

Summer was over. The mists began to exhale from the marshes, and the autumn wind swept over field and forest. The birds sought shelter among the branches or flew to warmer climes, for they knew that a cold and severe time was coming.

Out in the forest sat a little bird on a branch; he could not fly away, because his wings were wounded. He beseeched the birch: "Dear birch, let me hide myself among your green leaves, because the autumn wind blows so cold, so cold!"

But the birch answered: "That you cannot do, because you might injure my buds, and ruin my fine attire; away with you!"

So the little creature, shivering with cold, hopped to the strong oak and begged:

"Dear oak, let me hide among your green branches and leaves, because I shiver so much, so much!"

But the oak answered: "Away with you! You might steal some of my acorns, and soil my spotless garments. You cannot stay with me!"

Then the poor bird hopped to the willow beside the brook and said: "Kind willow, let me creep in among your leaves or I shall die of cold."

But the willow answered: "I do not know you, and besides, I am afraid for my garments. What would the other trees think if they should see me conversing with one so poor and wretched looking as you?"

Thus the little bird went to all the leafy trees in the forest and begged for shelter, but none would protect him, and he came near dying with cold. At last he came to the place where the spruce, pine and juniper stood, but he could not speak then, for he was nearly frozen.

When the spruce caught sight of the poor little thing it said: "Come here to me, you poor little bird, and you shall warm yourself! Come under my branches, they are soft and warm!"

The pine said: "I have not such thick branches as my sister, the spruce, but I shall stand here and defy the north wind, so that he cannot harm you, poor little bird! "

And the pine stretched out its tall limbs and helped the spruce to protect the forlorn little one.

The juniper said: "I am small and humble, but when you are hungry, come to me, because I have good, soft berries, and you shall have them so freely, so freely! "

And thus the wounded bird received food and shelter from the warm-hearted trees.

But night came on with frost and storm, and in the morning the leaf trees' green attire lay on the ground, ruined, and the autumn wind shook their naked branches; but the evergreen trees that had shown kindness and given shelter to the poor defenseless little bird, stood there just as green and beautiful as ever. For no winter cold could rob them of their magnificent robes.