

Story 1355 (1988 Tape 9)

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The Cleverness of Laz¹ Astronauts

One day an American, a Frenchman, and a Laz were talking together. Each of them was bragging about his own people.

The American said, "In the near future we are going to send a rocket to Mars so that its crew members can determine whether or not there was ever any life on that planet."

The Frenchman said, "My country will soon send scientists to the moon to carry on research there."

Hearing that, the Laz said, "Do you think that those will be such great achievements? Several Laz scientists will visit the sun."

"Are you crazy?" the other two asked. "If they get close to the sun, they will be killed by its great heat."

"We thought of that possibility and so we plan to have them arrive there in the cool of the night."

¹The 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.