

Story 1008 (1974 Tape 23) Narrator: Behçet Mahir

Location: Erzurum, Erzurum
Province

Date: Summer 1974

This tale is extracted from
very long Tale 318. There
it used as an exemplum.

Behlül Dane¹ Remains Cool in Hell

In spite of all his endeavors, Behlül could not awaken his elder brother, who was like a badrşak, to his own situation. He saw his brother's many wrongdoings, but he was unable to make his brother fully aware of them.

One day Harun Reşit saw this blessed man of coming along the street toward him. "Where are you coming from?" he asked Behlül.

"From Hell!"

People who heard this laughed. They said, "this is the business of a lunatic! What does he mean by saying this?"

"Well, why had you gone to hell?" asked his

¹ Legendary mad half-brother of the great Abbassid Caliph Harun Reşit (Haroun al-Raschid). His feigned madness was a "cover" for his satire and moralizing aimed at the wealthy and powerful, notably the Caliph himself. Like the Jewish schlemihl, he is a saintly fool.

Story 1008

brother.

"To get warm! I felt cold. I went to get warm," said Behlül.

"Well, did you feel warm there?"

"No, I could not find any fire.

"Why?"

"Because everyone else who had gone there had taken his own fire. Not even a single spark fell upon me."²

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²That is, all the alleged flames of Hell are brought there by the sufferers themselves--within their own hearts.