

Story 1722 (1993 Tape 3)

Narrator: İhsan Işık

Location: Olucak village,  
Suşehri kaza,  
Sivas Province

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Nasreddin Hoca<sup>1</sup> from Bismillah<sup>2</sup> to Hatim<sup>3</sup>

Nasreddin Hoca's next-door neighbor was married to an attractive woman. She was so very attractive, in fact that comments about her beauty were in the mouths of everyone.

One day Nasreddin Hoca's wife came home and said to her husband, "Oh, Hoca, whenever our next-door neighbor speaks to his wife, he first says, 'Bismillah!' You never say anything like that to me!"

Nasreddin Hoca smiled and responded, "If I had such a beautiful wife, I should express my feelings not just with a bismillah but with an entire hatim!"

<sup>1</sup>A hoca in Ottoman times was both teacher and preacher. After the establishment of the Republic in 1923, religion became secular, and the hoca was thereafter primarily a religious leader and preacher. Nasreddin Hoca, of Ottoman origin, was and still is the most popular comic figure of Turkish folklore.

<sup>2</sup>"In the name of Allah!"--the opening word of the Koran. This is uttered by many faithful Moslems at the beginning of any undertaking.

<sup>3</sup>Hatim means a reading or recitation of the entire Koran.