

Story 878 1964 Tape 2)

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*Shepherd* " " "*Barber*  
The Albanian Shepherd and the Barber

There was an Albanian shepherd who had served his master for a long time. Because he spent all of his time away from any settlement, there was no place for him to get a haircut. As a result, his hair grew very long, and the hair of his head and his beard had all grown together. They had grown into each other and were completely mingled

One day his master said to him, "Shepherd, we shall take the flocks to town tomorrow to have them sheared. Get ready for this."

"All right, Master," the shepherd said.

They were all ready the next morning, and so they started at once to drive the sheep along the road to the town. While the sheep were being sheared, the shepherd had some free time, and he decided to go to a barbershop for a haircut. I do not know whether or not it is really true, but I have always heard that Albanians are great misers and very stingy with whatever money they may have. This Albanian shepherd did not want to pay the full price for a haircut and shave. He had a small piece of soap in his pocket, and so before he

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entered the barbershop, he went to a nearby fountain, wet his hair and lathered his hair and beard thoroughly. When he entered the barbershop, he said to the barber, "Wet head How much?"

"Come here, Mori.<sup>1</sup> Sit down here, and I shall do something about it."

The barber already had a customer, whom he was trimming and shaving, and he deliberately lengthened the time it would take to finish that haircut. He kept the man an hour in the chair instead of the usual half hour. The barber said to himself, "Let this fellow's wet head dry, and I'll show him how much for a wet head!"

When the first customer had left the shop, the barber called to the Albanian shepherd, "All right. Come along here!" The barber had a blunt old razor on his shelf, one which he had not used for more than a year. He started shaving him with that razor. By that time the shepherd's hair had all dried. Between the blunt razor and the dry hair, the shaving was done with great difficulty for the barber and great pain for the customer. Each time the razor pulled, the Albanian jumped halfway to the ceiling. While his chin was being

<sup>1</sup> A name used for Albanians because, it is said, they use that name much among themselves.

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shaved, he could hardly stand the pain, but he tried not show his discomfort.

When he got up and paid the barber, the shepherd asked him, "Oh, Brother Barber, are all the people whose beards you have shaved still alive?"

"Yes, of course!"

"Well, then, I suppose that I can hope to survive, too!"