



Tuncer at the Cheese Shop
by
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- Inspired by a true story -

Once upon a time in Istanbul, there lived a 13-year-old boy named Tuncer, who had an extraordinary passion for cheese. His father, Bahattin, owned a charming cheese shop where Tuncer eagerly helped with sales. Tuncer, with his smart and cute demeanor, became a favorite among the customers.

One fateful day, Tuncer achieved a remarkable feat by selling 23 bins of cheese before 1 pm, out of the 40 bins they had in total. Bursting with pride, he rushed to share the good news with his dad.

Upon hearing the accomplishment, Bahattin smiled warmly but then surprised Tuncer with an unusual request. "That's great, Tuncer. But I want you to do something for me. Go to the cheese shop down the street and ask them how many bins they sold today."

Tuncer hesitated, questioning the logic of visiting their competitors. However, trusting his dad's judgment, he obliged and set off to the neighboring cheese shop owned by Yorgos, a friendly man with a big smile.

After Tuncer inquired about their sales, Yorgos, looking somewhat surprised, revealed that they had only sold 4 bins out of 60—a slow day for them.

Ecstatic with the comparison, Tuncer hurried back to share the news with his dad. However, Bahattin shocked him with a perplexing request, instructing him to divert customers to the other shop, claiming they had more cheese.

Confused and disappointed, Tuncer questioned the decision. "But dad, why? That doesn't make sense. We have more cheese, and we need to make money."

"Trust me, Tuncer. There is a reason for this. Just do as I say," his dad replied.

Reluctantly, Tuncer followed his father's instructions, directing customers to their competitor's shop. The customers were bewildered but complied, favoring Tuncer and his dad's recommendation.

As a result, Yorgos' shop flourished with activity, while Tuncer and his dad's shop remained eerily quiet, with no cheese sold.

Feeling despondent, Tuncer questioned his dad's decision, wondering if it was a mistake. However, as they closed their shop at the end of the day having only sold 25 bins, they encountered Yorgos, who approached them with immense gratitude.

Yorgos thanked them for their unexpected generosity, explaining how they had saved him from potential losses. Overwhelmed with appreciation, he gave them a box of luxury chocolates as a token of gratitude.

Perplexed, Tuncer asked Yorgos why his dad had made such a sacrifice. Yorgos, with a smile, explained a valuable lesson about the camaraderie among true merchants.

"The lesson is that there is no competition between true merchants. We are not enemies. We are friends. We are partners. We are in this together. We share the same passion. We share the same customers. We share the same market. We need each other. We support each other. We help each other. We make each other better."

Tuncer and his dad were deeply moved by these words. They realized that, in helping their neighbor, they had fostered kindness, generosity, and friendship within their community. Grateful for the lesson learned, they thanked Yorgos for the chocolate and invited him to share dinner with them.

As they walked home together, talking and laughing, Tuncer felt a renewed sense of happiness and pride. He now understood his dad's decision and cherished the lesson about the importance of kindness, generosity, and friendship in the world of business. And, to top it all off, he had enjoyed the best chocolate ever, a sweet reward for the unexpected joy they had brought to their neighbor's life.