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The Kadı and Karabaş

Once upon a time there was a shepherd who had a beautiful sheep dog called Karabaş. Karabaş was such a good dog! No matter whether the shepherd was present or not, he would protect the flock from all kinds of danger. He would never allow wolves to get near the sheep. If a wolf even approached, he would catch it and strangle it, he was such a strong dog.

One day, however, Karabaş was taken ill, and soon after that he died. The shepherd gave his dog a fine funeral, just as if he had been a human being. He had him washed and put in a white shroud and buried in a Moslem cemetery.

As there are busybodies all over the world, so there was one too in this village. He went to the kadı of the village and complained that the shepherd had held a Moslem funeral for a dog, and that he had buried him in among the graves of the faithful. "It is a sacrilegious act, and I demand that he be punished," he said.

The shepherd was summoned to court and he was asked by the kadı, "How is it that you give an unclean creature a Moslem burial and put him in a grave among the faithful? Don't you know that this is a blasphemous thing to do?"

In defense, the shepherd said, "Efendim, so great was the service of this dog to me that in his lifetime I presented thirty sheep to him in appreciation. When the dog was about to die, he said to me, 'When I am dead, kill ten of these sheep and spend the money on my funeral expenses; kill ten more and give the money they bring to the poor.'"

"That makes twenty sheep," the kadı said. "What about the rest?"

"Well," said the shepherd, "he placed the remaining ten at the disposal of the kadi of the village and said that he should do whatever he thinks appropriate with them."

Very pleased with this arrangement, the kadi asked, "What was the name of the deceased?"

When the shepherd said it was Karabaş, the kadi opened his hands toward heaven [as all Moslems do in prayer], and addressing all those present he said, "Join me, O faithful, in a prayer for the soul of Karabaş."