

Story 1928 (1995 Tape 1)

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Location: Cihanbeyli, kaza
town of Konya
Province

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The Laz¹ Who Came in from the Storm

One day Temel² went to the home of a friend to spend a few hours. The two friends talked and talked for several hours, and finally the visitor said, "It is time for me to go home, for it is getting late." When they looked outside, however, they discovered that it had begun to rain.

Because Temel had no automobile in which to travel home, his host offered him a room there for the night.

¹The word Laz referred originally to an ethnic minority living primarily in Trabzon and Rize provinces, along the extreme eastern end 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.

²In 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. Turks sometimes extend the use of Temel to tag as stupid almost anyone, whether that person happens to be Laz or not.

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The host went at once to prepare a bed for Temel in the guest room, but when he returned to the living room, he could not find Temel anywhere. He said to himself, "I guess Temel must have decided not to remain here but to go home in spite of the rain." After a short while, however, there was a knock on the front door. When he opened the door, the host found Temel standing there with a pair of pajamas in his hand. The host asked, "Temel, where did you go? I made up your bed in the guest room, but then I looked all over for you. Where have you been?"

Temel answered, "I cannot sleep anywhere without my own pajamas, and so I went home and got them."