



Greece | Athens

“Eleni, her aunt and the evil eye”

Have you ever been given the evil eye, whether because of envy or great admiration? I have. Well, actually I don't believe in such things, but last week I was at a party and the next morning I was totally wiped out! Oops, I thought, probably drank too much; it'll be fine. But the headaches just didn't go away; I felt tired and listless. Oh, I forgot to mention it was Sunday and my mother had invited my aunt, a thirty year-old modern and independent woman, to dinner. When my aunt saw me, she said: “You've been given the evil eye. I'll exorcize it!”

That's just what I need! I thought to myself. I felt so bad that, honestly, I wasn't in the mood for such crap. But you couldn't stop my aunt. She went to the kitchen, took a cup and filled it with a little water. Then she took another cup and poured a little oil into it. And then she began the exorcism: In the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit for Eleni, she said, and made the sign of the Cross over the cup filled with water. I began to find this quite exciting and wanted to see how it would continue. Then I heard her say: “Jesus Christ conquers and makes all evil disappear.”

And she poured a drop of oil in the water. She did this again twice while uttering a few more invocations, which I didn't really understand. “There, you see”, she said at last, “I knew it: You were possessed by the evil eye; the oil has completely dissolved in the water.”

“To protect yourself against it in future, you must wear a blue amulet in the form of an eye. Here”, she said, “it's my gift – it's quite in vogue just now.”

In the afternoon then I felt somewhat better and so didn't argue with the idea of the amulet, though I didn't really understand what all this with the blue amulet was about and why blue-eyed people passed on the evil eye. Oh, and then my aunt said that, in addition to wearing the amulet, you could also protect yourself against the evil eye by hanging some garlic in the corner of your flat. But that's quite another story.

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