

Story 1415 (1989 Tape 7)

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Boarish Fanatics and Fanatical Boars

There was a hoca¹ who was a very heavy smoker. Just chance he was assigned to serve in a village where no one else smoked. The people there tried in various ways to make the hoca give up smoking, but they failed in all of their attempts

That village lay in a very fertile valley. Everything there was very green. There were trees growing almost everywhere, and there were many gardens in and around the village. One day one of the villagers tried another means of making the hoca stop smoking. He said, "Hoca, most of us in this village plant tobacco around the edges of our gardens. We do this in order to keep wild boars away from our gardens. As you know, tobacco smells very bad, and the boars are repelled by its stench."

But the hoca was a very clever man. He responded, "Allah, O Allah! I have often heard about boarish fanatics,² but this is the first time that I have ever heard about fanatical boars."

¹A Moslem preacher.

²The Turkish word around which this wordplay is constructed is softa, which may mean either theological student or religious fanatic. Because it ends in wordplay, this tale belongs in a special category of anecdotes known as nüktes.