

Story 1042 (1973 Tape 2) Narrator: Ali İpekçi

Location: Gediksaray village
Göynücek kaza,
Amasya Province

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The Man Who Visited Fate

Once there was and once there was not a man who seemed to have no talent for any kind of work. One day he said to his wife, "I don't have a talent for any kind of work. I am going to find Fate and tell it my situation. Please prepare some food for me to take along with me."

After his wife had prepared provisions for him, he set out on a long journey. After traveling for some distance, he came to the top of a mountain. There, sitting beside the road, was a wolf.^{89, 92}

The wolf said, "Where are you going, my friend?"

"I am searching for Fate," said the man. "I am going to explain to Fate my difficulty in life."

The wolf said, "I always have a terrible headache Fate about this for me. What is the reason for my headache? Please don't forget to do this."

The man said, "All right. If I can remember to do I shall ask Fate about your problem."

After the man had gone away farther, he met a watchman.

The watchman greeted him, "Selâmünaleyküm."

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"Aleykümselâm."¹

"Where are you going, my brother?" asked the watchman

The traveler answered, "I have no talent for any kind of work. I am searching for Fate, and if I find it, I shall tell it my difficulty.

The watchman said, "I have been a watchman for these vineyards for seven years, and I have not found it to be a very comfortable life. I took this job because I was unable to succeed at anything else I undertook. Please ask Fate about my problem too. Ask Fate for the reason that I have never had the things I really wanted

right, my brother," said the traveler. "If I don't forget about it, I shall ask Fate about your problem too He kept walking as he said this. A little farther along he came to a river

From the surface of the water a fish spoke to him

"Selâmünaleyküm."

"Aleykümselâm," answered the traveler.

"Where are you going, my brother?" asked the fish

"I am searching for Fate in order to tell it my problem in life, but I may have trouble getting across this

¹This is the standard exchange between Moslems who are not well acquainted with each other: Selâmünaleyküm / Aleykümselâm -- May peace be unto you / May peace be unto you too.

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river in order to do so."

The fish said, "If you will agree to ask Fate about my problem too, I shall carry you across this river on my back."

"All right," said the man. "What is your problem?"

The fish said, "The river which you see here flows through my mouth because I have been unable to shut my mouth throughout my entire life so far. Please tell Fate my problem and learn from Fate what the remedy for my problem is."

After the man had been carried across the river by the fish, he said goodbye and continued walking again. He finally reached Fate's house. Fate sat before its house with a wheel before it.

"Selâmünaleyküm," said the traveler.

"Aleykümselâm," responded Fate.

"I came looking for Fate, but I saw you here," said the man.

"I am Fate. What is your difficulty?"

"Because I have no talent for any kind of work I am very poor. I therefore decided to come here and tell you about it

Fate spun the wheel around one time and then asked,

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"My friend, were there any others who had difficulties they wanted to have solved?"

"Oh, yes," said the man. "I met a (w'olf) who complained of having a continuous headache. That wolf sent his greetings to you and asked to know what the remedy was for his headache.

Fate said, "Tell him to eat a stupid man's head and then his own will become well.

The traveler continued. "A little farther along I came upon a man who was a watchman at a vineyard. He said to me, 'I have been serving as watchman at this vineyard for seven years, but it has not been a very comfortable life. I took this job only because I could not succeed at anything else Please ask Fate for a solution to my problem too.'"

Fate said, "Buried in that vineyard are two jars filled with gold. Go there, and let the two of you work together to locate that gold. There will be enough to take care of both of you for the rest of your lives

The traveler then said, "A little farther along my way here I came upon a fish which complained that the water of the river ran continuously through its mouth. This happened because the fish had not, throughout its life so far, been able to shut its mouth."

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Fate said, "Its mouth remains open because there are two stones in it. On your way back, take out those stones and it will be able to close its mouth at once."

"All right," said the man. "Thank you and goodbye."

When the traveler reached the river on his way home, he found the fish eagerly awaiting his appearance. "What did Fate tell you about my problem?" asked the fish.

"Fate said that there were two stones in your mouth and that if I took them out, you would be able to close your mouth." Saying this, he removed the two stones

"Keep them," said the fish. "You may need them

"Fate turned the Wheel of Fortune for me. What should I do with these stones? I don't need them." Resuming his journey, he reached the watchman at the vineyard

"Did you ever find Fate, my friend?" asked the watchman.

"I found Fate

"What did Fate say about my situation?" asked the watchman.

"Fate said to tell you that buried in this vineyard are two jars containing a great amount of gold. If you find them, they will make you comfortable for life."

The watchman said, "But I do not know where they are."

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Let us work together to find those jars, and then we can each take one of them."

"Fate gave a turn to the Wheel of Fortune for me, and so I do not need any of your gold." Saying this, he continued on his way.

When he reached the wolf, that animal asked him, "Did you see Fate? What did Fate tell you was a remedy for my headache?"

"Yes, I saw Fate. Fate said to tell you that if you cut off the head of a stupid man, your own head would be cured."

The wolf then said, "There is no man who could possibly be more stupid than you. You threw away two valuable diamonds which you took from the mouth of a fish. Then, although the watchman agreed to give you one of the jars of gold buried in the vineyard, you refused that too. Each time these opportunities were offered to you, you said, 'Fate gave a turn to my Wheel of Fortune, and so I do not need anything else.' I think that there is no other man in this world as stupid as you are. Let me now eat your head so that I will be saved from this terrible headache."