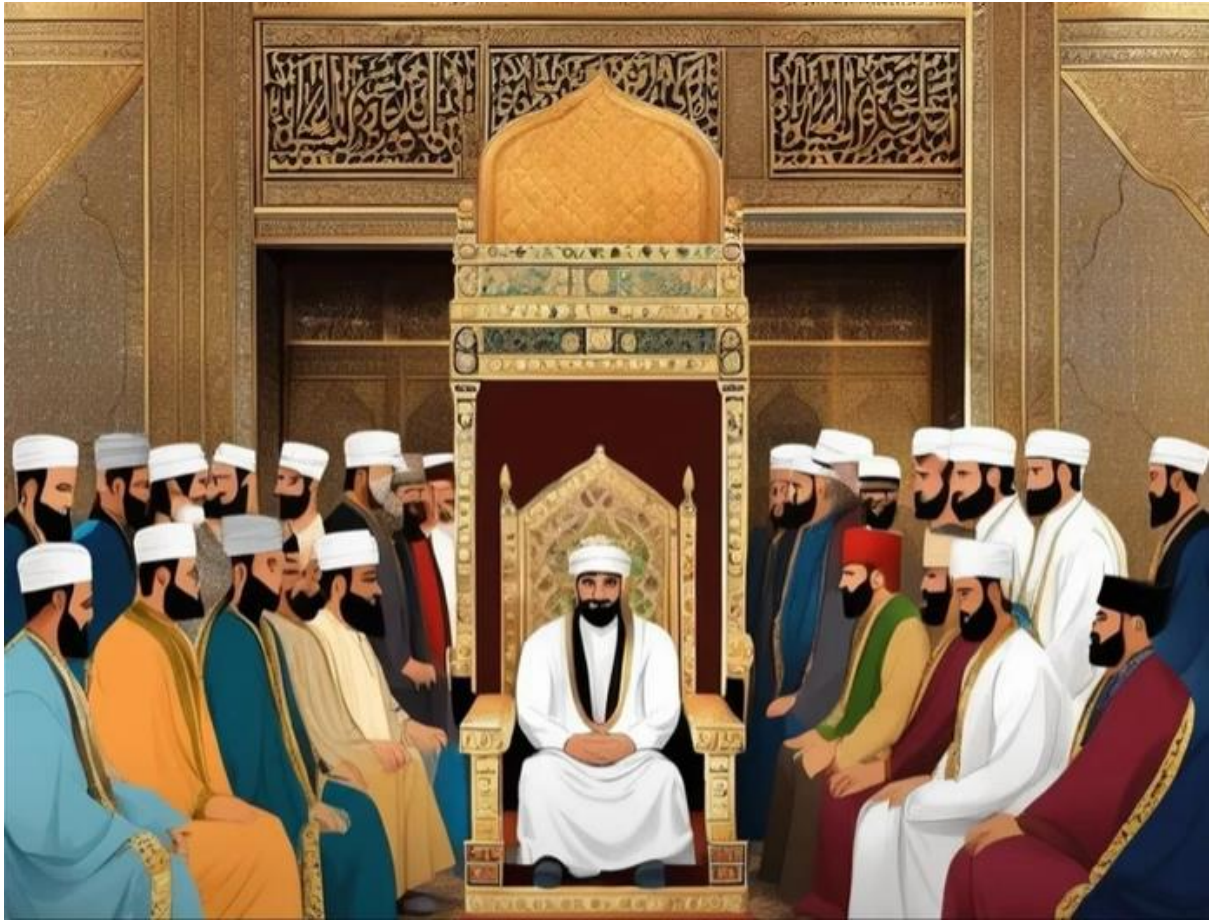


## Story 1: All this will surely pass



Story shared by: *Abdurrahman Akres*

Representing: *Refugees (Iraqi)*

### The Story:

It is said that one day the king gathered all the wise men of his kingdom and asked them to come up with a sentence to write above the throne. It had to be such a sentence that it would contain a life lesson that would apply to everyone, from the king himself to the poorest person in the kingdom. On the one hand, it should inspire people to do the right thing and be just, and on the other, it should instill optimism and hope in the darkest and most difficult moments. The king promised a great reward to the person who could find the sentence that would carry all these meanings in itself.

Wise people all over the country started thinking and discussing among themselves. How could there be a sentence that would be suitable for every situation, for every difficulty, for every person, that would express happiness and joy on the one hand and resilience against difficulties on the other? How can a single sentence convey optimism and hope on the one hand, and on the other not to get intoxicated by the riches and happiness that one possesses? Wise people have thought and thought and thought.



After a while, people returned to the palace with their suggestions. They took turns to tell the king their suggestions. Many of them said things about how strong, clever and great a leader their king was. But the king saw them as useless flattery.

Some spoke of the beauty of life, others of the difficulties of living. The king did not like any of them.

Then it was the turn of one of the wise men sitting in the back. And he said this sentence to the king:

“All this will surely pass.”

The king was intrigued by this sentence. He looked at the wise man's face, waiting for him to explain why he had suggested this sentence. The man said:

“The world will never remain the same, my king. Neither the best things nor the worst things last forever. The worst troubles, sorrows and defeats will pass and end in time. These dark days will be followed by good days, when glory will knock on the door of your kingdom, when everyone will speak of you with great praise. However, these good days will also pass and end.

What you need to do is to remember that nothing in this world lasts forever. We should not panic and despair in times of pain and calamity, and we should not be drunk with triumph in times of happiness and success. For all this will surely pass.”

The king smiled happily at the wise man and ordered this sentence to be written above the throne and all over his kingdom.

**Story Moral:** *Nothing in this world lasts forever. We should not panic and despair in times of pain and calamity, and we should not be drunk with triumph in times of happiness and success. For all this will surely pass.*

## Story 2: Test of Satisfaction and Loyalty



**Story shared by:** *Abdurrahman Akres*

**Representing:** *Refugees (Iraqi)*

**The Story:** One day a young man walked into a store and asked, “Can I use your phone?”. When the owner looked at the young man's face, he thought he was a smart and trustworthy person and gave him permission.

The young man picked up the phone and dialed a number.

...After the phone rang for a short time... a woman that sounds to be elderly answered. The store owner was standing very close by and could hear everything that was being said. The young man asked the old woman if she needed an employee. He told her that he was good at gardening, that he could take good care of the plants and keep the garden clean. But the woman refused:



“Thank you, my son, but I already have an employee who does all these jobs,” she told him.

The young man then told the old woman that he could also keep the house, wash and clean the car, and do whatever else was needed. But again the woman refused and said:

“Thank you, but as I said, I already have an employee who does all these things.”

The young man replied that he could do all this work for half the salary of her current employee. But the woman said:

“I told you, I already have an honest employee who does all these jobs skillfully. I'm very happy with him” and once again rejected the young man and hung up the phone.

The owner of the store was impressed by the conversation he witnessed. He really liked the young man's perseverance, hard work and polite manners.

“If you want to work so much, you can work here with me,” he said, offering the young man a job.

But the young man's answer surprised the store owner:

“Thank you sir, but I already have a job. The person I just spoke to on the phone was my boss. I wanted to know how satisfied he was with me and I am very happy to know that she was indeed satisfied with me”.

The store owner was even more impressed by this answer. He called out to the young man who was preparing to leave the store and made a new offer:

“If you work with me, I will pay you twice as much as you earn now. And you will do much less work than you are doing now, so you will be less tired.”

Flattered, the young man turned to the store owner:

“Thank you very much. But my boss rejected someone who could do all the work I do at half the cost, for me. She wouldn't let me go. I won't leave him either, no matter how much more money I can earn,” and then he left the store.

**Story Moral:** *“Loyalty is a very important virtue and it is mutual: if you want someone to be loyal to you, you need to be loyal to them.”*

## Story 3: The Goat Family and the Wolf



Story shared by: *Berbank Aydın*

Representing: *Kurdish Community*

### The Story:

Once upon a time there was a mother goat who lived with her 7 children. This goat loved her children very much. One day the goat was going out to find food for her children. She said to them: “Children, I am going to the forest to get food. Do not object and listen to me well. Never open the door to anyone but me. The wolf wants to eat you.” She kissed her children and went out.

The wolf was always waiting for the mother goat to leave. He loved goat meat. When the mother goat left, he went to their hut and knocked on the door:

“Hello, my babies! Your mother is here. Open the door, I have food for you.”

The baby goats were very smart and recognized the wolf's voice.

“You bad wolf! You can't fool us. Go away!” they said. The wolf tried to imitate the goat's voice and after some practice he came back to the hut. This time he said loudly, “Hello, my cubs! Mommy is here! Come on, open the door, quickly.”

The baby goats looked carefully through the hole in the door. Seeing the wolf's feet, they said, “No, we won't open! We recognize you. Your feet are different from our mother's. Her feet are white in color, not yours.”



Then the wolf immediately went to the shoemaker and asked him to cover his feet with flour. The shoemaker was surprised by the wolf's request. But because he was afraid of the wolf, he did what he said. So, the wolf's feet became white.

The wolf returned to the hut and knocked on the door, "Hello, my kids, it's me, open the door now!" he said, imitating the mother goat's voice. The baby goats looked through the hole in the door and saw white feet. They opened the door. Seeing the wolf, the baby goats started running everywhere to save their lives. Some hid under the bed, some behind the curtains. But the cunning wolf ate them all. Only one baby goat survived, hiding inside the big clock of the house. The wolf couldn't find him.

After a while the mother goat came home and was surprised to find the door open. When she entered the house, she was overwhelmed by what she saw. The whole house was turned upside down and none of her babies were there. Crying bitterly, she said, "Oh my babies! What happened to all of you? Why did you open the door to a stranger? The wolf has won the battle. I have lost my cubs!"

Meanwhile, the baby goat hiding in the clock spoke: "Mom! Can you hear me? Take me out of the clock." The mother goat took her baby out of the clock and kissed it many times. The baby told its mother everything that happened.

Then they heard a wolf snoring somewhere around. The mother goat said, "The wolf must be around here somewhere. Bring me the long scissors." The baby goat brought the scissors. The snoring was coming from the garden. They went to the garden and found the wolf sleeping. The mother goat slowly approached the wolf and cut open his belly. She found her babies alive and took them out one by one. She hugged and kissed her children. Then she told her children to find stones and bring them. They brought the stones and put them in the wolf's stomach. Then the mother goat sewed up the wolf's belly. Then the mother and her cubs went back to their hut. After a while the wolf woke up and felt thirsty. He got up and went to the well to drink water. Because there were stones in his stomach, he could not keep his balance and fell into the well with a great noise.

**Story Moral:** *"Children need to listen to their parents and shouldn't let strangers in or trust them"*

## Story 4: The Most Comfortable Bed



eeded was not an expensive and comfort  
soft sheets or fragrant feather pillows.

Story shared by: *Hatice Hanım*

Representing: *Kurdish Community*

### The Story:

Once upon a time, a poor family living in a small village had a very beautiful daughter. The beauty of this girl became legendary and was heard even in the neighboring villages and towns. The son of the richest family of one of the neighboring towns also heard about this beauty and wanted to marry the girl. The members of this rich family loaded their camels with gold and gifts and came to ask for her



hand in marriage. The poor family agreed to this marriage both because of their own poor financial situation and so that their daughter could live in better conditions.

After the wedding, the man took the girl to his majestic home. The house was extremely luxurious, with servants, the finest furniture and silk beds in it. As the days and weeks passed, the man noticed something. His wife was going to bed next to him at night, but she could not sleep in that comfortable bed. Every night they went to bed together, but when the man woke up in the middle of the night, he would find his wife sitting in a corner, not sleeping.

The man was very upset about this and wondered why. He asked his wife why she couldn't sleep and if she had ever had this problem before. She replied that she did not have such a problem in the past, that when she was at her father's house, she used to sleep very comfortably all through the night. And now, she didn't know herself why she couldn't sleep.

The man did everything he could to improve the situation. He changed her bed, which was already very expensive, with the most comfortable mattresses, put the softest sheets on them, and sprayed the feather pillows with the best scents. But no matter what he did, it didn't work and she couldn't sleep at night.

One day the man had an idea. He said to his wife:

“Get ready, I'll send you to your father's house, stay there for a few days and catch up with them.”

His purpose was to follow her secretly and see how she slept in her father's house and try to understand why she could not sleep in his house. He disguised himself and followed his wife to her father's house and spied on them through the window.

In the evening, they set a modest table at home, they had dinner while sharing a warm conversation, and it was time to go to sleep. The man expected the family to make their beds and go to sleep. However, this did not happen.

The father sat on the floor in a corner and the mother slept with her head on his knees. The eldest brother put his head on the mother's knees, and so on. The whole family slept on the floor with their heads on each other's knees. His own wife also slept on the floor, resting her head on her brother's knees.

The man continued to watch by the window until morning. His wife slept soundly until morning without waking up. When morning came and everyone woke up, the man could not stand it and knocked on the door. His wife opened the door and was surprised to see him there. When she asked him why he was there, he explained his reasons.

The man finally understood why his wife couldn't sleep. What she needed was not an expensive and comfortable bed, soft sheets or fragrant feather pillows. On the contrary, she could sleep very comfortably on a carpet on the floor, surrounded by the family she loved. After all, she had been used to it since she was a little girl, and for her, this was what was comfortable and safe.

From that day on, the man realized that to make his wife happy, money, possessions and property were not the things that were important. First, he won her love and trust, and then he tucked her in every night on his knees, stroking her hair, while she slept soundly until the morning. After all, the most comfortable bed was wherever you are as long as you are with the one you love.





**Story Moral:** *What matters most in life as well as in a relationship is love, trust and peace of mind. In most cases, these things take shape early in life through habits and childhood memories.*

## Story 5: The Old Lady and Her Children



Story shared by: *Hatice Hanım*

Representing: *Kurdish Community*

### The Story:

There was a very old and poor woman living in a remote village. She lived with her daughter and her son. Her daughter was in her wedding age and her son was of the age of military service. In that village, after the crops were harvested, the bottom parts that remained in the soil was called “ears” and because the winters were harsh, the poor villagers would collect these ears in the fall. They would make flour and bread for the winter. They also gathered brushwood from the forest for both heating and cooking.

One year, this old lady decided not to make these preparations for winter. When her neighbors went to harvest wheat and ears, she did not go. When her neighbors gathered brushwood in the fall, she did not. The neighbors thought this was strange and asked her about it:

“Auntie, it's fall and you haven't gathered the brushwood, you haven't harvested your wheat. Why?”

“Well,” said the aunt, “what am I going to do with them? My son will go to the army anyway. And the girl will get married. I am too old anyway, I will die. What are we going to do with all the ears and brushwood?”

Days came and went like this and finally winter came. And what a winter! You know how they say black winter, so cold, so hard. The old woman did not die. Because the roads were blocked by snow, the boy did not receive his draft notice and he did not go to the army. The girl didn't get married either.



The food in the house finally ran out and they were left hungry and thirsty. The fuel in the house ran out and they were left in the freezing cold. The lady realized that the situation will not do, so she took her kendir (thick ropes were called kendir in that region):

“Come on, get up, my children,” she said to her children, ‘show me which way is Shiğra’ as they used to call bushes and brushwood shiğra there.

Of course, in the middle of that black winter, under the snow, there were neither ears of wheat nor brushwood to collect...

From that day on, whenever someone does not do what they should do on time, does not take the precautions they should take with their own excuses and justifications, the story of the old lady and her children was told in that village. A way of saying “be careful, fulfill your responsibilities before it is too late, and don't be like them”...

**Story Moral:** *People should fulfil their responsibilities on a timely manner and be prepared for difficulties taking all the precautions on time. If they don't, it may be too late to do anything and the costs might be significant.*

## Story 6: Dieterli: The Man on the Moon



Story shared by: *Heidi Banker*

Representing: *Non-Muslim Community*

### The Story:

On a bright night when the moon was huge and shining, a father and his son were in their home chatting. The moon attracted the boy's attention and he asked his father:

“I wonder what is there?”

The man replied:

“Oh, didn't you see that man over there?”

“Of course I saw him,” replied the boy, unperturbed. “And what is he doing there?” he continued.



Since they live in an area full of forests, “he cuts down trees like us and turns them into firewood all night long,” the man replied.

“But why is he doing it there?” the boy asked, “If it were me, I would do it here, without leaving our village. Where is he from, is he from our village too?”

The father realized that he had a chance to teach his son a valuable lesson, when the boy continued his questions with curiosity. “Do you think he does this on purpose?” he said. “He is there as a result of what he has done all his life”. And he began to tell the story of the man on the moon:

“He drank too much. He was imprisoned on the moon and forced to do this day and night.”

“But why?” asked the boy, “What did he do to get such a punishment and who sent him there?”

The man continued:

“His name was Dieterli. He was a lazy, mischievous man. He was always drinking and wandering around. He never prayed or worshiped. He had no time or intention to work. Because he never worked and always wanted to drink, he turned to wrong ways. He used to steal and spent some time in prison. But then he escaped from prison and went to another town and continued his same life.

One Sunday, when all the townspeople were in church, he took his axe and went into the forbidden forest and cut down the most beautiful trees there. But the trees for firewood were different, and it was strictly forbidden to cut down the trees in this forest. But he didn't care, he cut them down and tried to sell them without anyone seeing.

But just as Dieterli was returning home, he heard a voice. This voice said to him very sternly:

“Dieterli, stop! You have always gone the wrong way! But you will not go that way anymore and you will come with me!”

After that, Dieterli suddenly disappeared. When the townspeople realized that trees had been cut down in the forbidden forest, they looked for him everywhere, but he was nowhere to be found. And one day they realized that he is now the moon and he has to stay there by himself, all alone. Now he just works all day and all night long. And he can't drink at all because there is no liquor on the moon!

He is paying for his choices and actions with this punishment.”

Horrified by what he heard, the boy cried out:

“No, I don't want such a punishment in my life!”

The man replied in a calm tone:

“Then you know the path you must take for yourself. You will work hard, pray and do not go astray. If you do these things, you will not need such a punishment.”

**Story Moral:** *People bear the outcomes of their choices and actions in life. If they make good choices, work hard and act doing good deeds, their lives will turn out OK. If they make bad choices, be lazy and irresponsible, they will suffer the consequences.*





<https://digifolk.eu/>

## Story 7: Stories of Bararom



One day two brothers were sitting by the window of a café, watching the passers-by and chatting.

Story shared by: *Yücel Tural*

Representing: *Roma Community*

### The Story:

One day two brothers were sitting by the window of a café, watching the passers-by and chatting. They saw an interesting kind of dog walking past the café. The younger brother asked his brother, “What an interesting dog, what kind is it?” But he didn't know either. A few minutes later, a rare car passed in front of them again. The younger brother again turned to his brother and said, “Look, what a cool car. What brand is it?” he asked. However, the older brother did not know this either and said to his brother with a laugh:

“You ask me everything you don't know as if I would know for sure. Who do you think I am, Bararom?”

The younger brother grimaced:

“Bararom? What does that mean?”

The older brother was surprised by his brother's answer:

“You really don't know about Bararom? First of all, don't say 'what', say 'who'. Bararom is an important figure of Roma culture. You can think of him like Nasreddin Hodja or Temel from the Black Sea jokes. In stories inspired by the nomadic life of the Roma, Bararom is the person who is consulted about new and unknown things encountered in the places they visit, who is believed to be experienced, but who actually does not know these things himself.”



“What do you mean?” said little brother.

“I'd better tell you a Bararom story or two, that way you'll understand better,” replied his older brother.

“One day, when the Roma were visiting a new place, they came across a field of eggplants and were trying to figure out what this plant was, which they had never seen before in their lives. They started arguing among themselves:

“What is this?”

“It was planted, but how was it planted?”

“How did something so tall come out of the ground?”

“I'd say a cucumber but it's not a cucumber...”

Then they decided to take an eggplant they had plucked from the field to Bararom, thinking, “If anyone knows what this is, it is Bararom.”

Bararom looked at the eggplant and said:

“You are so many people, don't you know what this is?”. When the Roma said, “By God, we didn't know,” Bararom said, “Shame on you. What you see is a baby starling with unopened eyes.”

“Well, he didn't know either,” grumbled the younger brother, “how is he an expert, this Bararom?”

That's the joke, Mr. smarty pants,” said the older brother. “If the man said 'this is an eggplant', would there be any point in telling this story? Look, let me tell you another one:

One day, while the Roma were traveling, they saw an abandoned horse cart in a barren place. It was a horse-drawn cart in ruins with broken tires. This time they started circling around this cart. Since they usually traveled with donkeys and the carts they used were different, they could not recognize what this was. Finally they said, 'If anyone knows this, it is Bararom. Let us consult Bararom again'. They went to Bararom and asked him: “We saw something in the middle of a large plain, but we couldn't understand what it was. We want to ask you what it is.

They took Bararom and returned to the cart. They pointed to the cart and said, 'This is what we were wondering about and didn't know what it was'. Bararom again got very angry with the Roma and said very confidently, 'You spend so much time with me, I teach you everything and you don't know what this is? When the Roma said, 'So what is it?' Bararom replied, How can you not know this? This is a baby dinosaur whose flesh is eaten and bones are left.”

“That's funny,” smiled the little brother. “So, Bararom doesn't know either, but even when he says absurd things, he makes people around him believe him with his confident demeanor, is that it?”

“Yes,” said the older brother. “In fact, Bararom is both an entertainment element of the Roma culture and a reminder that what someone says should not be immediately accepted as true just because he speaks confidently in an environment where no one knows the truth. So, you better be careful and when you don't know something, instead of relying on Bararoms, do your own research with the right sources.”





**Story Moral:** *What someone says should not be immediately and automatically accepted as true just because they speak confidently. Instead, people should search for truth from reliable and trustworthy sources.*

## Story 8: Mice and the Cats with a Bell



Story shared by: *Zeinap Almuslim*

Representing: *Refugees (Syrian)*

### The Story:

Once upon a time, there was a young, strong and agile cat living in a house. This cat would not allow mice to enter the house. No matter what the mice did, they could not enter the house. Then, one day the cat got married and left home for a while. The mice took advantage of the cat's departure and settled in the house. In the absence of the cat, they moved around the house as they pleased, eating and drinking whatever they wanted.

But after a while the cat returned home with his new wife. The mice, worried about losing their comfort, put their heads together and started to think: "What are we going to do, how are we going to defeat these cats and continue our comfortable life? If we couldn't even deal with one cat before, how will we deal with two cats now?"

If they tried to fight, they knew the cats were stronger than them. If they tried to run away, they knew the cats were faster than them. If they left home, they knew it was too hard for them to live on the streets.

Then one of the mice had an idea:



“If we can somehow attach bells to the cats' necks, we can hear their voices from a distance and escape before they come near us.”

Of course, it was difficult and risky to get close to the cats and put these bells on them. Thinking about how they could do it, they came up with a plan. They decided to form a team and put the bells around the cats' necks at night while they were sleeping. First, two mice went outside the house and brought the bells. Then, while the mice on the watch kept an eye on the cats, another two mice were in charge of the task of quietly bringing the bells to the cats. When the mice on the watch reported that the cats were asleep, the operation began. Everyone did their job and the mice put the bells around the cats' necks without waking them.

From that day on, life in the house was just as the mice expected. Thanks to the bells, they could understand where the cats were and when they came near them. So they lived happily and safely in that house.

This adventure of the mice has also shown everyone this: the challenges, rivals or enemies you face may be stronger, faster or superior to you. But if you use your wits, make a good plan and work carefully on your plan in cooperation with those around you, you can still defeat them!

**Story Moral:** *The challenges, rivals or enemies people face may be stronger, faster or superior to them. But if they use their wits, make a good plan and work carefully on their plan in cooperation with those around them, people can still defeat them!*

## Story 9: Oil Merchant and Soap-maker



Story shared by: *Nadir Alhalil*

Representing: *Refugees (Syrian)*

### The Story:

Once upon a time, there was an oil merchant who lived in a remote village. This man was very greedy and what he wanted most was to be rich. So he used to cheat to sell more oil. He would mix cheap and bad oils with good oils so that he could sell cheaper than other oil merchants. Since the people in the village were poor, they would buy from him the most because he sold the cheapest oils.

Time after time, a soap-maker came to the village. He needed to buy oils to make soap. He came to this man's shop and said he wanted to buy the best quality oil. But the oil merchant gave him some of his fraudulent oils again. So he asked for a cheap price. After a few days, the soap-maker gave the oil merchant some soap as a gift because he had made a large profit.

When the oil merchant used these soaps for a while, he started to develop severe itching and skin diseases. When he went to the doctor, he found out that these problems were caused by the soap he had used. Then the oil merchant said to himself:

“Woe to the dishonest man who gave me bad soap! I will report him to the Kadi (Judge)! He will see the day!”

The oil merchant went to the Kadi, explained the situation and complained against the soap-maker. The Kadi then ordered all the soap-maker's goods to be collected and examined by experts. He said that whoever disregarded people's health would not go unpunished.



The soap maker's products were collected, examined and the result was conveyed to the Kadi. The day of the court came. The Kadi first looked at the document in his hand, then at the oil merchant and the soap-maker standing in front of him. Then he said:

“It is understood. The health of innocent people has been harmed by the use of fraudulent products. The person who did this will be punished immediately and banned from trading again!”

The soap-maker was very ashamed and embarrassed about what had happened. The oil merchant, on the other hand, was listening to the Kadi with a triumphant smile on his face, thinking that he had made the soap-maker punished. The judge continued his words:

“Immediately this oil merchant will be thrown into prison, all his goods will be confiscated and he will be forbidden to trade again! As for the soap-maker, he is free to go.”

The oil merchant was shocked by what he heard.

“But how can that be, sir? I am the one who has been victimized here, who has lost his health. He is the one who produced the product!”

“Yes, but you are the one who produced the fraudulent product, the oil that was put in the soap!” said the Kadi. Upon further investigation, it was found that only the soaps made with the oil bought from the oil seller were defective, and that the problem lay with the oil.

The oil seller, who thought he could get away with his greed and immorality, realized that he was wrong. He lost his health, his freedom, and his property. The soap-maker, who had always been honest, once again learned from this incident and continued on his way.

**Story Moral:** *Honesty is a very important virtue, both in personal life and professional life. Greed and dishonesty may bring short-term gains to someone, but in the long-run greedy and dishonest people will never get away with it and pay a hefty price.*

## Story 10: The story of the Arrogant Frog and the Ox



Story shared by: *Hatice Erkavi*

Representing: *Refugees (Syrian)*

### The Story:

Once upon a time there was a frog and an ox. One day the frog saw the ox standing by a pond. The ox was drinking water from the pond. The frog saw that the ox was drinking too much water, not getting full, keeping on drinking. So the frog said:

-THAT'S NOTHING! I CAN DRINK LIKE HE DRINKS! EVEN MORE THAN THAT!

Then the frog went to the pond and tried to drink all the water in it. As the frog drank the water, he started to inflate like a balloon and then suddenly he bursted! The frog's arrogance was his undoing. He forgot that everyone has their own characteristics and that no one is like anyone else; he entered into a race with someone else in his own mind and ended up in this situation while trying to overtake him. The frog, in fact, has many qualities that are superior to the ox, but he succumbed to his arrogance and died trying to prove that he was superior to the ox in everything.



**Story Moral:** *Arrogance is a dangerous and harmful vice. It's harmful to see oneself in a giant mirror and try to compete with everyone in everything. Instead, one should know his/her strengths and weaknesses and never forget that everyone has their own characteristics.*

## Story 11: Dream of the Cruel Sultan

Story shared by: *Mahabat Akin*

Representing: *Kurdish Community*

### The Story:

Once upon a time, in a distant land, there lived a sultan. This sultan was very cruel to his people and treated them like slaves. He would destroy people's houses and seize their property by force. The people living in this land could not open their eyes because of this cruelty.

But one day, something unexpected happened. The sultan said to his soldiers, "Tell my people that I will no longer oppress them, I am setting them free."

The soldiers traveled to the cities and villages one by one and announced this news. The news was greeted with great happiness by the people, children played in the streets and the people celebrated as if it were a holiday.

The sultan had a vizier who was closest to him. This vizier was very surprised by the sultan's sudden decision and asked himself: "Our sultan was so hard to his people, he was such a cruel ruler. What has changed in one day that this man has become such a good person?"

The vizier appeared before the sultan and said, "My sultan, forgive me, but I want to ask you a question."

The sultan said "go ahead".

"My sultan, you used to be so harsh and cruel, you used to give the people a lot of hardship. How did you suddenly decide to give them so much freedom?"

The sultan began to tell his story: "One day I went to the forest alone. There I saw a shepherd grazing his sheep in a pasture. There was cheese and bread in his bag and I secretly took the bag without the shepherd seeing. The shepherd was hungry until the evening. When I went to sleep that night, I dreamt of the shepherd whose bag I had taken. That shepherd beat me very badly until morning. He beat my body from side to side. It was such a dream that I thought I was going to die and this fear lasted until I woke up in the morning. Finally, he said to me, 'Even if you are a sultan, those who oppress will be oppressed, and oppressors will eventually pay for their cruelty.' When I woke up, I vowed not to oppress my people anymore and to be a good and just sultan."

**Story Moral:** *Cruelty and oppression of people would sooner or later be met with cruelty and oppression. Leaders should treat their people in a good and just manner.*







## Story 12: Inheritance for 3 Brothers

Story shared by: *Ismail Bey*

Representing: *Kurdish Community*

### The Story:

A rich man in a village had 3 sons. When this man died, all his property was left to these 3 sons. His sons had great difficulty in sharing the inheritance of the man who had many fields, gardens, estates and properties. Especially the youngest son did not agree to any sharing and always wanted a bigger share. No matter how hard the elder brother and the middle brother tried to come to an agreement, they could not convince the younger brother.

When a growing animosity between the brothers emerged, one of the village elders came up with an idea. He said that there was a kadi living in one of the neighboring villages who was influential and highly respected. He said, "Go to him and tell him your situation, and he will give you the fairest solution for sharing the property."

Unable to reach a solution among themselves, the brothers accepted this idea and set off for that village. On the way, they were chatting among themselves. They saw the footprints of an animal that had passed by before. The elder brother looked at the tracks and said:

"Brothers, the animal that left these tracks is a camel."

The middle brother said:

"This camel carries tar on one side of its saddlebag and oil on the other."

The youngest brother said:

"Brothers, this animal is a blind camel."

As they were talking, a man came running up to them and asked, "I lost my animal, did you see it?"

The older brother asked, "Was your animal a camel?" The man said "yes".

The middle brother asked, "Was there tar on one side and oil on the other side of the camel's saddlebag?" The man said "yes".

The younger brother asked, "Well, was your camel blind?" "Yes, he was blind," the man replied.

After all these questions, the man said, "Since you know all this, you have my camel. Give me my camel!"

The brothers said they had not seen the camel, but the man was not convinced and said, "You took my camel. How else can you know all this? You will come with me to the kadi in the next village!" he insisted. Since the brothers were already on their way to the kadi, they agreed and all of them went together.



The man said to the kadi, "I have a complaint against them. They stole my camel and now they deny it. When I asked them, they told me a lot of information about my camel. If they had not seen my camel, how could they know these things?"

Then the kadi asked the brothers: "If you did not see the camel as you say, how did you have this information? Explain!"

The elder brother said:

"I knew it was a camel without seeing the animal, because camels make their feces differently from other animals. I knew it was a camel because I saw it."

"Okay," said the judge. He turned to the middle brother and asked him how he knew the animal's load. The middle brother said:

"Sir, as you know, it is spring. Flies were landing on one side of the road the camel had traveled, but not on the other side. Flies go to oil, but not to tar. That is why I came to this conclusion."

"Okay," said the kadi and turned to the younger brother. "You explain, the biggest doubt is on you. How did you know the animal was blind without seeing it?" The little brother said:

"Sir, the camel had only grazed on one side of the road. It did not touch the fresh grass on the other side. If it was not blind, it would have grazed on both sides. That is why I knew it was blind."

"Okay," the kadi said again, turning to the man who had complained: "these men did not take your camel. Go on your way, look for your lost camel".

Thus, all three brothers were relieved. They were convinced that this man was indeed a fair and wise person and they explained why they had come there. When the kadi realized that his guests were smart and intelligent people, he said, "You have come from the road. First have a meal and fill your stomach. Then we will decide your case."

The food was prepared, the table was set and the three brothers sat at the table. The kadi left the room and started to listen and watch the brothers from behind the door.

After the kadi went out, the elder brother said:

"Brothers, the meat in this dish is not mutton, it is dog meat."

The kadi was very surprised to hear this, but he continued to listen. Then the middle brother said:

"The woman who made this dish is a sick woman." He did not eat the food either. Then the younger brother said:

"Brothers, the most troubling thing is that this kadi we have come to is not the son of the person he knows as his own father." Hearing this, the kadi could not stand it any longer and went inside. He turned to the brothers and said:

"What kind of people are you? You were guests at my table, and one of you said that the meat I served was not mutton but dog meat. Another one of you claimed that the woman who cooked the meal was sick. The youngest of you said that I was not the son of the person I knew as my father. These are very shameful and heavy accusations. Either you prove these allegations or I will have you all beheaded."



“Okay,” said the elder brother. “Go and question the butler who slaughtered this animal, you will see that what I say is true.”

Kadi sent for the butler and said “I told you to go and bring mutton for my guests, but which animal's meat did you bring to the kitchen?” At first the butler was scared and denied it, but then he told the truth:

“By God, sir, I was too tired to go to the flock and slaughter a sheep. I slaughtered one of the dogs in front of the door and delivered it to the kitchen.”

Then, to investigate the middle brother's claim, he went to the woman who cooked the food and questioned her. She replied, “Yes, sir, I am sick.”

Finally, the kadi went to his mother to investigate the younger brother's claim. Although his mother did not agree at first, she finally said, “Yes, my son, the person you think is your father is not your real father”. “Because your father was a respected agha, we had to hide this fact, and we didn't tell you,” she continued.

When all the allegations proved to be true, the kadi went back to his guests and asked them one by one to explain how they had understood what they had said.

The elder brother said:

“Unlike mutton, dog meat is not meant to be fried, it changes color when fried. That is how I understood it.”

The middle brother said:

“I didn't see love in the food. A person who makes a dish puts love into it, but a person who is sick cannot put love into it. That's how I understood it.”

The judge turned to the younger brother: “Yours is the most troublesome. How did you know that I was not the son of the person I knew as my father?”

“Mr. Kadi, our culture teaches that a man who does not sit at the table with his guests cannot be the son of an agha. You didn't share your table with us, that's how I knew.”

After listening to all this, the kadi said to the brothers:

“All right, misters. You have come this far and made conclusions based on your observations. Now I will do what you want and divide your father's property between you. All the property and land on the upper side of the stream belongs to the elder brother. The property and land below the stream belongs to the middle brother.”

The brothers were very surprised because they had not told the kadi about the location of the properties before. But in fact, the kadi already knew the brothers' father and knew where the everything were. The younger brother was very surprised and angry:

“You divided all the property among my brothers. What about me?”

“Don't say anything,” said the kadi. “If you had accepted your rightful share from the beginning, you wouldn't even need to come here to me. But you were greedy, you thought you were smarter than



your brothers, so you tried to get more than your share. That is the outcome of greed and arrogance. So get up and go your way.”

**Story Moral:** *Greed and arrogance are harmful vices. People should be fair and humble, especially to the people they love.*



## Story 13: Agha's Daughter

Story shared by: *Kumri Keskin*

Representing: *Kurdish Community*

### The Story:

Once upon a time, an agha had a daughter. She was a very beautiful girl. One day three suitors came to ask for the hand of this girl in marriage. Neither the girl nor her father knew any of them beforehand.

The girl said to her father, "Father, if you allow me, I will put them through a small test and then I will choose one of them."

When her father gave permission, she put a plate of raisins in front of each of them. Then she started to watch.

One of them chewed the raisin crunchily together with its seeds. "No, not him," said the girl. "He has no manners like a mule".

The other took the seeds out and put them aside. "No, not this one either," she said. "He's like a savage".

The last one swallowed the seeds and ate the raisin. "He is the one I'll choose," she said. "This is a man of honor and good manners."

**Story Moral:** *Manners of a person are very important and they give important clues about their personality. Having good manners is always a big advantage for a person.*

## Story 14: The Story of Zerka Zera

Story shared by: *Kumri Keskin*

Representing: *Kurdish Community*

### The Story:

Once upon a time, there was a girl named Zerka Zera who lived with her mother in a village. One day she went to fetch water from the fountain and one of the village women said to her:

“Zerka Zera, you have seven brothers, why don't you ever visit them?”

The girl was very surprised. “No, I don't have any brothers,” she replied.

“No,” said the peasant woman, “you have seven brothers, but your mother has obviously hidden them from you. When you go home, tell your mother that you know the truth and find out where your brothers are.”

As soon as the girl returned home, she went to her mother and said:

“I have seven brothers. Tell me, where are they?”

At first the mother denied it, but when the girl insisted, she said, “Yes, it's true, but they are so far away and in such a bad place that I don't want to send you there, I can't do it to you.”

The girl stubbornly insisted, “No, I want to see my brothers, I will definitely go to them.” The mother agreed to tell the girl where her brothers were.

The next morning her mother made a mud donkey for Zerka Zera and added:

“My daughter, if you ride this donkey, it will take you to where your brothers are, right up to their house, but don't pay attention to what you see and hear and don't get off your donkey. If you get off, know that it will instantly turn into mud.”

Zerka Zera said “okay” and set off. After a while, she saw something shiny on the ground and forgot what her mother had said and got off the donkey. Of course, the donkey immediately turned into mud. She ran back home crying. “Mom, mom, my donkey has turned to mud!” she said. Her mother got angry and said, “Daughter, didn't I tell you? Why don't you listen to me?”. Zerka Zera calmed her down by saying, “Mommy, I promise I will listen to you this time.” So her mother set to work again and made another donkey from mud. She sent her daughter off on it.

The donkey walked and walked, taking her far away from home. This time she obeyed her mother and never got off the donkey. After a long time the donkey brought her to a hut on the top of a mountain. Zerka Zera got off the donkey. The donkey became mud again. She knocked on the door and said to her brothers, “I am your sister Zerka Zera.” Her brothers said, “Dear sister, why have you come here? This place is not safe, it is not good for you.”

“No, I came here to live with you and I will not go back to my mother,” she insisted. They had to say “okay”. “But if you are going to stay, you have to listen to us. You can stay with us and take care of our



housework. Look, we have a fireplace over there. That fireplace is the only fire we have, and that cat is the cat of our house. And that fig over there is this cat's fig. Don't you dare eat the cat's fig or the cat will pee on our fire and put it out.”

“Okay,” said Zerka Zera.

In the morning, her brothers went hunting and the girl started cleaning and cooking. Days passed like this. After a while, while she was working again, she saw a fig on the ground, forgot her brothers' warnings and put the fig in her mouth. When the cat saw this, it urinated on the fire in the fireplace and put it out. When the girl saw this, she began to beat her knees and said to herself, “What am I going to do, if my brothers come in the evening and don't see the fire, they will be very angry!”

She went out and looked around, and somewhere in the distance she saw the light of a fire. When she looked closer, she realized that it was coming from a cave. She approached the cave and saw three giant women baking bread by the fire. When she got there, she wept and sobbed and told them what had happened to her and asked for a pinch of fire. But the women said, “We can't give you any of our fire, each of us has a limited number of embers. Our giant husband would notice immediately and be very angry with us.” But Zerka Zera insisted and begged the women, crying. Finally they could not bear it and each gave her a tiny ember from their fire. So the girl took the fire and went home.

After a while, the giant returned from the hunt and as soon as he arrived, he roared, “I smell humans here, were there humans here?” The women denied it, saying, “No, no, no,” but the giant didn't believe them at all. “A human has definitely passed through here. Tell the truth quickly!” and the women told him what had happened. They also showed him which direction she was going. The giant followed her scent and came to her door. He knocked on the door and said, “Quickly give us back the fire you took or else!” “Can I keep it? We don't have any other fire and I need it to cook my food,” the girl begged, afraid to open the door. The giant said, “No, it is not possible, either you give me back my fire or you give me your pinky finger through the door hole, I will come every day to suck your pinky finger and draw your blood.” The girl accepted what the giant asked. The giant sucked the pinky finger the girl handed him through the door hole. The next day he came again and again asked for the finger and sucked it. This went on like this for days. Every time the giant sucked the girl's finger, the girl's spirit seemed to be drained, her color faded, and she grew weak. When the girl's brothers noticed this, they asked her, “My lamb, are you sick, don't you eat enough, what's wrong with you?” She insisted, “There is nothing wrong with me, I am fine.” Her brothers didn't believe her, so they devised a plan among themselves.

In the morning, Zerka Zera's brothers went out hunting as usual, but in fact the eldest brother hid in secret and waited. Then the giant came and asked for her finger. When the girl held out her finger, the giant immediately sucked it. The girl became pale and weak. Seeing this, the eldest brother could do nothing out of fear. The giant went on his way.

The brothers left the second brother on watch the next day. But he too covered in his place out of fear. Each day they left another brother behind, but none of them could do anything against the giant. Finally they decided that they should do it all together. This time when the giant appeared, they all came out of hiding and attacked him. Finally, they chopped off the giant's head and killed him. They buried his head in a field near the house and said to their sister, “Sister, learn this field well and don't go there. Don't pick any of the herbs that grow there and bring them to our house or bad things will happen to your brothers.” “Okay,” said Zerka Zera, and they went on with their lives.





Months passed, and one day Zerka Zera went out to gather herbs around the house to cook, but she couldn't find any. Finally, she came to the place where the giant's head was buried and saw that it was covered with the most beautiful and lush herbs she had ever seen. Zerka Zera could not resist and picked enough grass for one evening's meal. She went home and cooked it well, and when her brothers came in the evening, she put it in front of them and they ate it with great appetite. As soon as they ate, they turned into calves. Realizing what she had done, the girl began to beat herself up. Crying, she said, "What have I done? I didn't listen to my mother or my brothers, whatever happened to me happened because I didn't listen!"

Resigned to her fate, she began to take care of her brothers in this way from then on. She drove them ahead of him and took them to graze. A man came along and said, "What happened to you, my child? Why do you look so troubled?" Zerka Zera told him what had happened to her. The man calmed her down and hit the backs of the calves one by one with the stick in his hand, and they all returned to their old selves. Zerka Zera cried with excitement and joy and said, "My dear brothers! I will never disobey you again, I will act wisely" and the story ended.

**Story Moral:** *Children should listen to and obey their families when they are warned about something. Disobedience leads to harm.*

## Story 15: Two Goats

Story shared by: *Nadir Alhalil*

Representing: *Refugees (Syrian)*

### The Story:

Once upon a time, there were two goats named White Goat and Black Goat. They lived in two houses side by side in a village full of trees and green grass. But these two goats were always fighting with each other and never got along well. They were always in competition with each other and both of them always wanted to surpass the other. When one of them did something good, the other would not congratulate him, on the contrary, he would be jealous and belittle the other's success.

One day both goats went for a walk to a neighboring village. Then their paths crossed over a narrow bridge. The White Goat was coming from one side and the Black Goat from the other and they met in the middle of the bridge. The bridge was wide enough for only one goat to cross. Both goats were arguing that they should cross first and neither would back down.

Their argument became more and more intense and finally turned into a fight. As the two goats fought each other to cross first, the wooden bridge was shaking. Eventually the bridge could not withstand the shaking and collapsed. So both goats fell into the river and drowned in the current. In fact, if they had let each other cross the bridge in turn, both would have survived, but because they chose to be stubborn and fight, they both perished.

**Story Moral:** *Jealousy, stubbornness, fighting and competition only to prove that you are better than somebody are harmful vices. Instead, one should be able to congratulate others when they are successful and cooperate with them when it is in their advantage to do so.*

## Story 16: Leyla and the Wolf

Story shared by: *Hatice Erkavi*

Representing: *Refugees (Syrian)*

### The Story:

One day Leyla wanted to take food to her sick grandmother. She put the food her mother had prepared in a basket and set off. There were two different ways to get to her grandmother's house. The longer one was a safe and quiet road. The other was a shortcut, but fraught with many dangers. Her mother advised Leyla to take the longer, safer route and to avoid the dangerous one.

But Leyla said to herself, "What can happen? Wouldn't it be better to take the shortcut and get to my grandmother's house right away instead of taking such a long way?" and took the shortcut.

On her way, she met a friend and told her that she was on her way to her grandmother's house to bring food to her sick grandmother. Meanwhile, a wolf hiding behind the trees was listening to Leyla and her friend's conversation. Learning Leyla's destination and path, the wolf acted fast and went to her grandmother's house before Leyla and ate the sick and old woman. Then he made a plan to wait for Leyla who was coming there. He disguised himself as Leyla's grandmother and laid in her bed and waited for her.

After a while, Leyla came to her grandmother's house. Finding her grandmother lying in bed, Leyla asked her, "How are you, grandma, are you okay?" The wolf tried to imitate the old woman's voice and said "I'm fine, my child". However, Leyla noticed something strange in her grandmother's voice and asked her:

"Grandma, why is your voice so strange?"

"Because I am sick," the wolf replied.

While talking to her, Leyla started to get closer to the bed and noticed that her grandmother's nose looked different and asked her:

"Grandma, why is your nose so big?"

"To smell you better," the wolf replied.

"And why are your ears so big?" asked Leyla.

"To hear you better," replied the Wolf again.

Growing suspicious, Leyla asked one more time:

"And why is your mouth so big?"

Suddenly jumping out of bed, the wolf shouted "so I can eat you more easily!" and grabbed Leyla and ate her too.



Meanwhile, a hunter passing by heard the shouting and came to the house. Finding the wolf in the house, dressed in the clothes of an old woman, he killed the wolf and pulled Leyla and her grandmother out of the wolf's stomach.

**Story Moral:** (i) Children should listen to and obey their parents. (ii) It is better to take the safer path even if it is longer than to take a dangerous shortcut. (iii) Speaking loudly in public might be dangerous as there are bad people with bad intentions who may hear you.



## Story 17: Story of Adlo

Story shared by: *Kumri Keskin*

Representing: *Kurdish Community*

### The Story:

Once upon a time there was a village. There was no water in this village, so they carried water from a cave. One night when there was a full moon and it looked bright, a woman named Adlo woke up from her sleep. She thought it was time for the morning call to prayer, so she went to the cave to fetch water. It turned out that the jinns were having a festival in the cave at that time. They were laughing and playing and dancing. But Adlo could not see this, so she went into the cave as she always did. When she walked, she stepped on the jinn babies.

Seeing this, the jinns immediately grabbed Adlo and disemboweled her, then laid her on the ground and started dancing around her. As they danced, they sang this song: *“Adlo thinks it's morning, but our rooster keeps crowing.”*

The elders of the jinns appeared and got angry with them: *“Why are you doing this to this poor woman? Stop”*. They said, *“This woman crushed our baby, so we are punishing her.”* The elders said, *“You are jinns. How could the woman see you? She stepped on the child by mistake. She only came to get water. Quickly sew up her belly and put it back the way it was.”* Thereupon the jinns left her on the ground like that.

Meanwhile, Adlo's husband woke up, it was time for the morning prayer. When he looked around and could not see his wife, he realized that she had gone to carry water. So he took his rifle and headed for the cave. As he got closer, he saw some people playing games at the entrance of the cave. He realized that the disemboweled person lying on the ground was his wife. He secretly took the child of one of the jinn and threatened them: *“If you don't sew up my wife's belly and return her to me safe and sound, I will kill your child.”* The jinns begged him and said, *“Give us our child now and we will cure your wife.”* But the man refused. He said, *“Treat her first and give her to me, then I will give you the child.”* They accepted the deal, stitched up her stomach and carried her home. The jinn promised never to come near them again. When time passed, Adlo woke up and asked her husband if he saw what happened to her. Her husband said *“yes, yes, I saw them too”*. But two days later Adlo passed away.

**Story Moral:** *This is a scary story told to children to warn them of the dangers of going into caves that they didn't know about by themselves, particularly during the night.*



## Story 18: Did the man have a head?

Story shared by: *Yücel Tatal*

Representing: *Roma Community*

### The Story:

While the Roma were traveling, they came across a place full of caves and dens. The Roma were very curious and wanted to satisfy their curiosity. They saw a 50-60 cm wide cave and convinced the thinnest of them to reach inside and take a look. While he was going in, the others told him that they would hold him and if anything dangerous happened, they would pull him out if he kicked his feet.

The man reached in, but there was a bear inside. Seeing the man and his torch, the bear tore off the man's head with one strike and dropped it. When the man struggled for his life, those outside pulled him out.

They looked at the man they pulled out and thought that something was missing and started to argue among themselves: "When we put this man here, was he or was he not like this?" As the discussion continued, 'Did this man have a head or not?' they said, 'If anyone knows, it would be his wife,' and called his wife. When they asked her: "Did your husband have a head or not?" she replied: "I know he had a mouth, because he talked a lot. But I don't remember if he had a head."

**Story Moral:** *Roma are a nomadic and curious people who enjoy making fun of themselves. This is a funny story they tell to satirize both their lifestyle and the husband-wife relations.*



## Story 19: The Blind, Deaf and Mute Bride

Story shared by: *Abdurrahman Akres*

Representing: *Refugees (Iraqi)*

### The Story:

Once upon a time, there lived a pure and pious young man. One day, when he was very hungry, he was passing by a road with many orchards full of apple trees. The branches of the apple trees were hanging over the street. Thinking, "If I eat one apple, there will not be much missing from the whole orchard," he plucked an apple from one of the trees to satisfy his hunger and ate it.

But when he returned home, he regretted it very much. "How could I eat an apple that did not belong to me without the permission and approval of its owner?" he lamented. Increasingly remorseful, the young man set out to find the owner of the apple tree and ask for forgiveness. When he went to the garden where the apple tree was located, he saw an old man there. He went up to the man and told him that he had plucked an apple from his garden, that he regretted not asking his permission to do so, and asked for forgiveness.

However, the owner of the garden was very harsh with the young man and said: "You ate my apple without my permission, and I will not forgive you until the Day of Judgment, and I will complain against you before Allah."

The young man then began to beg the man to forgive him. He said he was ready to do whatever it took to get him to forgive him. However, the man turned his back on the young man and entered his house. The young man was determined not to leave until he forgave him and waited for hours for the man to come out again. Finally, when the man came out again, he saw the young man waiting for him and approached him. The young man continued to beg and plead: "Uncle, please forgive me. I am willing to work in your garden for the rest of my life without asking for any wages to compensate you for your loss!"

Saddened by the young man's plight, the old man began to soften. He thought for a while and said: "My son, I am now ready to forgive you, but on one condition."

The young man was delighted, his face lit up with happiness and he said: "I accept whatever your condition is, just forgive me."

So the man said: "My condition is that you marry my daughter."

The young man was very surprised. For someone who is young and single like him, this was not a terrible condition.

"But," the old man continued, "you should know that my daughter is blind, deaf and mute. And I am looking for a trustworthy person who will accept her as she is."

The young man agreed without hesitation. The old man then invited the young man to his house on the following Friday for the wedding. When the wedding day arrived, the young man came home. After the wedding ceremony, the young man and his wife went into their room together. When the



young man lifted the veil of the wedding dress and saw his wife for the first time, he could not believe his eyes. She was the most beautiful woman he had ever seen. When she greeted her husband, he was even more astonished.

Realizing the young man's astonishment, the girl asked him why. The young man replied that his father had said that his daughter was blind, deaf and mute, and that he was surprised to see that she was not. The girl replied to her husband as follows:

“I am blind to forbidden and evil things, I do not see them. I am mute to gossip and evil talk, I do not speak them. And I am deaf to forbidden and evil words, I do not hear them. After my mother died, my father raised me alone and wanted a husband to entrust me to. He said to me, 'He who fears the sin of a single apple that is not lawful for him would be very afraid of upsetting and wronging my daughter. That is why he allowed me to marry you.’”

**Story Moral:** *One should never take something that is not his/her without the permission of its owner. If someone makes a mistake, they should do whatever is necessary to fix their mistake.*





## Story 20: The Boy in the Cemetery

Story shared by: *Nazif TUTAL*

Representing: *Roma Community*

### The Story:

Once upon a time, a gang of 4-5 horsemen were passing through a cemetery when they heard a child crying in the cemetery. As the gang passed by, the child stepped on the road from the cemetery. One of them took pity on the child and said: "They have forgotten this child, let's take him with us, it is a pity he is crying" and took the child on his horse.

The person who took the child on his horse rode at the back and the other horsemen rode 15-20 meters in front of him. Then the horse of the person who had taken the child started to go with difficulty. The man bent down and looked at the horse's feet and saw that the child's feet reached to the ground and he was braking the horse with his feet. The horse could not go and stopped. The man called out to his friends behind him. The other gang members looked back and saw that the little boy was even bigger and taller than the horse.

It turned out that the boy (believed to be a demon) had a certain distance limit from the graveyard and they exceeded that limit. Then, with the morning call to prayer, the boy disappeared and they never saw him again.

**Story Moral:** *This is a scary story told to children to make them afraid and keep them off cemeteries.*

