

Story 1206 (1990 Tape 12)

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54

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İzmir Province

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Creation
Al right

Creation of Three Mountains

Once in the very distant past, while the world was still not completely formed, there were no mountains named Ağrı,¹ Palandöken,² or Erciyes.³ Those names were not then the names of mountains at all but the names of three girls who were sisters. They lived with their mother. Whenever these girls were seen, they were always wearing their white headscarfs.

Unfortunately, these three sisters (like many other sisters) could not get along with each other, and they were forever quarreling over one thing or another. Their mother tried

¹ Ağrı (Ararat), in extreme eastern Turkey, is the country's highest peak at 16,954 feet. It is, of course, the mountain associated with the myth of Noah's Ark.

² Palandöken is actually a range of mountains in Erzurum Province, eastern Turkey.

³ Slightly more than 12,700 feet in height, Erciyes towers above the Plain of Kayseri near the city of Kayseri, central Turkey.

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every means she could think of to make them get along peaceably with each other, but all of her attempts failed to bring harmony among her daughters.

One day the mother became so exasperated with her daughters' quarreling that she threatened them with severe punishment if they did not cease fighting. But the girls were not a bit intimidated by this warning, and they continued their hostile behavior toward one another. When the mother finally lost all patience, she uttered a curse, saying, "May Allah turn all three of you into stone!"⁴

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The girls were immediately turned into three huge stones, so big, in fact, that each became a mountain. The oldest became Mount Ağrı. The middle sister became Mount Palandöken, and the youngest became Mount Erciyes. The white scarfs on their heads became the permanent snow on the tops of those three mountains

⁴In Turkish folktales parental requests for curses against children are almost always complied with by Divine will. This is true even though the parents may be immoral, vindictive, or absolutely scurrilous people!