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The Wind and the Sun

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The blustering Wind was stalking up and down an open field one day, rejoicing aloud in his great strength. "Oh, I am strong, indeed!" he roared. "I breathe, and the grasses bow down before me. I wave my hand, and the reeds and the bushes bend or snap. I can break even the stout tree branches, merely by taking hold of them. Oh, yes; I am strong! Who is stronger?"

As he stopped and his rough, roaring tones died away, a gentle voice said: "I am strong, too. Perhaps stronger than you; who knows?"

"Who is that?" roared the Wind.

"It is I, the Sun," said the same mild voice.

"You strong!" said the Wind. "You! with your soft ways and gentle smiles! Can you move mighty windmills? Can you, with a few touches, raise the wild waves upon the ocean? Can you break the strong oak, the king of the forest?"

"I am strong!" said the Sun again. "I can do many things that you cannot do. Shall we try our strength? There comes a traveler, wearing a heavy cloak. Let us see which of us can force him to lay it aside, and agree that the one who does, shall be called the stronger."

The Wind could not help giving a pleased whistle at this easy task, for he thought that he should probably get the traveler's cloak off by one strong gust.

"You can try first" said the Sun.

Away went the Wind. He met the traveler near the middle of the field and began to tug at the cloak. It flapped about a little, and the traveler fastened it more securely. The Wind tugged again and howled fiercely. The traveler took the edges of the cloak in his hands and wrapped it closely around him. Again the wind puffed and pulled and tugged. The bottom of the cloak fluttered, but the man only held it more and more closely about him. "Who would have thought there was such a wind today?" said the traveler, as he struggled on.



The Wind kept trying for some time, but without success; and he was quite ready to give up when the Sun claimed his turn.

"I don't see how you can do anything at all!" said the Wind; "for my angriest howls and my roughest pulls have only made him hold his cloak the more tightly."

"I had not meant to try that way," replied the Sun. "Anger and roughness are not what I shall use." Then the Sun smiled down upon the traveler. Not a sound was heard; but softly, steadily, silently, the Sun kept shining. The traveler, who had been using all his strength to keep his cloak about him, now found the air quiet again, and walked on more easily. Soon he loosened his hold of the cloak. The Sun kept on shining, softly, steadily, silently; and the traveler began to think his cloak too thick, so he unfastened it and threw it open. Still the Sun kept on shining, softly, steadily, silently.

At last, the traveler said: "How strange! A little while ago I felt that I could not hold my cloak too closely, and now I am glad to throw it off entirely." So saying he took off his heavy cloak and sat down under a tree to cool himself in the shade.

And the Wind saw and acknowledged that the quiet Sun was indeed powerful and had won the title of "the stronger;" for without noise, without bluster, without anger, the Sun had succeeded in making the traveler take off his cloak when the Wind had found it impossible.

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