

# Pine and the Winter Sparrow

## SUMMARY

- This book is inspired by a fable attributed to the Cherokee tribe of the American southeast
- Written for kindergarten children and up, it has delicate, warm colors and a simple, lyrical text
- Sparrow, the main character, is an amiable creature who shows us the human qualities of strength and vulnerability
- Pine, the hero, demonstrates how beautiful and rewarding a simple act of kindness can be for both the one who empathizes and the one to whom empathy is given
- The forest setting provides a secondary focus for discussions about changing seasons and the need for some animals to migrate
- Includes an inspiring message for kids by Robert Lewis, a Cherokee, Apache, and Navajo storyteller

## ABOUT THE BOOK

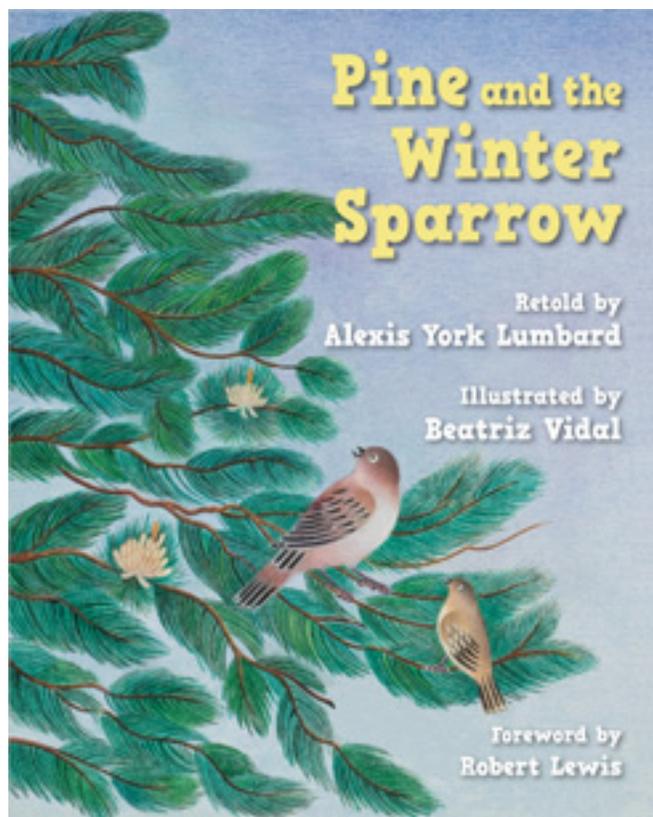
Sparrow has injured his wing and cannot migrate with his family. In a race against time, Sparrow searches for shelter. Among the many trees of the forest, which one will show him compassion? Mighty Oak? Golden Maple? Or will an unexpected hero save the day? *Pine and the Winter Sparrow* offers young readers a chance to experience the rewarding nature of empathy and true friendship.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Alexis York Lumbard is the author of the award-winning titles *The Conference of the Birds* (illustrated by Demi), *Angels* (illustrated by Flavia), and *Everyone Prays* (illustrated by Alireza Sadeghian). A busy mother of three, she was motivated to write by her children. With a B.A. in Religious Studies from George Washington University, it is her sincere hope to bring the wisdom and beauty of the world's cultures and religions to the eager minds of young children. Alexis lives with her husband and three daughters in Massachusetts.

## ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

Beatriz Vidal is an Argentinean painter, illustrator, and teacher. Her prize-winning work has appeared in well-known magazines such as *Woman's Day* and *The New Yorker*. Vidal won the prestigious Tomas Rivera Mexican American Children's Book Award for her title *A Library for Juana* (written by Pat Mora). Her artwork has been featured in numerous exhibitions around the world, including The International Exhibition of Illustration for Children in Sarmede, Italy, and The Society of Illustrators in New York. Beatriz divides her time between Buenos Aires and New York City.



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28 color illustrations

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## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Why is Sparrow's family flying south?
2. Do all animals migrate? Discuss hibernation as another way that animals cope with winter.
3. Sparrow approaches several different trees, asking for shelter. Can you remember what their names were?
4. What are the various ways you can identify a tree (e.g. leaves and bark)?
5. Pine sees that Sparrow is hurt and he wants to help. What would you do if a family member or friend was feeling sad or hurt?
6. What are some simple things that you can do to help someone feel better? (Discuss the 3 steps of empathy: 1) "read" another person's feelings; 2) allow yourself to share in those feelings; and 3) give a supportive response.)
7. *Pine & the Winter Sparrow* was based on an ancient story. From what culture does this story come?
8. Discuss how the rich tradition of oral storytelling among Native American cultures continues today.
9. At the story's conclusion, all the trees of the forest are called to a meeting. What happens at this council?
10. What do you think is the moral of the tale?

## VOCABULARY

- evergreen: The word means "always green." An evergreen tree is a tree that does not lose its leaves during the winter. Pine is one example of an evergreen. Other examples include the cedar, spruce, holly, and hemlock trees. There are many evergreen plants and shrubs as well.
- deciduous: The word means "to fall off." A deciduous tree loses its leaves each fall. Examples of deciduous trees from *Pine and the Winter Sparrow* are oak, maple, elm, and aspen.

## FURTHER READING

1. *Lost and Found* by Oliver Jeffers
2. *Bear Has a Story to Tell* by Philip C. Stead
3. *Forever Friends* by Carin Berger
4. *Fall is Not Easy* by Marty Kelley
5. *Fletcher and the Falling Leaves* by Julia Rawlinson

