**Camel’s Hump by Rudyard Kipling Analysis**

Rudyard Kipling was an English author famous for an array of works like 'Just So Stories' and 'The Jungle Book.' He received the 1907 Nobel Prize in Literature. He was born in 1865 in Bombay, India, where his father was a Professor at the Bombay School of Art. He became a very popular writer of poetry and short stories and was also the authekor of some novels. One of his greatest poems is “If” which is a very inspirational poem written as a series of advises by a father to his son. He also wrote many sotries and poems for children.

**The origin of the poem:**

The Camel’s Hump”, derives from one of the Children’s stories he wrote called, “How the Camel Got his Hump” In this story Kipling speaks of the time long ago when animals just began to work for men. Many animals including horses, dogs and oxen went to work for men but the camel did not wish to do this and went to live in the middle of the desert to avoid it. On three successive days the horse, the dog and the ox came to the desert to ask the camel to come and work for men. But on each occasion the camel refused to go saying, “Hum.” At the end of the third day, man called the three animals – the horse, the dog and the ox and said, “That Hump thing in the desert refuses to work and therefore the three of you have to work double time.” The angry animals then met the Djinn ( a spirit) and complained to him about the camel’s refusal to work. The Djinn then ordered the camel to go and work for three days for man, but again he only said, “Hump”, and did not go to work. Then for the second time the Djinn ordered him to go to work and again he refused saying, “Hump” But this time the Djinn used his magical powers to punish the camel; he punished him by puffing up his back into a hump. Then the Djinn ordered him to go and work for man and from that day to this the camel has a hump and works for man.

The hump in the poem “The Camel’s Hump”, is a metaphor for a uncooperative, sullen, and lazy state of mind. There is a moral in it like in many of Kipling’s poems.

**Comment on the Poem:**

The poem is written using very simple language and a swinging rhythm which appeals to children. This appeal is enhanced by the use of internal rhymes in verses in 1,3, 5 and 6 as can be seen in the 1st line: “The Camel’s hump is an ugly lump” Hump” and “lump’ rhyme and the 2nd and 4th lines too rhyme. In verse 2 and verse 7 there is a refrain like quality. This comes from the lengthening of the vowel sounds, at the end of the 1st two lines – ‘too-oo-oo’/’you-oo-oo,’ and ‘do-oo-oo.’ This makes it easier to chant or to sing. The poem also has many lines which are repeated: ‘Camelilious himp-‘.’The hump that is black and blue!’ All this makes it attractive to children.

It is obviously a children’s poem, but everyone can bejefit from the moral contained in it – that sulky unwillingness to join in constructive work, results in the person who refuses to work becoming unpleasant and unattractive.

**Questions and Answers:**

1. Would you class this poem as one written for children?

Though it is primarily meant for children, it is a poem that adults can read with profit and enjoyment.

2. Name the main metaphor used in the poem.

The Camel’s hump is a metaphor for selfishness and laziness.