Story 1742 (1994 Tape 2)   <u>Narrator</u>: İhsan Işık

<u>Location</u>: Olucak village,
Suşehri kaza,
Sivas Province

<u>Date</u>: January 1, 1994

<u>Laz[1] Homesickness</u>

Temel and Cemal[2] had worked in Germany for several years.[3] When Cemal had saved enough money to buy a car, he decided to drive his new car home to Turkey for a brief vacation

A month later Cemal was back in Germany again, and as soon as he arrived there, he went to visit his friend Temel. After greeting each other and exchanging what news they had to report, Temel asked, "Cemal, did you have any

---

[1]The word <u>Laz</u> now often refers to any resident of the Turkish Black Sea coast. Originally <u>Lazi</u> denoted a member of an ethnic minority in the eastern end of the Black Sea coast, primarily in Rize and Trabzon provinces. Both Laz and Lazi were unjustifiably stereotyped as being stupid or inept.

[2]<u>Temel</u> is the most popular male name among Lazes, followed by <u>Dursun</u>, <u>Cemal</u> (pronounced <u>Jemal</u>), <u>İdris</u>, and <u>Hızır</u>. <u>Temel</u> is often virtually a synonym for <u>Laz</u>. Although the name <u>Temel</u> occurs occasionally elsewhere in Turkey, <u>Temel</u> is in most cases automatically associated with <u>Laz</u>.

[3]During the last half of the 20th century more than a million Turkish workers (mainly laborers) went abroad for employment. Germany received more of these workers than did any other country.

flat tires while you were in Turkey?"

"I had just one flat tire while I was there," answered Cemal.

"On which wheel of your car did the flat tire occur?"

"It was on the right front wheel," said Cemal.

As soon as Temel heard this, he rushed over to the car, removed the cap from the valve stem of that tire, and then unscrewed the valve spring slightly. As the air escaped from the tire, Temel sucked it into his mouth with great eagerness.

Amazed at this behavior, Cemal asked, "What are you doing, Temel? What are you doing?"

With a very happy look on his face Temel exclaimed, "I am breathing the air of my native land!"