

# ❖ The Legend of ❖ the Indian Paintbrush



retold and illustrated by  
**Tomie dePaola**



But the boy, who was called Little Gopher,  
was not without a gift of his own.

From an early age, he made toy warriors  
from scraps of leather and pieces of wood  
and he loved to decorate smooth stones  
with the red juices from berries  
he found in the hills.

The wise shaman of the tribe understood  
that Little Gopher had a gift that was special.

"Do not struggle, Little Gopher.

Your path will not be the same as the others.

They will grow up to be warriors.

Your place among the People will be remembered  
for a different reason."







And in a few years  
when Little Gopher was older,  
he went out to the hills alone  
to think about becoming a man,  
for this was the custom of the tribe.  
And it was there that a Dream-Vision came to him.

The sky filled with clouds and out of them  
came a young Indian maiden and an old grandfather.  
She carried a rolled-up animal skin  
and he carried a brush made of fine animal hairs  
and pots of paints.





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"A rhythmic and evocative retelling of an Indian legend that explains the origin of the Indian paintbrush flower. [The story of] how a young Indian boy, Little Gopher, becomes a man is an engaging tale of strength, perseverance, reverence, and obedience."  
—*Horn Book*

★ "The humanity expressed in this story illustrates the value of perseverance and of endurance of effort that will bring its reward."  
—*School Library Journal* (starred review)

★ "DePaola's story, based on a Texas legend, is illustrated with full-color paintings rendered in the artist's distinctive style. Earth tones, punctuated with splashes of bright color, predominate. . . . A handsome retelling."  
—*Booklist* (starred review)

"The colorful illustrations accentuate the authenticity of a tale that encourages children to follow a different drummer."  
—*Children's Book Review Service*

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