

#34

The Forbidden Reprimand

This story is about the days when people earned so little money that they couldn't pay their taxes, even though the taxes then were not high. In those days, there was a peasant who had two oxen, one of which was smaller than the other, and weaker too. This is often the case, for it is hard to get a matched pair of oxen. Oxen -- team -- u-nus + chod

The peasant took his oxen to the field to plow one day in a valley near his village. The smaller ox kept balking and sometimes even lying on the ground as he tried to plow. When the man tried to lift the ox to its feet, the yoke was broken, and he could not plow any more. Getting very angry at his balky ox, the peasant swore at him loudly.

A kadı happened to be passing along the road near the field at that time and he heard the peasant swearing. The kadı sent his clerk over to the peasant to arrest him for profanity. They took the peasant to the town, and there he was kept in jail for twenty-four hours, fined, and released the next day. imprisonment -- for profanity

When he returned home, the peasant fixed the broken yoke and again went to the field with his oxen to plow. The balky ox started to act the same way as he had the previous day. He thrashed his tail and then lay down right on the black plow, which has been used since the day of Adam, and broke it. day of Adam

The peasant became very angry. He looked at the ox and shouted, "I know what to say to you, but I can't."

¹Kara saban, black plow, is the name given to the primitive wooden plow still used by many Turkish peasants.