

Story 1589 (Dictated)

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Province

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The Laz¹ as Helicopter Pilot

Temel² worked in Germany for several years. When it was time for him to return to Turkey, he decided not to take an automobile back with him as most Turks were doing. He decided to take instead a helicopter. He took three or five³ flying lessons in Germany, but he had someone else pilot the helicopter back to Rize for him.

When Temel and the helicopter arrived at Rize, everyone there became very excited. It was the first private helicopter in Rize. Many people came to look at the helicopter, and soon one of Temel's friends asked him to demonstrate how this kind of airplane worked.

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.

²In tales about the stereotyped Laz as dummer or fool, the male characters usually have one or another of five or six very common Laz names. Temel is the name used most often, with Dursun in second place. Thus if either of these names occurs in a folktale, the audience knows at once that it is a Laz tale.

³Turks often use the expression üç beş (three or five) to mean a few.

Story 1589

Temel climbed into the helicopter and started the engine
The helicopter rose from the ground and went straight up very

Then, all of a sudden, the helicopter dropped back down
and crashed in the garden of a restaurant. Temel's friends ran
to him and asked, "What happened, Temel? What happened, Temel?"

Temel answered, "I went up very high--almost to the sky.
I was getting so close to the sun that I was becoming very hot.

I turned off the ceiling fan, and then this happened."