

Story 994 (1975 Tape 1    Narrator: Mehmet Kara (Koruk),  
Muhtar

Location: Nasreddin Hoca vil-  
lage, originally  
Hortu (supposedly the  
birthplace of N. Hoca),  
Sivrihisar kaza,  
Eskişehir Province

Date: September 27, 1975

The <sup>Nasreddin</sup> Hoca's <sup>ally</sup> Hunting Crow and the Filthy Pay-Off

One day the people of this village were going on a hunt. All of the other people took their dogs to assist them in the hunt, but Nasreddin Hoca took his pet crow.<sup>1</sup>

During the hunt, the crow landed on the back of one of the villagers' cows. When the Hoca saw this, he said, "Well, that is my quarry for today."

"How can you say that?" the villagers exclaimed.

"Well, when your dog catches an animal, isn't that your quarry? My crow seized this cow, and so that is my quarry!"

When the villagers protested against this, they and the Hoca agreed to lay the matter before the local judge. The Hoca said to the judge, "You please make a decision

<sup>1</sup>Early Turks were among the world's greatest falconers. Variants of this tale have the villagers hunt with falcons instead of dogs. The absurdity of Hoca's hunting with a crow is far more effective (and believable) in the context of falconry.

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about this matter. I present it to you--cow, turds, cream, and all."

After the judge had listened to the arguments of both sides, he said, "The cow belongs to the Hoca."

"But . . .!" exclaimed the villagers

"No, no, it is the Hoca's cow. He turned his crow into a dog, and the crow seized this cow. It is therefore his. Don't try to break his heart over this matter

On the following day the Hoca placed some cow turds in a dish and poured cream over them. He then took the dish to the court and presented it to the judge. The judge tasted the cream and was very pleased with the gift, but when he dipped his finger into the dish a second time, he asked, "What is this?"

"Well," said the Hoca, "yesterday you favored my -turds, cream, and all--and so I thought . "

Angered, the judge shouted, "Yesterday's decision was incorrect! You had no right to that cow!"<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup>This tale combines two well-known anecdotes, one about Hoca's hunting with a crow and the other about cheese- or cream-covered dung as a bribe or pay-off presented to a corrupt judge. For an example of the second, see ATON No. 252.