

Story # 63 (Tape 51)  
1961-1962

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Otaç; age 50  
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#63 Nasreddin Hoca and the Camouflaged Donkeys #63

One day Nasreddin Hoca went to the mill to have some wheat ground, for he had no more flour at his home. He went to the mill, had the wheat ground, and started home again. On the way back, Hoca wondered if the wheat had all been ground as fine as he liked it. He opened one of the bags, felt some of the flour between his fingers, and decided that some of it was too coarse.

He decided to separate the coarse from the fine by winnowing <sup>of wheat</sup> it, as he had seen men separating the chaff from the grain in threshing time.<sup>1</sup> He unloaded his donkeys, found a smooth place on the ground, and started to throw the flour up into the air. The wind was too strong, however, and much of the fine flour blew away, covering both the ground and his donkeys, which were downwind from where he stood. After he had finished separating his flour, he put it back into the bags, but then he was unable to find his donkeys. Completely white with flour, they blended into the whitened landscape. He looked in every direction, but they were nowhere to be seen. Finally, doubting his senses, he picked up one of the bags of flour, put it on his back, and walked home with it.

He reached home quite confused and said to his wife, "Woman, is there a man by the name of Nasreddin Hoca?"

"Yes, there is," she said. "It is you."

"Well, if that is so," answered Hoca, "then I have surely lost my donkeys."

<sup>1</sup>To separate the wheat from the chopped straw after threshing, workers throw both into the air while a light breeze is blowing. Being of unequal weights, the straw and the grain are blown greater and less distances respectively.