

Story 2053 (Transcribed by Ahmet Ali Arslan from his tape and later used in his unpublished dissertation.) Narrator: Güneş Öztürk, 45, housewife
Location: Ardahan, capital of Ardahan Province

Date: November 20, 1977

Şangulum, Şungulum, and Karaca Dingilim¹

Once there was and once there was not, when the camel was a town crier and the flea was a barber,² a mother goat had three kids. The names of these kids were Şangulum, Şungulum, and Karaca Dingilim.

The mother goat went out to graze every day so that she could produce milk for her children. When she returned to her home, she always stood before the door and said, "Şangulum, Şungulum, and Kara Dingilim, open the door. It is I, your mother. I have brought you milk in one of my breasts and honey in the other

¹Karaca Dingilim means, literally, my dark axle. We have retained the Turkish words, however, in order to preserve the euphony in the three names.

²Formulaic opening for many Turkish folktales, this is known as a tekerleme. A full tekerleme may run to several lines, though most narrators nowadays use only one or two parts of a tekerleme. The tekerleme is a nonsense jingle filled with paradoxes and other comic incongruities. It is meant both to amuse and to alert the audience to the fact that a tale is to follow. Some of the humor is lost in translation because it is difficult to reproduce in English the rhyme scheme.

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Their life went on in this way for some time, but one day a wolf overheard the mother goat's greeting to her children when she returned from grazing. A short while after the mother had gone grazing on the following day, wolf knocked on the door and said, "Şangulum, Şungulum, Karaca Dingilim, open the door. It is I, your mother. I have brought you milk in one breast and honey in the other."

Şangulum, who was the smartest of the kids, said, "You are not our mother. Our mother has a high voice, but yours is very deep."

The wolf then left. He went somewhere and ate a raw egg, which changed his voice. He then returned to the goats' house and said, "Şangulum, Şungulum, and Kara Dingilim, open the door. It is I, your mother. I have brought you milk in one breast and honey in the other."

Şangulum replied, "You are not our mother. Our mother's feet are white, but yours are black."

The wolf hurried away to a gristmill and whitened his feet with flour. Returning to the goats' home, he said, "Şangulum, Şungulum, and Karaca Dingilim, open the door. It is I, your mother. I have brought you milk in one breast and honey in the other."

Although Şangulum warned his brothers not to open the

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door, they insisted that the person outside was indeed their mother. When they opened the door, Şangulum ran quickly and hid himself. The wolf ate Şangulum and Karaca Dingilim and departed.

When the mother goat returned later, she called out, "Şangulum, Şungulum, and Kara Dingilim, open the door. It is I, your mother." When only Şangulum came to the door, his mother asked, "Where are Şungulum and Karaca Dingilim?" Şangulum told her that the wolf had eaten them. "I shall avenge their deaths," said the mother

On the following day the mother goat went to the wolf and said, "I am preparing a lavish meal for this evening. Won't you come to our house and share it with us?"

The wolf accepted this invitation, for he was always hungry. He had wanted to eat Şangulum as well as his brothers, and he thought that this invitation might eventually give him an opportunity to do that too

The wolf went to the home of the goats for dinner that evening. They ate outside in the garden. When they had finished eating and drinking, the mother goat said to her guest, "Let us play knucklebones³ for awhile and see which of us can win at that game." The wolf agreed to this

³A game like jacks in which small, similarly shaped objects are tossed, stacked, or arranged in a variety of patterns. The knucklebones come from the legs of sheep.

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A couple of hours before the dinner, the mother goat had built a fire in her tandır⁴. As they were playing, the mother goat pretended to drop one of the knucklebones, but she had actually thrown it into the tandır. She then said, "Oh, Brother Wolf, my long hair might catch on fire if I tried to remove that knucklebone from the tandır. Can you get it for me? You are braver than I am and your long claws could grasp it more tightly than my hooves could."

The wolf suspected nothing as he leaned over the tandır to retrieve the knucklebone. But as he did so, he was struck from behind. The goat kicked him so hard that he was knocked into the fiery tandır. "Save me! Save me!" he began shouting.

The mother goat responded, "If you had not devoured Şungulum and Karaca Dingilim, nothing like this would have happened to you!"

⁴A tandır is an outdoor oven, often little more than a hole in the earth.