

Story 1119 1966 Tape 5) Narrator: Hacer Ertemli

Location: Bursa

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Kandilli¹ Is the Place

There was an old woman in İstanbul who wanted to travel along the Bosphorus by boat. When she went to the ticket counter to pay for her passage, however, she could not remember the name of her place of destination. The ticket agent asked, "Where are you going?"

"Oh, son," she said, "old age has made me so forgetful that I cannot even remember what I had for dinner last night."

While she was talking to the ticket agent, a long line of people was forming behind her of other people wishing to buy ship tickets. This made the agent impatient. He said to her, "Come on, now! Say where you are going so that all these other people may buy their ship tickets also. The ship is almost ready to leave!"

"Son, can't you understand that I am an old woman? They invited me somewhere tonight. I'll tell you about them, and perhaps you will know where they live. There is a Customs official, Ali Riza Efendi,² who lives near them, and surely

¹ Kandilli is a village on the Bosphorus.

² Efendi added to a man's name was once an honorific. The term has been so devaluated in the twentieth century that it is now applied only to servants and children.

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you must know him. Hacer Hanım³ lives on the right side of my hosts' home, and Hikmet Hanım lives on the left was describing the people of the neighborhood where she was to visit in hope that through hearing their names the ticket agent would know the name of the place. "Above my friends' apartment lives Colonel Ali Bey,⁴ who has two daughters: Handan and Candan. Below them lives Major Osman Bey, who has two sons: Metin and Çetin. My friend who lives among these people has invited me to come to dinner tonight. During the rest of the year they live in Sarıyer,⁵ but during the summer they rent a house at this other place to get a change of air. Where did they rent this house?"

"How should I know?"

A rowdy fellow behind her in line shouted, "Candle-lighted corpse!"⁶ Buy your ticket so that we may go!"

When she heard this, the old woman exclaimed, "May God bless your tongue, son! Kandilli is the place where I am going!"

³ Hanım added to the name of a woman means Lady.

⁴ Bey in very early Turkish times meant Lord or a member of the aristocracy. It is now appended to a man's name as a term of respect, roughly equivalent to Mr.

⁵ A town along the Bosphorus on the European side, 19 kilometers from İstanbul.

⁶ Apparently "Candle-lighted corpse" (Ölüsü Kandilli) is an oath and not a direct reference to the old woman. Kandil means candle, and the suffix -li make it mean with candle.