

Story 7: Stories of Bararom



Story shared by: *Yücel Tatal*

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.*