

Story 1695 (1993 Tape 5)

Narrator: Sabit Uzun

Location: Trabzon, Trabzon
Province (at bakery
that was a front
for the arrangement
of call-girl appoint-
ments)

Date: June 1993

Collected by Jo Ann Conrad

The Clever Laz¹ Astronaut

After Temel² had heard about the American landing on the moon, he decided to travel even farther than the moon. He decided to travel to the sun. He said to his wife, "Woman, prepare something for me to eat on my journey. I am going to travel to the sun."

His wife answered, "Oh, Temel, you cannot go to the sun because it is too hot. You will be melted! You will be burned!"

Temel said to his wife, "Oh, Wife, you are so thick-headed! I certainly shall go to the sun, but I shall not start out until evening, when it will be cool!"

¹The Laz people are a large ethnic minority who live principally in Rize and Trabzon provinces in extreme north-eastern Turkey. They are stereotyped as being stupid or inept, though in fact they are not different from other people.

²Temel is the most popular male name among the Lazes. It is so popular that for most folktale audiences the word Temel is almost synonymous with the word Laz, though Temel is a name occasionally used by other Turks.