

Story 1345 (1969 Tape 5)

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Location: Aşağı Kulacı village,
Şiran kaza, Gümüşhane
Province

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Collected by Dr. Saim Sakaoğlu

Advice sold - A11

Following Purchased ^{A11} Advice Leads to Fortune

When the father of three sons died, those young men found it necessary to support themselves. Because there were no jobs available in their small village, they decided to go elsewhere to find work. After traveling for some time, they arrived at a town where all three of them found employment and began to work. After working for six months, each had saved a small sum of money, and one day they decided to return to their village.

In preparation for their journey home, each of the brothers bought some bread to eat as he traveled along. When the youngest entered a bread shop, he said to the baker, "Uncle, sell me some bread."

The baker replied, "Son, I shall sell you a loaf of bread and a good piece of advice for one red lira."¹

¹Turkish peasants frequently have the misconception that the most precious gold is red gold. It appears frequently in folktales and songs. Any metal supposedly gold that is red has been adulterated with copper. The alloy is not, of course, as valuable as pure gold. A golden lira was a great amount of money for a peasant. Even as late as the 1960s a loaf of bread cost less than a Turkish lira, and the lira of that era was worth perhaps 10 percent of an Ottoman golden lira.

*Youngest son ALL
Youngest bro. ALL*

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"All right, father," said the boy, and he handed the man one red lira.

"Son, here is my piece of advice. While in the company of others, do not sit in a place from which you will probably have to move.² --Now, for a second red lira I shall sell a second loaf of bread and a second piece of good advice."

"All right, father," said the boy, and he handed the baker a second red lira.

The baker said, "Here is my next piece of advice. When you are among strangers, do not comment on anything that is going on among them unless you are asked for your opinion --And now for a third red lira I shall sell you a third loaf of bread and my third piece of good advice

"Here is the third red lira," said the boy, handing coin to the man.

Then the baker said, "Son, do not talk about things

²In rural areas of Turkey there is often a set pattern for the seating arrangement at social occasions. The person of greatest status is across the room from the main entrance. People of lesser rank spread out in graduated distances to right and left of this central position all the way to the door, or, in extremely crowded conditions, even out the door. If someone of any degree of status enters a full room, everyone of lesser status must move down a notch. The wise person of lowly status therefore seats himself well toward the door so that he will not be affected by the possibly frequent shuffling for position.

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you have observed in your travel unless you are asked specific questions about those things. --And here is a final piece of advice which is free. Do not eat the loaves of bread I have sold you until you reach your own village." Having said that, the baker pressed a red lira into each loaf of bread and handed the three loaves to the youngest brother.

The three brothers continued their journey home. Along their way they came to a small city, and there they decided to rest briefly, but the two older brothers were too proud to rest with the youngest brother, for, they said, he was poorer than they were. Two tricksters, overhearing their comment and observing their behavior, decided that the older brothers must be foolish fellows. Approaching the older brothers, the tricksters inquired, "Hey, friends, where have you come from and where are you going?"

They replied, "We have just come from such and such a town, where we worked to accumulate some money, and now we are returning to our village."

Hearing that, the two tricksters decided to travel along with the two older brothers. Before the four had gone very far together, the tricksters found a way to steal the older brothers' money and then disappear.

The youngest brother, who had been left behind in the

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small city, set out alone for the remainder of the journey home. Just outside a village along his way, the youngest brother met an old man. Speaking politely to this old man, he asked, "Grandfather, is there any place in this village where I might stay for the night?" The old man gave him the address of a house where he might be accepted as a guest, the boy proceeded to look for that house. When he finally located it and knocked on the door, the youngest son was surprised to discover that the old man who opened the door looked very much like the old man who had sent him there.

After they had eaten and talked for a while, it was time to retire for the night. The old man pointed down a hallway to the room which he said would be the guest's bedroom for the night. Not entirely certain which room was to be his, the boy accidentally opened the door of the room next to his own. He was horrified by what he saw, for that room was filled with decapitated bodies and the scattered heads from those bodies. Shutting the door of that room, the boy proceeded to his own room and there decided to say nothing about what he had seen.

The following morning the boy thanked his host, bade him farewell, and set out again for his village. Before he had gone many steps, however, his path was crossed by an old man who seemed to resemble his host, but the boy could not be cer-

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tain of that in the dim light of dawn. The stranger asked him, "Did you see anything worth talking about in that house that you just left?"

Saying, "No, I didn't see anything worth telling you about," the youngest son continued on his way. Late that da he arrived in a village where a wedding was in progress.

When he asked someone where he might possibly find a place to spend the night, that person said, "The house where the wedding feast is about to begin is the most likely place for it is the largest house in the village." When the boy went to that large house and knocked on the door, he was vited inside as a guest for the night.

Entering the main room of that house, he took a seat the door. When his hosts urged him to sit at the table for the feast, he answered, "I do not sit in any place from which I shall have to move." Those who heard this remark were surprised at his modesty.

In the morning he left that house and renewed his journey toward home. He was unaware that he was being followed at some distance by a man on horseback--the same old man whom he had already encountered three different times. After a short while, the old man rode up to the boy and said, "Since we are going in the same direction, let us travel together. Come! Mount behind me on my horse!"

*Leaving
anyone*

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After they had traveled for a while, they arrived back at the first village at which the boy had stopped. Apparently the old horseman had circled back to his own village. The boy, therefore, spent another night in the house which contained a room full of decapitated corpses. In the morning he again departed, and, as before, the same old man cut across his path, though he had changed his clothes so that at first the boy did not recognize

"Oh, son, where did you sleep last night?"

"I slept in that large house back there," said the boy, pointing.

"Did you see anything unusual in that house?"

"No, I saw nothing worth speaking of there."

The old man then said, "My son, I am a wise man, but you are even wiser than I am. Here. Take this saddlebag as a gift from me, but do not open it until you reach your village.

The boy said, "All right, father," and began walking homeward again. He moved more slowly now, for the saddlebag was full of gold and very heavy.

He finally reached his village on the very same day that his older brothers arrived there. After they had greeted the youngest brother, they asked him, "How much money did you save from your pay while we were all working in that town? We lost

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all of our savings to a couple of men who robbed us."

"I managed to save three red liras, but then I exchanged them for three loaves of bread and three very valuable pieces of advice. By following those pieces of advice on my way home, I had the good fortune of being given this heavily loaded saddlebag by a strange old man.³ He told me not to open it until I had reached my village. Let us open it now."

When they opened up the saddlebag, they discovered that it contained a great number of gold coins. As a result of having such wealth, they had all of their wishes fulfilled. May we be as fortunate as they were.

³See Notes Vol. VII for commentary on the old man.