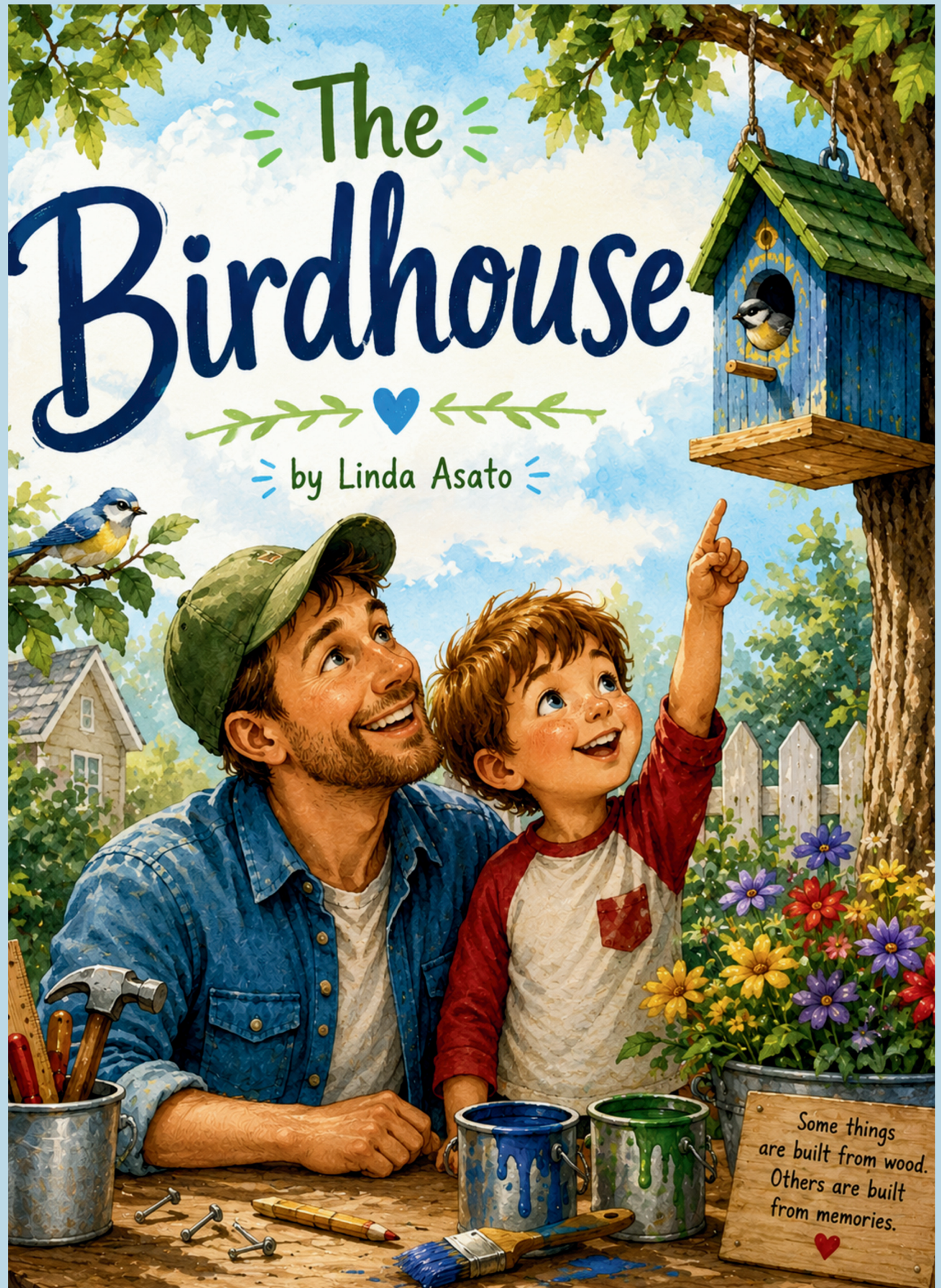


The Birdhouse

by Linda Asato



Some things
are built from wood.
Others are built
from memories.



Every morning, Owen watched the birds outside his kitchen window.

They hopped through the grass and perched in the trees.

Some carried tiny twigs in their beaks.

Owen wondered where they lived.

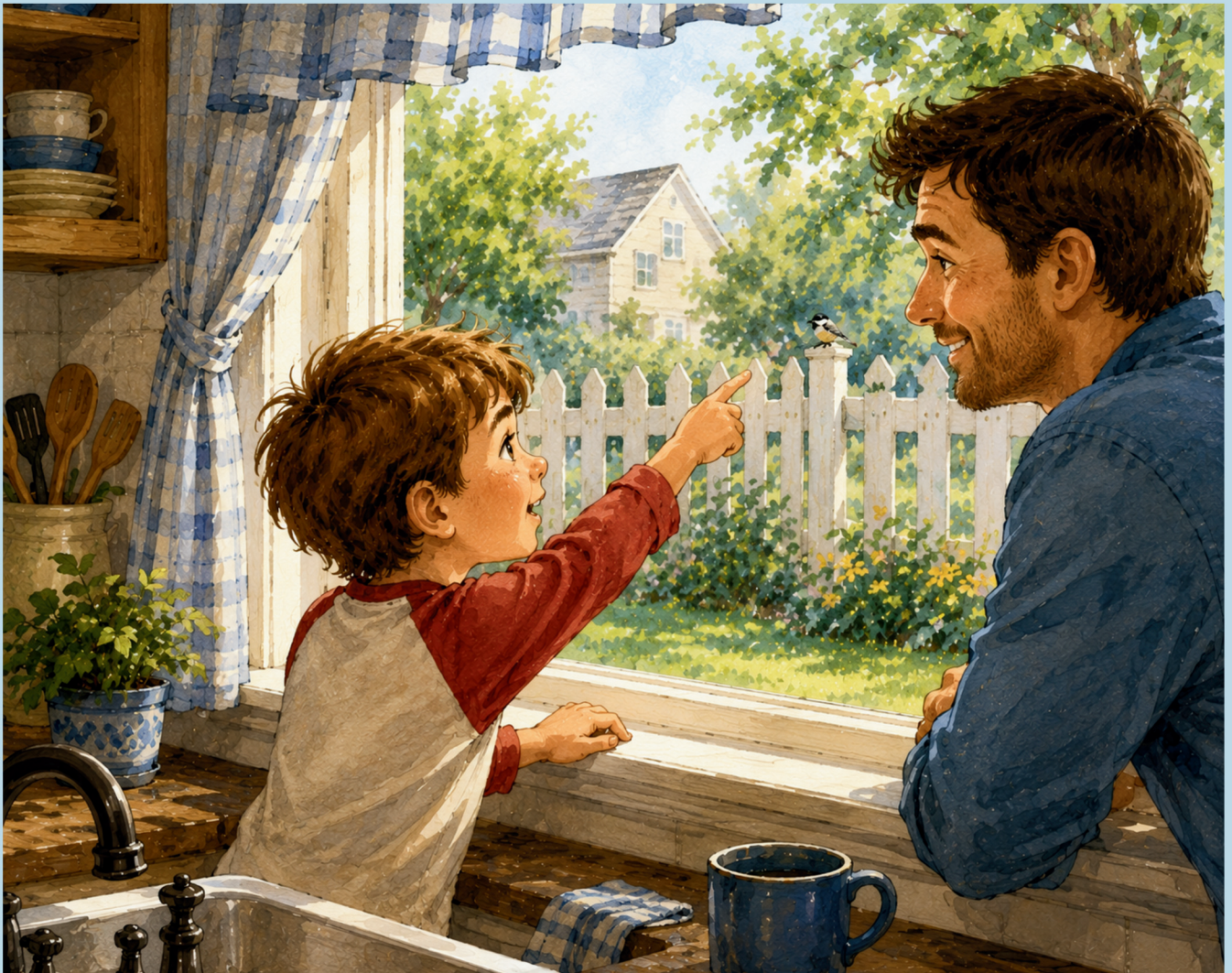


One Saturday morning, Owen pointed to a little bird on the fence.

“I wish the birds had a house,” he said.

Dad looked out the window and smiled.

“Maybe we can build one.”



“A real birdhouse?” Owen asked.
“A real birdhouse,” Dad replied.
They headed to the garage to gather supplies.
Owen could hardly wait to begin.



Dad brought out a few pieces of wood.
There was a hammer, some nails, and a tape
measure.
Owen put on his safety goggles.
Now they were ready.



At first, building seemed easy.
Then Owen bent a nail.
The next nail went in crooked.
Dad chuckled. “That happens to everyone.”



The roof didn't fit quite right.
One board was a little crooked.
Owen frowned at the birdhouse.
“It doesn't look perfect.”



Dad put a hand on his shoulder.
“Most things worth building aren't perfect,” he
said.
Together they adjusted the roof.
Then they kept working.



When the birdhouse was finished, Owen painted it bright blue.

Dad painted the roof green.

By afternoon, the little birdhouse was ready.

They hung it in a tree near the yard.





The next morning, Owen ran to the window.
No birds.
The morning after that?
Still no birds.



For several days, Owen checked again and again.
The birdhouse sat empty in the tree.
“Maybe the birds don't like it,” he said.
Dad just smiled.



“Give them time,” Dad said.
“Birds like to look things over first.”
So Owen waited.
And watched.



Then one morning, something had changed.
A tiny bird sat on the roof.
Another bird peeked into the opening.
Owen's eyes grew wide.



Every day after that, the birds returned.
Soon they carried twigs and bits of grass inside.
The birdhouse was becoming a home.
Owen could hardly believe it.



A few days before Father's Day, Owen had an idea.

He found a small piece of wood in the garage. Carefully, he painted three simple words.



On Father's Day morning, Dad walked outside.
Hanging beneath the birdhouse was a small
sign.

It read:

Built With Dad.



Dad smiled.

Owen smiled too.

Every time they saw the little birdhouse, they remembered the day they built it together.



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