

Story 2174 (1999 Tape 11)

Narrator: İsmi Koçak, 34

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Lazy Woman Compels Visitors to Do Her Work

In a certain village lived a woman who was attractive but quite lazy. Whenever someone came to visit her, she would put that person to work on one of her household chores. After a while, the villagers began to talk about this woman and her practice of having others do her work.

When the gossip reached the ears of the hoca,¹ he said to those around him, "You really should not talk about her in this way. Who knows? By speaking so loosely about her, you yourself may develop the worse habit of maligning others."

"Oh, no, hoca. We wouldn't do such a thing. Actually, she makes us do her work."

"Well, I too shall visit her," said the hoca, "to find out for myself the truth of this matter." And indeed he did do just that.

When the hoca knocked on that woman's door, she did not immediately open it, but without even identifying the caller,

¹A hoca is a preacher and the religious leader of a Muslim community. In pre-Republican times the hoca was also the community teacher, for education then was the responsibility of the clergy. Separation of church and state in the Republic required that teachers be people of secular rather than religious training.

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she shouted out to him, "Whoever you are, you may have noticed my baby's diapers hanging on the clothesline. Will you take them off the line and bring them inside?" Then she went to the door to greet her guest. When she saw that her visitor was the hoca, she said, "Ah, hoca, just put those things back where you found them, and come along inside."

The hoca hung the diapers back on the line and went on into the house. He and the woman chatted about this and that, and then the hoca went along to the coffeehouse

His friends there asked him, "Did you visit that laza woman. hoca? Well, if you did, what happened?"

"I thought that you were all foolish to do her household chores, but I was twice as foolish. You each served her once, but I served her twice. I not only took the diapers off the clothesline, but I even put them back there again I was twice as foolish as you. You were certainly right in what you said about that woman."