

## **Nearly Nonsense: Hoja Tales from Turkey**

Rina Singh



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Nasrudin Hoja was a mullah (teacher) in Turkey. He was a busy man – he worked in a vineyard, gave sermons at the mosque, and was sometimes even a judge. He did all of this with a nagging wife, a constant stream of uninvited visitors, and many animals. Although Hoja's life wasn't easy, his heart was always light and his observations about life held a witty twist. For instance, when his donkey got lost, his neighbors offered sympathy, but Hoja found the bright side: "Imagine if I were riding the donkey at the time. I'd be lost too!"

Though the ten Hoja stories presented by Rina Singh and richly illustrated by Farida Zaman are funny, each one contains such insight into human nature that Sufi teachers use them to illustrate their teachings. Traditional Turkish Hoja stories are much-loved throughout Asia, and **Nearly Nonsense** brings them to a North American readership sure to enjoy them and, through laughter, to learn from them.

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