

“OLD WINE”

The Mentalism Trick That Fooled Einstein!

What follows is Al Koran's handling for “Old Wine” from “Greater Magic.” Al Koran was a genius at reinvigorating tired, old tricks that other magicians had long since forgotten or given up on, so it is only fitting that it was with one such effect that he fooled one of the greatest scientific minds in history – Albert Einstein. Ironically, it was a simple, mathematically-based trick that fooled him.

Old Wine

While “Old Wine” trick employed cards, Al Koran performed it with money. In his hands, this simple old parlor trick took on new life and was as baffling to his audiences as any mystery they witnessed.

Let us set the stage. He would have a large bowl filled with coins – all of the same denomination. After calling on a volunteer to assist him, Koran would have the spectator reach into the bowl and grab a handful of coins. Then, he would do the same. He would look at the person's hand or sometimes touch it with his own, as if “weighing it.”

Koran would count the coins in his own hand. He would then say to the spectator; although it was impossible for him to know how many coins the person had taken, he would make three statements and they all would prove true.

- 1) “I will take the same number of coins.”
- 2) “I will have six more than you.”
- 3) “And I will have enough to make yours 15.”

At this point, he would then have the spectator openly count his/her coins back into the receptacle. Let's say, for example, the spectator had 14. Koran would count 14 coins from his own hand and say, “Same as you. Right?” His first statement had proven true.

Next, he would remind the person of his second statement, “Six more.” He would count off six more coins. “The second statement had proven true as well.

Koran would then repeat his third statement, "And enough to make yours 15. You had 14, so one more makes 15." He would drop the last coin in his hand into the receptacle and show his hand empty. With that done, all three statements had indeed been proven correct.

Fooling Einstein

In Al Koran's own words: "Whilst playing at the Savoy, I finished my act and the manager said someone asked me to join them at their table. It was Albert Einstein, the mathematical genius. He leaned over to me, very personally, and asked? 'Where in the world did you get those extra coins... did they come from your sleeve?'" I replied, "No, it's simple, a child can do it." Koran then proceeded to repeat the trick for Einstein at his table and fooled him again! He then told the great man, "It's not the numbers – but the words that fooled you."

HOW IT WORKS REVEALED

When you count your coins, mentally subtract the 2nd statement (in this case six – it can be less) from your total. The amount left after you subtract is the number of coins used in your third statement. This means in the above example, you would have had 21 coins to start.

If you repeat the trick, just vary the number used for the second statement. That's it! That's the trick!

It DOESN'T matter how many coins the spectator takes, so long as you have more. If the spectator has too many (which is rare), you can have the person transfer some coins to the other hand and then eliminate one hand using a magician's choice before you start.

When someone had a handful of coins that was overflowing, Al Koran would say, "Do you mind letting the hanging ones drop?" This always got a laugh and helped assure he had more coins in his own hand.

ADDITIONAL THOUGHTS

With regard to the properties, a large clear bowl is best. Keep in mind, instead of coins you can use virtually any object, as long as it's small and uniform in size – poker chips, golf tees (for golfing

banquets), etc. Of course, the effect also works with playing cards. If you do use coins, use a denomination that's easy to multiply in your head on the fly. In the US, dimes are perfect, as are 10-pence (10p) coins in the UK. That way, when you get to the "third statement," you can articulate it in "dollars and cents," "pounds and pence," etc. So instead of saying, "And I will have enough to make yours 15." You can say, "And I will have enough to make yours \$1.50 (or £1.50)."

Don't let the simplicity of this effect put you off. The key here, like most all magic and mentalism, is showmanship. The fact that Al Koran used this effect at a prestigious venue, like the famed Savoy in London, tells you just how highly he thought of it. Try it and see for yourself just how strong the reaction is.

Enjoy!