

Story 1314 1988 Tape 8)

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of Trabzon Province

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The Laz<sup>1</sup> at the Theatre

Several years ago Ahmet of Sürmene<sup>2</sup> came into Trabzon to see his first cinema film. He went to the theatre at the proper time. Finding the box office, he bought a ticket for himself. As he was about to enter the main part of the theatre, an usher took his ticket and tore it in half. Ahmet did not know what had been wrong with his ticket, and so he went back and bought another ticket. Again the usher tore ticket in half. Ahmet was even more confused by this, but he went back to the ticket office for a third ticket.

Finally the man at the box-office window recognized Ahmet and asked him, "Haven't you already bought two tickets? What are you doing with these tickets?"

<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 İstanbul belies the folk image.

<sup>2</sup>A kaza town on the Black Sea coast, east of Trabzon and about half the distance to the city of Rize.

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Ahmet explained, "I keep buying tickets, but the man at the entrance door keeps tearing them up. He must be very angry with me. Give me another ticket, and I shall see if I can get past him this time before he can tear it up!"