

Story 1148 (1974 Tape 14) Narrator: Hasan Solak

Location: Akdağmadeni, kaza town
of Yozgat Province

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Diet for a Laz¹ *all*

A Laz became ill and went to İstanbul for medical help. There was a fellow Laz in the city whom he knew, and he asked this friend, "Do you know a good *physician* *all* doctor you could take me to here?"

"I do. Come along and we shall go to see him right away."

They went to the doctor's office, where there was a long line of patients waiting ahead of them. They got into this line, and after a while their turn came to see the doctor. "What is your problem?" asked the doctor.

The Laz answered, "Doctor, I become sick and my stomach aches. The pain is so great that it hurts my back and spreads up to my head."

The doctor examined him and asked him some more questions. He then wrote out a prescription and gave the Laz a sheet of paper with a diet listed on it. "Abide strictly by this diet, and take this medicine after every meal."

¹ The Laz people constitute one of the larger ethnic minorities in Turkey. Their exact origins are not definitely known. The largest concentration of Lazes are in extreme northeastern Turkey along the Black Sea coast. Reputedly stupid, they are made fun of in numerous folk anecdotes about fools. The frequent success of Lazes who move to İstanbul belies the folk image.

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After they had left the doctor's office, the patient said "My compatriot, take me straight to the ship. As soon as I get back to Trabzon I shall start this regimen." He boarded a Black Sea ship and began the voyage home. During the trip he ate nothing. As the ship approached Trabzon, he was becoming very hungry, and he said to himself, "Let me take a look at that diet and see what the doctor wants me to eat." As he took the diet list from his pocket, however, a puff of wind blew it from his hand, and it fell into the sea.

As soon as he had disembarked, the Laz went to a telephone and called his friend in Istanbul. He said, "My compatriot, as I got close to Trabzon, I decided to read the diet that the doctor had given me. As I was about to do so, however, it blew out of my hand and fell into the sea. Can you go to that doctor and find out what my diet is supposed to be?"

"Wait there by that telephone. I'll go and ask the doctor about your diet and then call you back."

The friend went to the doctor's office and got into the line of those waiting. When his turn came to see the doctor, he said, "Doctor, a few days ago I brought a friend here and you examined him. You gave him a prescription and a diet to follow. Well, the diet blew out of his hand and fell into the sea. What was his diet?"