

Story 1081 1980 Tape 1)

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Behlül Dane's¹ Urinating in Public

One day Behlül Dane urinated in public. People who saw this were shocked and they went immediately to the padişah² to complain. They said, "Watch your brother! Do you know what he did today? He urinated in the presence of many people!"

The padişah said, "I don't believe that, but I shall him about it." After the people had left, the padişah his brother brought into his presence. He asked him, "How could you do such a thing? Everyone is complaining about you! How could you do such a thing in public?" When Behlül Dane laughed, the padişah demanded, "Did you really do that?"

¹Behlül Dane is largely a legendary figure in the Moslem past of the Abbassid period. Whether there is any historicity to this figure is questionable, though until the 18th century there was a grave at Baghdad said to be his. Behlül was thought to be the mad half-brother of Harun Reşit, the caliph who flourished around 800. There was method in his alleged "madness," however, for his antic behavior provided a "cover" for his role as satirist and critic of worldliness of the powerful and wealthy--notably the caliph himself! At times he was, like the Jewish schlemihl, a saintly fool.

²The word padişah usually refers to a political leader, often a sultan. Here it refers to the caliph, Harun Reşit.

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Behlül Dane answered, "Yes, I did, but I did not see other people there."

The padişah asked, "How could you fail to see other people there? There were apparently many people, a great many people, there.

"Let us go there together," said Behlül Dane, "and if there are any people there."

They went together to the place where the incident had occurred. There Behlül Dane said to his brother, "Look at this place through my armpit." Looking through Behlül Dane's armpit, the padişah saw that one of the creatures there was a cat. Another creature was a dog. Still another was a donkey. In fact, all of the living creatures there seemed to be animals. Behlül Dane asked his brother, "Which one of all these creatures is a human being? Show me one. I cannot say that this creature or that creature or some other creature before us is a human being. Therefore, there is no reason why I should not urinate here."³

³This is one of the occasional pieces of flimflam perpetrated by Behlül Dane. Along with his ability to read minds and his God-given power to perform minor miracles, Behlül Dane also had strong power of suggestion which allowed him to place people in hypnotic states. He on several occasions projected Harun Reşit on a time warp during which he seemed to live many years in distant lands while in fact only a few seconds had passed. See ATON tales about Behlül which include in their titles the expression "Time within Time." In most of the tales about him Behlül Dane uses these special talents to teach moral truths or to make graphic certain philosophical positions. Here his hypnotic power is used simply as a convenient deception.

Armpit
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through