

Story 985 (1966 Dictated)

Narrator: Mrs. Sümer, in 90s,
the grandmother of
the historian Faruk
Sümer

Location: Aliçerçi village,
Bozkır kaza, Konya
Province (She was
in Istanbul when tale
was collected.)

Date: July 1966

Finding a Canvas-Needle

There was once a man who was in a crowded marketplace. He wanted to buy a canvas-needle,¹ but he didn't have enough money to do so. While he was walking around in the marketplace, however, he found just such a needle on the ground. It had apparently been dropped there by someone while sewing shut burlap bags. When he was sure that no one was watching him, he picked up the needle and put it in his leather pouch

This man then walked up a hill that overlooked the marketplace. It was at an hour when the marketplace was just boiling with people. Looking down, he said, "Oh marketplace, swarm with people just as much as you wish! The one looking for a canvas-needle has found it!"²

¹This is a large needle used for sewing burlap or any rough cloth, not exclusively canvas. It is as often referred to as an upholstery needle.

²The audience found this to be quite humorous. The narrator explained that this was the manner in which this proverbial expression--the last two sentences of the tale--was born. To date (9/30/87) we have not encountered this expression elsewhere.