

Story 1164 (1989 Tape 12)

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Location: Taped at Ankara, but narrator is of Black Sea coast, Trabzon

Date: December 17

Lazes¹ Stranded in the Sky

There were once two Lazes named Temel and Hızır² who set out by plane on a touristic trip. It was in a very large and luxurious airliner with four engines that they traveled

Soon after the airplane left the ground, a pretty stewardess made an announcement to all of the passengers. "We hope that you will have a very pleasant trip today. Sit back and enjoy yourselves."

It was not long after that, however, that the stewardess made another announcement. She said, "Dear passengers, do not be alarmed, but I wish to inform you that one of our engines has stopped. Our competent and experienced pilot will soon

¹The Laz people constitute one of the larger ethnic minorities in Turkey. Their exact origins are not definitely known. The largest concentrations 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.

²Temel, Hızır, and Dursun are among the most common male names for Lazes in anecdotes about Black Sea coast residents.

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land you safely at the nearest airport." Although Temel Hızır were somewhat upset by this news, they simply looked at each other and said nothing.

A few minutes later the same stewardess reappeared, with the same courteous manner she made another announcement: "Dear passengers, I must inform you that a second engine on this plane has stopped functioning. But do not be overly concerned about this." A bit more upset this time, Temel and Hızır glanced at each other again, but, as before, they said nothing.

When the stewardess announced shortly after this that a third engine had failed, Temel said to his friend, "Hızır, if we lose the fourth engine, we shall be stranded up here without any means of flying back to earth!"