

Story 908 (1964 Tape
erased on
field trip
after contents
transcribed)

Narrator: Mehmet Özsoy

Location: Aşağ Emerce village, kaza
of Taşköprü, Kastamonu
Province

Date: 1964

Tekerleme¹

I have a ship made of couch-grass root ²

I had a thousand cannons made of fresh onion stems
chained to this ship.

I had one hundred crows brought to the ship to serve as
night watchmen.

I recruited a thousand sparrows as artillerymen
musketeers.

Spiders in red silk form the rear guard,

And mosquitoes with shields and swords lead the van.

Ak Babas³ ordered the brave to stand ready for action.

¹A tekerleme is a nonsense jingle used at the beginning of a folktale to stimulate an audience to attentiveness. Beside the absurdities of the text, the ingenious rhyming is an attraction of the tekerleme. This particular tekerleme does not have one of the commonly used texts.

²A plant sometimes used as a diuretic.

³Ak Baba (White Father) is the most commonly used epithet for the vulture. Because they live to be very old--some in the Ankara Zoo are well over 100 years old--vultures, whether young or old, are usually spoken of as old men.

Story 908

Fleas started sniping, and shells made of peas shattered
the mountains.

blind mole it was who demolished the target.

dung-dealing nightingale shouted, "Oh, come

As he drew his great sword and wielded it wildly

Slashing the bedbug and spilling his blood on the ground.⁴

⁴See Notes for this tale in Notes volumes for the
Turkish text of this tale.