

A Camel's Eyes Saved the World—a short fairy tale by Victoria Fong

Once upon a time, there was a little girl who lived in a very big city. It was a pretty city, and full of bustling activity. It was hard for the little girl, whose name was Vickie, to keep up with all the chores she had to do. She had to buy food, cook it, eat it, and take it off again all day long. The next day, and every day after that, she had to get up and do the same thing all over again.

Pretty soon, Vickie got tired. She wanted to take a trip. She heard that she could go to a pretty fantastic place in the world. She had never heard about this place before, and it had a funny spelling. It had a lot of O's and C's in the name, and it was hard to remember. She never imagined that she would go there, because she also heard that it was a scary place.

Every day, she thought about this place. It sounded magical to her, the more she thought about it. The only thing that kept her from going, was one requirement. She had to draw. This terrified her, as she didn't know how to draw. Every time she looked at other people's drawings, they looked better than anything she could ever do. She remembered that, the more she tried to draw, the less she wanted to show what she drew.

One night, Vickie had a dream. She was riding a camel. When she got off the camel, the camel looked at her with big eyes. The camel's eyelashes were so big and so beautiful, that she fell in love with the camel. The camel continued to stare at her, until Vickie could no longer remain silent. She told the camel, "oh, you are such a beautiful animal. I wish I could draw you so I could remember you forever."

"Do not worry, Vickie" said the camel.

"Haven't I taken you from where you were to where you wanted to go?"

"Yes" affirmed Vickie.

"Well, silly girl, didn't you trust me to take you all this time to where you wanted to go?" asked the camel.

"Yes, but I didn't want to go at first" admitted Vickie camelishly (she wasn't riding a sheep).

"Well, then you must trust me. You can draw me, even if it's not what others think is beautiful. It's only what you think about me and what you remember that matters."

"I guess I could try."

The camel blinked slowly, then said to her wisely, "go to Morocco. You will find a way to draw. If you do not go, you will never do it."

Vickie looked at the camel's slow, deliberate actions. It chewed the bay leaves slowly, and its mouth frothed with each bite. It didn't bother to swallow the leaves, as the pungent flavor made it stop to think about life and Vickie's predicament. Hmm, the leaves tickle my nose, thought the camel. But I'd better do something to help this poor child.

"Well?"

"Well, what?"

"Are you going to draw in Morocco?"

"If I could only draw you, I would be happy that I could remember you. You have the most beautiful eyes of any living being. That would be my wish."

"Then go, child, as you will have your wish."

And Vickie went. She drew. She remembered. And she conquered.