Where Nasreddin Hoca's Wife Was to Show Her Face

When Nasreddin Hoca was married, it was to a woman whom he had never seen before. As it turned out, she was a woman whom the Hoca did not find very attractive in appearance.

Shortly after their wedding his new wife asked Nasreddin Hoca, "Hoca, to whom am I allowed to speak, and to whom do you wish me to show my face?"

Nasreddin Hoca said at once, "You may show your face to whomever you wish, just so long as you do not show it to me!"

1 There are still many arranged marriages in Turkey, but in earlier times the practice was much more common. Inasmuch as exogamy was favored as a marriage criterion, the bride and groom often came from different villages and were unlikely to have seen each other even at a distance.

2 Real veils have been outlawed in Turkey for well over half a century, but they were mandatory for women during the various periods of history when Nasreddin Hoca supposedly lived.