

The background of the page is a vibrant, stylized illustration. It features a large tree with thick brown branches and green leaves. A large blue bird with a red breast and a patterned wing is perched on a branch on the right. In the center, a smaller bird with intricate black and white patterns is sitting on a nest of twigs. The overall style is folk-art or children's book illustration.

# ISABELLA'S GARDEN

GLENDAMILLARD

## The Story of Isabell *from Glenda Millard*

My mother-in-law, Hannah Isabell Millard, has always been a keen gardener, but has now lost all vision in one eye and has only limited sight in the other. One spring day when I went to visit Isabell (as she is known), she sadly told me that she could no longer see if the bulbs in her garden were shooting and that she had to kneel down and try to feel them instead.

I drove home that day sharing Isabell's sorrow that she could no longer care for her garden in the way she wished. I thought of all the cuttings and potted plants she had grown and given away to other people, including me. I remembered how she named the roses growing in her garden after some of her loved ones who had passed away. I knew how she had taken cuttings of favourite plants in the big old garden of her family home and how she had brought them with her and nurtured them in the small garden at her new unit. I wished there was something I could do or say to comfort Isabell.

There was nothing I could do about Isabell's failing sight, but I thought that perhaps I could write a story that might help her understand that she was involved in a cycle of life that would never end; that her garden would live on forever through her gifts of cuttings and seeds and also through the many memories she had given to us.

Isabell is almost 87 now and it will be one of my greatest pleasures to present her with the book which she inspired.

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GLENDA MILLARD

