

When Animals Were People/Cuando Los Animales Fueron Gente (English and Spanish Edition)

Bonnie Larson, Modesto Rivera Lemus

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This text is in Spanish & English. This book takes children into a magical time and place in Huichol Indian folklore where newly-created beings were evolving into the creatures they were meant to be and finding the habitats they were meant to enjoy. According to tradition, these early ancestors of today's forest-dwellers had human characteristics, physical as well as emotional; hence they were sometimes referred to as animal people. This concept of animal people is very appealing to children as well as easily and intuitively understood by them. This delightful folktale shows how Turtle Person learned to be patient; how Squirrel Person learned to find safety in high places; and, how Wolf Person learned not allow greed to block his common sense - all important survival skills for each of these animals today. While enjoying an animal tale filled with bits of wisdom and humour, children will be able to learn some lessons about the interdependence of all living things and the natural environment. The brilliantly-coloured illustrations are from Indigenous yarn paintings called cuadros, created by applying beeswax and pine pitch to a board then carefully applying the yarn. The artist, Modesto Rivera Lemos, created the yarn paintings specifically to illustrate this story. Each page is written in both English and Spanish, giving children the ability to read in either language, or both, providing another learning opportunity. Children will also absorb some of the Huichol cultural and spiritual heritage from this traditional folktale. Adults as well will enjoy the astonishing beauty of the illustrations and the simple yet profound truths reflected in "When Animals Were People".



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