



Talmud Tales – Session 9 – Muted Passions

BT Kiddushin 81b

Rabbi Hiya bar Ashi used to prostrate himself in prayer and say: “May the Merciful One save me from the evil impulse!” One day his wife overheard him. She said: “Given that for several years he has abstained from me, why is he saying that?”

One day he was studying in his garden. She adorned herself, passed by, and came before him. He said to her: “Who are you?” She said: “I am Charuta. I returned today.”

He propositioned her. She said to him: “Bring me that pomegranate from the top of the tree.” He jumped up and brought it to her.

When he came home, his wife was lighting the stove. He went and sat inside it. She said, “What is this about?” He said, “Such and such happened.” She said to him: “It was I.”

“Nevertheless,” he said to her, “my intention was to transgress.”