

Story 2142 (1999 Tape 4)

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Location: Gözsüz village,  
Malkağa kaza,  
Tekirdağ Province

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The Courteous Thief

It was winter and the nights were long. A young farmer had run out of hay for his livestock. A neighbor of his, Uncle Ömer, had plenty of hay but the young farmer could not bring himself to asking for any of it

But the young farmer pretended that he asked for some hay. He went at night to Uncle Ömer's hayloft and said, "Selamünaleyküm!<sup>1</sup> It is March, a very troublesome month. Give me a basketful of hay, Uncle Ömer." Then he took a basketful of hay and returned home with it

Uncle Ömer knew that he was losing hay every night but he did not know who was taking it. One evening he decided to hide himself near the hayloft and see what was going on there.

The younger farmer came again and said, as usual "Selamünaleyküm! It is March, a very troublesome month.

<sup>1</sup>Selamünaleyküm/Aleykümselam--traditional exchange between Muslims not well acquainted with each other. It means roughly May peace be unto you / And may peace be unto you too. If Selamünaleyküm is not responded to, the speaker should be wary of the one so addressed.

Story 2142

Give me some hay, Uncle Ömer."

Uncle Ömer came forth from his hiding place and said, "What do you think you are doing--taking my hay without my permission?"

"Every time I have come here I have asked your permission to take some hay. You would not have given it to me otherwise, and so this was the way I got it."