

Story 1751 (1994 Tape 3)

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The Laz<sup>1</sup> and the Seat for Ankara

One of the Black Sea coast people decided to travel by air from Trabzon to Ankara. He bought his ticket and boarded the airplane. As he entered the airplane, he noticed the large comfortable seats in the First Class section, and he decided to take one of them

When the stewardess noticed this, she went to him and said, "Sir, you cannot sit there because your ticket is for the Coach Class.

But the Laz answered, "No, I want to sit right here I shall not change my seat.

Seeing that the stewardess was quite distressed, one of the other passengers on the plane spoke to her. "What

<sup>1</sup>Originally the word Laz referred exclusively to an ethnic minority living on the extreme eastern end of the Turkish Black Sea coast. In time, however, it came to mean any Turkish Black Sea coast resident, as it does in this tale. Lazes are stereotyped as being stupid or inept, but this stereotype (like many others) is entirely unjustifiable.

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is your difficulty? What is going on here?"

After the stewardess had explained the difficulty, that second passenger arose and went to the Laz. He whispered something in the Laz's ear. When the Laz heard whatever it was that the second passenger said to him, he stood up immediately and moved into the Coach Class section of the plane.

The stewardess was very pleased to have her problem solved, but she was also curious about how it had been achieved. She very quietly asked the second passenger, "What did you say to him that made him willing to change his seat?"

"I told him that the First Class passengers would go to Erzurum and that the Coach Class passengers would go to Ankara."