

Story 1850 (1981 Tape)

Narrator: Niyazi Özden

Location: Melekli village,
İğdır kaza,
Kars Province

Since time of
recording, İğdır
became capital city of
new province of that
name.

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The Reformed Gambler and Alcoholic

There was once a man in one of the villages of Kozan¹ who was badly addicted to gambling and alcohol. He would come home late every night drunk. He had lost all of his money in gambling. As a result of this bad behavior, he was continually fighting with his wife. Finally, when she could no longer stand this, she said to him, "I shall divorce you unless you change your way of life and renounce gambling and drinking." When it reached that point, the man promised to reform and become a better husband than he had been. "I shall stop gambling and drinking and devote myself to the work of Allah."

The next day while that man was walking in the forest, he came upon a large jar containing a small amount of water. Taking the jar home, he informed people in his village that the water in the jar could cure many kinds of illnesses. He revealed also that the water

¹Kozan is a kaza town in Adana Province.

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level in the jar remained the same no matter how much water was taken from it.² He said that he was providing this water by the will of Allah and that he therefore could not take any pay for it. He did, however, agree to accept any gifts that people might offer him.

Sick people began going to this man's house to drink some of that water, and all who drank it were cured of their illnesses. Those who were given this treatment testified to the accuracy of the claim that the water was constantly replenished by some unknown source. We were told that even the wife of the commander of the military forces at Adana was cured of some kind of sickness by this water. My aunt was another one of the people who benefited from its healing power.

The owner of the jar kept it half buried in the ground in his garden. Many people wondered what it was that constantly replenished the water in the jar. Some thought that he used some principle of physics to replace water taken from the jar. Others thought that the owner simply dumped water into it when nobody was looking.

²The narrator gave no indication of how the protagonist acquired these pieces of information.