

Story 1964 (1992 Tape 4)

Narrator: Leyla Özdemir, 25

Location: Kırklareli, capital of  
Kırklareli Province (a  
Black Sea or Laz  
province)

Date: May 1992

### A Laz<sup>1</sup> Lack of Perseverance

Temel's<sup>2</sup> wife, Fadime, was a very capricious person. She very quickly became bored with anything that she undertook. She started work on various projects, but she never completed any of them. After awhile Temel became disturbed by his wife's fickleness, and so he said to her, "Fadime, I have never seen anyone else as fickle as you are. You never complete any project that you start. You started to knit a sweater but never finished it. You decided to make a dress, but after you had cut the cloth, you never sewed a stitch in it. If you continue in this way, I do not know what will become of you."

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<sup>1</sup>The word Laz referred originally to an ethnic minority living primarily in Trabzon and Rize provinces, along the extreme eastern part of the Turkish Black Sea coast. More recently the word has come to be applied to any resident of the entire Turkish Black Sea coast. In the Turkish oral tradition Laz people are stereotyped as being stupid or inept. This stereotype (like most others) is unjustifiable, for Lazes are, of course, much like other people.

<sup>2</sup>In tales about the stereotyped Laz as dummer or fool, the male characters usually have one or another of five or six very common Laz names. Temel is the name used most often, with Dursun in second place. Thus if either of these names occurs in a folktale, the audience knows at once that it is a Laz tale.

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Fadime was annoyed by Temel's comments, and she said, "If you continue to criticize me, I may drown myself!"

Temel answered sarcastically, "I doubt that anyone as changeable as you are could continue a suicide attempt long enough to kill yourself!"