

Story 1770 (1994 Tape 4)

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Nasreddin Hoca¹ and the Untwisted Ear

Once one of Nasreddin Hoca's neighbors was giving a party, but Hoca had not been invited to it. He was very upset by this. He and his wife talked about what they might do in order to get an invitation for him. "Let us stand outside our front door and pretend to have a fight. If we do this quite loudly, people at the party will hear the noise. They will then come and separate us, and they may take me back to the party with them."

They went outside and pretended to be fighting. at the party heard this disturbance, and they went to Hoca's house to make peace between Hoca and his wife. They asked, "What are you doing, Hoca? Is this not a shameful thing? You had better come along with us to the party."

¹Nasreddin Hoca is the most popular comic folk character in the Turkish oral tradition. He is sometimes very wise, but just as often he is equally foolish. In modern Turkey a hoca (pronounced hodja) is a preacher and religious leader. In pre-Republican times he was also a teacher, for education was then the responsibility of the clergy.

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At the party they were serving a kind of pastry that Nasreddin Hoca was very fond of. When they passed the pastry tray to him, he placed it on the table. Then he took hold of the edge of the tray and spun it around, saying, "That is how I would have twisted your aunt's his wife's] ear if you had not separated us." But in fact he was turning the tray to bring the largest pieces of the pastry within his reach.