

Story 1230 (Dictated)

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Location: Cumra, kaza town of
Konya Province

Date: 1982

How a Group of Karatepe¹ People Found Their Feet

One day a group of Karatepe people all ordered shoes made for themselves by a local shoemaker. This shoemaker made of the pairs of shoes of exactly the same design and exactly the same color.

After they had bought their new shoes, put them on their feet, and started home, they all decided to stop to rest at a coffeehouse along their route. As they sat together on a long bench outside the coffeehouse, they suddenly became aware that all of their feet now looked exactly the same. Alarmed at this, they began telling each other, "Our feet are all mixed up! How shall we ever find out which two feet belong to each of us?" They discussed this problem for a while, but they could not solve their problem. After a while they called to a passerby, saying, "Come and help us! We are unable to continue home because our feet are all mixed up. None of us knows which feet are his own.

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¹Karatepe is a remote village in the northeast corner of Adana Province. Its people are alleged to be stupid, and their misadventures are the subjects of a great many Karatepe anecdotes.

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The passerby looked at the Karatepe men and then looked at their feet. He said, "Just wait a minute, and I shall return to help you solve this difficulty." Going to a nearby grove of trees, he cut a branch from one of the trees and fashioned it into a club. Returning to the coffeehouse, he began beating the feet of all the Karatepe men with this club.

Each Karatepean² whose feet were struck jumped up howling in pain, "Oh, my feet! Oh, my feet!" In this way each was enabled to separate his own feet from all of the others, thus they could continue their journey home

²A resident of Karatepe is called in Turkish a Karatepeli