

Story #586 (1963 Tape #4)

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Location: Pazarören village  
Pınarbaşı kaza  
Kayseri Province

Date: Summer 1963

The Donkey Daughter Self-Condemed

A tax collector came to a certain village near here back in the days when the tax on livestock was five kurus<sup>1</sup> per head. After counting the animals in one stable, he came out and wrote the number down.

The owner of that farm had set aside one of his donkeys ahead of time in order to avoid paying the tax for him. He had put the donkey in a bed where he lay with a blanket covering him. He had covered the donkey's head with a white head scarf. The farmer's wife sat by the bed saying, "Oh, my poor father! Oh, my poor father!"

When the tax collector entered the house, he asked the woman, "What is the matter?"

"My father is very ill, and I am keeping the flies away from him," she said.

When he lifted one edge of the blanket, the tax collector saw one of the donkey's shoes. Dropping the blanket as soon as he saw this, the tax collector said, "Madam, you have a fine father. May Allah add to his years."

<sup>1</sup> The kurus is a hundredth part of a lira. As late as the 1960s, five- and ten-kurus pieces (copper coins) were still negotiable, but in the 1980s, when the lira was devaluated to the worth of one U.S. penny, the kurus became a meaningless monetary denomination. In the Ottoman era the kurus was of sufficient value so that even fractions of a kurus were negotiable. The kurus was divided into units called paras. The para was worth one fortieth of a kurus.