How a Laz Named an Important Medicine

There once was a large conference in a European country that was assembled to discuss a newly developed medicine of worldwide importance. One of the reasons for calling the conference was to find a suitable name for the new medicine.

A great many people had registered for this conference, and there was a long line of people waiting to enter the building where the conference was to be held. Among these people there was a Laz. After he had waited in line for some time, the Laz became disgusted with the delay and decided to cancel his registration. In a loud voice, he shouted to the attendant at the door, *Peni silin!* (which means "Erase my name!"). But few of the people there knew any Turkish, and they thought that he was offering a name for the new medicine. The conference later decided to accept what they thought was the Laz's recommendation for a name for the new medicine. And that was the way that penicillin was named.

*Silmek* means to erase, and *silin* is the imperative form. *Peni* is the Laz pronunciation for *Beni*; *ben* means *I*, and *beni* is the objective form, *me*. Thus *Peni silin!* means *Erase me!* or *Erase my name!*