



THE NORTH WIND AND THE SUN

The powerful north wind was blowing over the land and people in its way were closing their window shutters to hide. It was really a very strong wind. It could tear trees apart if it desired or muster a blizzard that covered the entire country in snow in just a few moments. Out on the open sea, it could create waves so high no fishing boat stood a chance against them, and on such days, fishermen didn't even bother to leave the shore. Even migrating birds would fly elsewhere to avoid it because flying against a wind so powerful would cost them all their strength.

One day, the north wind, blowing high above the ground, met the sun and started mocking the golden disk, boasting about its unrivalled power.

“You better move out of my way or I'll blow you so far away you will never shine on this land again!”

But the sun had no intention to let the wind talk down to it and the two began arguing which of them was more powerful. Neither of them was willing to budge until they saw a pilgrim walking along a dusty road down on earth. The wind wanted to create a dust storm to prove his strength, but the sun stopped it and they made a bet: the one who would first manage to take the coat off the pilgrim would be considered the strongest.

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So the wind began blowing under the pilgrim's coat. First from one side, then from the other. Every time the coat flew up but never enough to leave his owner completely. The angry wind kept blowing stronger and stronger, but instead of blowing the coat away, the pilgrim grew cold and held on to his coat even tighter to keep warm before deciding to hide under an overhanging rock. Soon the wind became weary and finally gave up, admitting to the sun that it couldn't take the pilgrim's coat off.

The sun didn't say a single word, just smiled. When the wind calmed down, the pilgrim set off again. He left his shelter and started walking down the dusty road. The sun climbed high to the sky, which was without a single cloud now that the wind blew all of them away. It kept smiling at the pilgrim, silently watching his journey while he was getting warmer and warmer and soon undid his buttons. While his teeth chattered with cold just moments ago, now he was starting to sweat. The sun was smiling more and more and finally, the pilgrim was so hot, he had to take off his coat completely.

Then the sun turned back to the wind, saying nothing and smiling on and on.