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The Pine Needles

Mary Graham Bonner

Two little girls were sitting under a pine tree with their needlework in their laps.

"I must thread my needle before we begin," said one of them.

The pine needles froze.

Thread her needle? "Is she talking about us?" one whispered to another. "Am I her needle? Are you? And what exactly is thread?"

The second girl spoke. "I prefer knitting to sewing, because then I can use four needles."

A small panic swept through the branches. *Four needles.*

The pine needles huddled urgently and whispered to the tree:



*Blow about and move us away,
Sway, swing, swing and sway,
For we've just this minute heard it said
That into needles they will put thread.*

The tree, understanding entirely, whispered to the breeze:

*Blow, blow, make me sway,
So I can move the needles away.
Please, Mr. Wind, would you mind
Doing this act so very kind?*

The wind obliged. The branches swayed. The pine needles rustled and scattered and shifted as far as they could go.

And then they noticed that each little girl had reached into her workbasket and produced small, shining silver needles of a quite different kind.

Not a pine needle needed.

"Oh," said the pine needles, settling back onto their branches with considerable relief.

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