

Story 871 (1961-62 Tape 72) Narrator: Hasan Özgürbüz

Location: Kula, a kaza town of  
Manisa Province

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The Invulnerable Kadı<sup>1</sup>

One day when a kadı was very busy, a citizen of the area called at his office. This citizen came with two mules, riding one and leading the other. The man had come to file a suit with the kadı against such-and-such a person. He complained that the man had caused serious damage to his crop, and the plaintiff wanted to recover his losses from the offender. The kadı accepted his petition and listened to his complaint but then said, "I am very busy with several earlier cases, and it may take months before I can get to your case."

The plaintiff said, "As long as my case is tried, and as long as I recover my losses, the timing is not important. The man then left the kadı's office

Three months later the man called again. He said, "Kadı Efendi,<sup>2</sup> what has happened so far with my case?"

<sup>1</sup> The kadı was a judge of canonical law in pre-Republican Turkey. He was thus a religious as well as a judicial figure.

<sup>2</sup> Efendi is a complimentary and honorific term once applied to distinguished men. In recent years its prestige has been so devaluated that it is now applied only to children and servants.

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"Nothing," answered the kadı. "I have not been able to get to your case yet. I have your petition here on my desk, and it should not be very long before I start notifying witnesses of the time they should appear here. Please leave me now and come back later

Three months later the man returned again to the kadı's office, but the kadı was not there. He was on leave, for it was a holiday. The plaintiff therefore returned home.

After still another three months, he was back at the kadı's office, and this time the kadı was there. He said, "Kadı Efendi, what has become of the case I filed so many months ago? You said that you would inform us when witnesses should appear, but we have heard nothing from you. What has happened?"

"My son, your case may take a long time to decide. Wait a bit longer."

"How much longer?"

"Wait three months more."

The plaintiff went away and reappeared exactly three months later. This time he had made up his mind to speak harshly to the kadı in order to get some action. Entering the kadı's office, he said, "Kadı Efendi, do not utter a word. I shall speak this time before you say anything. If you do not

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start my case this time, and if you do not conclude it, and if you do not have me reimbursed for my losses, I am going to ride on your religion and lead your faith away behind me!"

As he said that, a court attendant rushed at him, asking, "Just a minute, sir. What was that you just said?"

"Don't interfere I am speaking to the judge."

"Well, what did you say to him?"

"I said, 'If you do not start my case this time, and if you do not conclude it, and if you do not have me reimbursed for my losses, I am going to ride on your religion and lead your faith away behind me.'"

"You spoke well," said the attendant, "but this kadı has neither religion nor faith!"