

How the Sparrow Stopped the Tornado



Based on an original idea by Duke Plofker
Inspired by Jessica Fisher



Good morning, my friends, I've a great story for you
About a tornado, and a sparrow who knew just what to do . . .

Tornado =
swirling wind

Majesty, the eagle, had been sent to get me
Asking help with a problem that really upset me:
It came from kids in a school in a town on the coast
"Come save us, Marceau, from what scares us the most".
They were threatened by a tornado of unstoppable wrath
And their school full of children lay right in its path.

Wrath = anger

Tornados, you know, possess winds of great power
That go 'round in circles and loom, dark, like a tower.
And that tower is awesome, truly something to fear
It gets scarier and scarier as its rumbling draws near,
Whirling and twirling and clashing and flashing
Uprooting trees and sending things crashing.
It's small at the bottom but huge at the top
And there's no way you can get a tornado to stop.
You can't ask it nicely. It won't just go away –
Marceau was lost for an answer. What else can I say?

Possesses = has
Looming = threatening
Awesome = big and scary

Uprooting = tearing out
Huge = really big



It looked almost exactly just like it was
When that Kansas tornado took Dorothy to Oz.

But this one got closer, the danger was clear
And time was getting shorter as the tornado came near.
Nothing could stop it, no one knew what to do;
Marceau kept on thinking but no idea came through.

The roar was growing louder, hurting everyone's ears
It was the scariest the kids had been in all of their years.
They hid under the desks like their teacher had said
Got as low as they could and they covered their head.

They had a reason to worry. I would, wouldn't you?
Goodness, even Marceau couldn't think what to do!

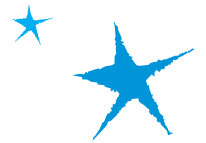
Lightning was flashing, the screaming winds pounded
It just kept getting closer; I stood there dumbfounded.

Dumbfounded =
stunned

Then onto my shoulder, as soft as can be,
A delicate little sparrow landed on me.

She sat on my shoulder, drew her beak very near
And the pretty little sparrow whispered into my ear,
“My name is Jessica Sparrow, I’d like a moment, if you will
I have an idea to tell you that just might fill the bill.
I can see that you’re busy but, please, give it a fling
I may be quite small but big ideas are my thing.”

Beak = bird mouth



“Good morning,” I said, “it’s a pleasure to see ya
Tell me what you’re thinking, I could use an idea.”

“If I flapped my wings,” said she, “ you’d hardly feel air. . .
It would be very much as if I wasn’t even there.
And if I tried with all my might, I could not put out a candle
So a tornado’s not the kind of thing a sparrow likes to handle.
But if every bird from far and near, every color, shape and size,
If all flapped their wings together, we might win the prize.”

Marceau smiled at the bird but could not recall
The last time he had seen a sparrow that small.

Recall = remember

She had bright, flashing eyes and pretty feathers galore
That clever little sparrow let her imagination soar.

Galore = a lot
Soar = fly high

“What a really great idea,” Marceau said to the bird,
“I will contact some friends who will then spread the word.”

Marceau put out the word, but our time was running short
The tornado's getting closer was the latest news report.

But the birds had started coming, at first one or two
Then many came to join them, way more than a few.
There were robins and ravens and falcons and seagulls,
Red birds and white birds, flamingos and eagles.
I saw buzzards and blackbirds and bluebirds galore
Pelicans and parrots and sparrows and more.
Some ugly old vultures got into the game
And doves and pigeons (though I think they're the same).

Then more and then more and then more and then more
The birds just kept coming from mountains and shore.
Every bird came, the biggest and smallest
The fastest, the slowest, the shortest, the tallest.

"The tornado," they cried! There was no place to hide.
It will take an incredible effort to push it aside!

Every bird in the sky—and with all of their might—
Flapped their wings all together, what an outstanding sight:
A thick wall of birds loudly flapping their wings
Creating strong winds; t'was the strangest of things.

T'was = it was

They moved closer to the tornado and got it in motion
They needed to push it out over the ocean.

Funnel = tornado

There were a million wings flapping, who could conceive it?
I wish you had been there. You would never believe it!

Conceive =
understand



Not one bird was singing, not one kid was yapping
They were all way too busy, praying and flapping.
Our wind held the tornado back a bit longer
And as more fliers joined us our winds became stronger.

Yapping = talking

Fliers = birds

Wild flapping of wings knocked the funnel askew
So it was working, it was doing what it needed to do.
You could see clearly despite the commotion
Our wind pushed the tornado out toward the ocean.

Funnel = tornado

Askew = twisted

Despite = even with

They flapped even harder, the tornado moved right
Then it turned out to sea and was soon out of sight.

You can see for yourselves that birds of a feather Of a feather = same kind
Always do better when working together.
They finished the job, then they smiled and returned
The danger had passed; it was a victory earned.

Things were quiet and calm so the kids could relax;
There was no further fear of tornado attacks.
So, they uncovered their heads and got off the floor,
And with smiles on their faces they ran out the door.
They saw beautiful sunshine and blue skies above
And to Jessica Sparrow they sent thanks and love.



The birds were now singing, they were all having fun
For when the job needed doing, Jessica was the one.

You see, its not the size of one's self, though big ones may boast,
It's the size of your imagination that matters the most.

That's the end of the story, I bid you "good day"
I'll have another tomorrow as we go on our way.

Bid = wish

