

Story #557 (not taped)

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Nasreddin Hoca, His Students, and the Last Day of the World

*Trickery*

Nasreddin Hoca had a lamb that was the joy of his heart. Every day, he fed it very carefully, and every night he brushed its wool. It was surely the finest lamb in all of Alşehir.

His students knew the Hoca's love for his lamb, and they wanted to trick him into eating it. After many days of planning, they came running to the Hoca in great excitement. "Oh, Hoca, Efendi, have you heard?" they said. "Tomorrow is to be the last day of the world. The world will come to an end on Friday."

"Hm! Is that so?" asked the Hoca.

"Yes. And what will you do with your lamb then?" asked Ahmet. "Wouldn't it be better to eat him now? Then at least you'd have some return for your trouble in raising him."

"Oh, I don't want to eat my lamb," the Hoca said. "It's the finest lamb in the village."

"But what good is even the finest lamb after the world has ended?" asked Mehmet. "Come, Hoca Efendi. Let's have a big feast tomorrow along the riverbank. While you're roasting the lamb, we can go swimming. That will be a fine way to end our last day on earth."

The Hoca suspected a trick, but there seemed to be no way out of roasting his lamb, so he agreed to meet the students the next afternoon on the riverbank.

The next day, which was Thursday, the Hoca roasted his little lamb, the joy of his heart, while his students splashed and swam in the river. At last the lamb was ready, and the hungry boys raced up the bank to dress.

But when they looked for their clothes, there were no clothes to be found. Shirts, trousers, shoes--all had disappeared.

"Hoca, Efendi, have you seen our clothes?" asked Ahmet.

"We left them right here under the tree," Mehmet said.

"Oh, those!" said the Hoca carelessly. "I ran out of firewood and I burned all those old things. Have you forgotten that today is the last day of the world? What would you need clothes for? Come. Let's eat this delicious lamb."

And the shivering boys sat down to the feast.