



## **Write Your Own Story Instructions:**

Read the story, then do a portrait page of how you see the character, and write your own story.

## **Story Prompt for The Little Painter:**

What would you paint if you were the Little Painter?

# The Little Painter

## ONCE UPON A TIME...

there was a little boy who loved to paint. He lived in the woods with his grandmother. Every day, she would take him for long walks and teach him the secrets of the forest.

She showed him how to dig up the roots of small plants and how to boil their leaves. She would make magical mixtures to cure his colds, sticky medicines to put on cuts and spices to drink to keep him strong. She showed him how to whistle the songs the birds sing while building their nests.

The little boy never spoke a word. He would draw pictures of what he wanted or needed.

If he was thirsty, he drew a tall glass of cold milk or steaming cup of hot chocolate. If he was hungry, he drew a plate of crackers or a ripe juicy apple.

On their daily walks in the woods, with a pencil and pieces of paper, the boy would draw wildflowers and the singing birds. How he wished he could have a box of paints and a brush to make his drawings come alive.

For his birthday his grandmother couldn't buy him paints and a brush. Instead, by crushing the petals of bright spring flowers she made colors for him. By weaving long blades of grass, she made fine thick brushes.

For many years, they lived happily together. They wandered in the woods, baked fresh breads, cooked spices and cleaned their cabin. Sometimes, while she told him stories or recited poems, the boy would comb her long white hair.

One day, too tired to go out his grandmother said, "Dear little grandson, please go into the woods and draw me a picture of my favorite flowers."

With his pencil and his pieces of paper, the little boy went into the woods, alone. When he returned, it was dark. Nothing was cooking on the stove for dinner. The boy went to his grandmother resting in her bed and gave her his drawings.

She thanked him and said, "tomorrow dear grandson, you must go by yourself into the woods and bring me a picture of my favorite singing birds. I do miss them, so."

For weeks, the grandmother sent the little boy out into the woods by himself. She would smile at his drawings. To her they were alive and beautiful.

The little boy knew his grandmother was very old and this made him very sad.

One night, with the full moon's light shining in through the window, he heard his grandmother talking in her sleep. "Dear forest, give me the strength to go into the woods to collect the wildflowers. I must crush the colors from their petals for my grandson."

The next morning when the boy woke up, there on his grandmother's bed were all the drawings he'd done for her. But they were not in plain pencil. They were painted in beautiful colors of red and blue, pink and gold, yellow and green.

The little boy was very excited. He rushed to his grandmother to show her the brightly painted flowers and birds. On the table, beside her bed were bowls filled with all the colors from the bright spring flowers.

That night, in the moonlight, the little boy's grandmother spoke in her sleep. This time, she said, "Dear forest, I haven't the strength to go into the woods to find blades of grass to weave a brush for my grandson to paint the bright colors of the wildflowers and the delicate feathers on the wings of the singing birds. I do miss them, so."

When the little boy got up the next morning, on the table beside his grandmother's bed was a lock of her long white hair. The strands of hair were woven into a brush.

Through the day, as he worked by her side, the little boy could see that his grandmother was growing weaker. He could hear her breath becoming softer and shorter.

That night, as the clouds covered the moon's light, once again, in her sleep, the little boy's grandmother spoke, "Dear forest, I wish that I could walk forever hand in hand with my grandson in the woods. I will miss him, so."

And when the boy awoke, silently, he went to his grandmother's bedside. Quickly, he drew.

He dipped the woven lock of her hair into the bowls of colors and began to paint. With each stroke of the brush, the soft pink of her cheeks, the bright blue of her twinkling eyes, and the stark white of her flowing hair began to shine on the paper.

When she woke up, the little boy showed his grandmother the wonderful painting.

With the bit of strength left in her, she smiled at him and spoke these last few words, "I love you, grandson. Now, I will never leave you, because you are my Little Painter."

From that day on, whenever the little boy went into the forest alone his grandmother would be there to greet him. Enjoying the brightness of Spring, the changing leaves of the Fall and the chill of the Winter, The Little Painter and his Grandmother would walk together hand in hand.