

Story 903 (1961-62 Tape 71) Narrator: Abdullah Doğan, of family repatriated from Yugoslavia in 1957

Location: Izmir, Province of Izmir

Date: May 1962

Lament: "Don't Go to Cut Wood Tonight, Son"

There was a woman once who had an only child, a son. He made a living by cutting ^{wooden} wood. One day he was carrying to town a load of wood he had cut on a nearby mountain when he was stopped by a forestry guard.¹ The guard said, "Do you have a permit for cutting down this wood in a government forest?"

"I think that I do not need one, for I am the only son of a lonely mother."

you cannot do this," said the guard. "Put down your load of wood." When the young man refused to do so, the guard pulled a stick from the load and hit the woodcutter on the head with it. The young man fell to the ground dead. The guard then went to the old woman and said, "Go to such-and-such a place and get the body of your son."

At the funeral ceremony the mother said, "If someone

¹ Until massive reforestation was begun by Atatürk, Turkey was almost without timber reserves. It now has sufficient wood to export lumber and to provide its own wood pulp for the paper industry. The Ministry of Forests guards the national forests carefully. Forest rangers are all uniformed and armed with small-calibre pistols.

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will compose a song in memory of my son, I shall pay that person twenty golden liras."

Within a few days a song was composed in memory of her son, and she paid the maker twenty golden liras. This song became very popular, and it was sung everywhere in the country--even on the radio. The mother later grew so sad living alone that she moved to Istanbul.

Here is the song. [The narrator then sang "Don't Go to Cut Wood Tonight, Son."]