

Story 1669 (1994 Tape 1

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Location: İzmir, İzmir  
Province

Date: May

Two Lazes<sup>1</sup> and the Pot of Gold

One day while he was digging in his garden, Temel<sup>2</sup> found a pot of gold. At first he could not decide where he should hide all of this gold. He thought and thought about the problem. He finally decided to hide it in the wall that separated his garden from that of his neighbor İdris. He therefore proceeded to make a hole in that wall and place the pot of gold in it. But even after he had placed the pot in the wall and plastered the hole shut again, he still had some misgivings about the safety of the gold. As a final step to protect his treasure, Temel placed over that part of the wall a sign which read, "There is no gold buried here."

<sup>1</sup>The Lazes are an ethnic minority living primarily in extreme northeast Turkey in the provinces of Rize and Trabzon. They have in the folk imagination become a stereotype for stupidity, though they are no different in intelligence from any other people.

<sup>2</sup>Temel is a popular male name among the Laz people. Although not exclusively a Laz name, it is so commonly associated with Lazes that any use of it immediately suggests Laz in the minds of most listeners.

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As soon as his neighbor İdris saw that sign, he removed the gold from the wall. After replastering the wall, İdris put up a new sign which read, "İdris did not take the gold."