

Story 1367 (1989 Tape 3) Narrator: Perihan Artıburun, c. 75¹

Location: Konya, Konya Province

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Nasreddin Hoca and the Power of a Book

Nasreddin Hoca and his wife had a baby boy. The child was healthy, but for some reason, it cried continuously. One day the mother held the baby in her arms for a long time, doing everything she could think of to stop its crying. She became so tired of doing this that she finally said to Nasreddin Hoca, "You are the father of this boy, and because you are also a teacher, you probably know more about handling children than I do. I have been unable to make this child fall asleep. You take him and do something to cause him to sleep."

Nasreddin Hoca first took a thick book from the shelf and placed it in his lap. Then, holding the child in his left arm, he began slowly turning the pages of the book with his right hand. After a short while the baby fell sound asleep.

¹The narrator was the widow of one of Turkey's most prominent political figures of the 1960's, General Tekin Artıburun. After his retirement from the military, Tekin Artıburun became President of the Turkish Senate and later Acting President of the Republic of Turkey.

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When the child's mother saw this, she was amazed. She asked, "Hoca, how were you able to put him to sleep so quickly?"

Nasreddin Hoca answered, "Whenever I used to try to teach my students something from this book, they always fell asleep. I thought, therefore, that it might also put my son to sleep."