

Story 1664 (1993 Tape 4)

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Taped by Jo Ann Conrad

Nasreddin Hoca¹ Squelches Praise of a Gossip

One day a woman who was a terrible gossip moved with her husband into the neighborhood where Nasreddin Hoca lived. This woman constantly gossiped about everyone and about everything. Worse than that, she caused other women to engage in the same kind of loose talk.

Nasreddin Hoca noticed one day that even his own wife had begun imitating this woman, repeating rumors and pleasant remarks about things that were none of her business. When he realized this practice of his wife, the Hoca came quite disturbed.

In those past times men used to spend much of their free time in coffeehouses. The husband of the gossipy woman went frequently to the coffeehouse of that village, and there he would always speak in praise of his wife. He would say, "My wife is my partridge. As you know, a

¹Nasreddin Hoca is the most popular comic folk character in Turkey. Anecdotes about him are legion.

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partridge is a very beautiful bird which sings 'tıkı, tıkı, tıkı.'"² These remarks also disturbed the Hoca.

Early one morning Nasreddin Hoca took his donkey from its stable. A neighbor, the husband of the gossipy woman, asked, "What are you going to do, Hoca?"

Nasreddin Hoca answered, "I am going to take my küheylan³ out for a morning walk."

When the neighbor heard this, he laughed loudly. He said, "Alas, Hoca Efendi, how can you call your donkey a küheylan?"

Smiling, the Hoca answered, "Well, if your fox can become a partridge, then certainly my donkey could easily become a küheylan!"

²Onomatopoeia (very apt) for the call of the partridge.

³A full-blooded Arabian horse.