

# *The Straw that broke the Camel's Back*

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There was a straw, once. She was long, pretty, shiny, smooth, golden and very, very hollow. She admired strength.

"O, how I admire strongness," cried the straw. "I find it so vigorous! So exciting! So useful!

She also didn't like to walk.

"Oh, how tiresome it is to walk," she moaned in her high, hollow voice—and she did have a point, for walking with one leg, no knee and no foot is difficult indeed. The only way for the straw to get around was to call on the wind to whisk her through the air.

One day as she was sunbathing a camel lumbered by, laden with heavy parcels. It struggled and strained under the weight, for its master cared not a fig for the beast. The straw did not see the suffering of the poor animal; she only saw the camel's great strength.

"Ah, what a mighty creature," exclaimed the straw. "What strong legs—all four of them! And what a wonderful back. So arched! So lumpy! So very humpy! O, how I would love to ride on this magnificent creature and be carried along like the Queen of Straws!"

So she called out: "Wind! Wind! Whisk me upwards into the air!"

Hardly were the words out of her mouth when a breeze lifted her up and spun her into the air.

"O Wind! Wind!" cried the straw, looking down from the heights. "Land me on that camel's back. Then I shall be the Queen of Straws!"

Gently the wind let her down, and gently, ever so gently she landed on the highest parcel piled on the camel's back.

The camel stopped. The camel quivered. SNAP!—the camel's back broke! Down the packages fell with a crash, the straw tumbling after and landing in the dirt.

“What a useless creature!” exclaimed the straw, jumping up and dusting herself off.  
“Why anyone bothers with camels I do not know. I shall never ride one of those again.”

But that wasn’t true. To this day, this very same straw lands on camels of all kinds – and when she does, guess who pays the price?!

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