

Story 1780 1994 Tape 3)

Narrator: Yurdağül
Diyarbakırlı, 59

Location: Malatya, capital
city of Malatya
Province

Date: October 1994

Laz¹ Dancers Descend to Basement

A group of Lazes was traveling in an airplane. In order to entertain themselves, they were performing in the aisle of the plane their favorite Black Sea coast dance, the horan.² Although the Lazes enjoyed this activity, the noise they made annoyed the other passengers. These dissatisfied passengers called the stewardess and said to her, "Please tell those dancers to be quiet. The rest of us are made uncomfortable by their noise."

The stewardess went to the Lazes and told them about the complaints of the other passengers. The Lazes

¹The 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.

²Typical of many Laz folk dances, the horan has extremely rapid rhythm.

Story 1780

listened to what the stewardess was telling them. Then they said to her, "If those people are really disturbed by our dancing, they should leave their present seats and go up to the second floor."

The stewardess returned to the other travelers and told them what the Lazes had suggested. They responded, "Why should we have to move up to the second floor? They are the ones who are making the noise and disturbing the rest of us. Why don't they go down to the basement to carry on their dancing?"

When the stewardess reported this to the Laz group, they accepted the idea. Opening the plane door, they stepped down, one after another, toward the basement.