

Story #67 (Tape 198)
1961-1962

Narrator: Osman Uçtu

Location: Çukurasma Köyü, Gülnar

February 1962 #67 matchmaker (dünür)

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Nasreddin Hoca as "Dünür" (matchmaker)

There was a man in a village whose son had reached the age when young men are normally married. One day the man said to his wife, "Tell your son that it is about time he is married."

When the mother told their son that it was time for him to be married he said, "Very well, then. I should like to marry Ahmet Ağa's daughter. Go and make the necessary arrangements."

Ahmet Ağa -- daughter of
daughter -- of Ahmet Ağa

When the parents discovered that it was Ahmet Ağa's daughter that their son wanted, they decided that neither of them could act as dünür¹ for him. Ahmet Ağa was above them socially, and so they would have to get some more important person to act as dünür. They finally decided to send Nasreddin Hoca (May he rest in peace!)

Nasreddin Hoca went to the ağa's house, and after the two men had exchanged greetings, the ağa asked, "What is it that brings you here, hoca? We haven't seen you for some time."

marriage contract -- request for --
formulaic

"I have come by the order of (God) and the consent of the prophet to ask Mehmet -- son of --
for the hand of your daughter for the son of Mehmet.² He wants to sleep with her, I guess."

Prophet (Mohammed)
formulaic language -- in requesting marriage
contract

When Ahmet Ağa heard Nasreddin Hoca speaking like this, he turned him out of the house, saying, "Get out of here, you scoundrel!"

¹In Turkey a young man does not ask a girl's father for her hand. This is done by a matchmaker, known as a dünür.

²This is the prescribed opening remark by a dünür, part of a regular pattern of statements and responses for the matchmaking ritual. The sentence that follows is not part of this pattern but rather Hoca's indiscretion. Compared with the flowery language of the prescribed dialogue, it is vulgar and offensive.

The Hoca returned to Mehmet's house and explained to him what had happened at Ahmet Ağa's house. In the meantime, the young man went to the girl's mother and discussed the matter with her. He returned and reported to his father, "If you send a good man as dünür, they will give their daughter to me."

Another neighbor was sent this time. After he had greeted Ahmet Ağa, he was asked his purpose in visiting. He responded, according to the custom, "I have come by the order of God and the consent of the Prophet to ask for the hand of your daughter for the son of Mehmet."

"Very well, let it be so," said Ahmet Ağa.

Nasreddin Hoca had been hiding quietly nearby. Now he spoke out loudly to the dünür and said, "But Mehmet's son will sleep with her, anyway, no matter what words you use to her parents!"