

Story 2137 (1999 Tape 4)

Narrator: Hüseyin Yavuz, 46

Location: Gözsüz village,
Malkara kaza,
Tekirdağ Prov-
ince

Date: January 25, 1999

Choices for Azrail¹

One day Azrail set out toward our village to take the life of someone who was destined to die. On his way through a nearby village he saw a poor man who had nothing--no money, no family, no friends. Azrail said, "That man has nothing to live for. He wouldn't care whether he lived or died. Then let him live!"

As Azrail went on, he saw a man who had prepared a fine lunch for himself. He was sitting by a creek in the shade of a large tree, singing and eating and drinking. Azrail approached him and said, "I want either your life or your lunch and your worldly goods."

The man answered, "I have no need for my lunch or for my worldly goods, but I do need my life. Here! Take my lunch and all the worldly goods I own."

Azrail saw that the man really didn't care about his

¹Azrail is the Angel of Death in both Judaic and Islamic belief. He is described as being huge and fierce looking. Some believe that he has more sets of wings than any other angel except the Archangel Michael.

Story 2137

lunch or about his other belongings at all, and so he left the man sitting by the creek. "I'll not take his life, after all," said Azrail, and he continued on toward our village.

Then he saw a very old man stumbling along the road, barely moving. "Uncle," said Azrail, "I need to take a life. You have a choice: I want either your life or your money and other goods."

The old man said, "Oh-h-h, don't take either my money or my other goods. Take my life instead. I have worked all my life for money and goods to leave to my children.