

Story 1305 (1988 Tape 8)

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The Durability of Stupidity

Laz<sup>1</sup> people are frequently criticized or made fun of for being stupid. One day someone asked a Laz, "Which do you think is more valuable: stupidity or beauty?"

The Laz thought about this for a moment before answering. He suspected that some kind of trick was being played on him. Then he said, "Stupidity is more valuable because it lasts so much longer. Beauty fades away quite quickly."

<sup>1</sup>The 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 Istanbul belies the folk image.