

The Girl and the Little Bird



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In a small house with a big backyard, a girl named Maya pulled on her red boots. She wore green overalls and a yellow sun hat with a red ribbon. The yard was plain and quiet, with only dry grass and a few old stones. "I want a garden full of life," Maya said. She grabbed her watering can and smiled.



Maya's mother gave her a bag of seeds. "These are native plants," she said. "They belong here, and they help local wildlife." Maya looked at the pictures on the packets: purple coneflowers, orange butterfly weed, and bushy little shrubs. She put on her small canvas gloves. "Let's plant them everywhere!" she cheered.



Maya dug little holes and tucked each seed into the soil. She watered them gently with her watering can. Every day she checked the garden, waiting for green sprouts. "Grow, little plants," she whispered. Her curly hair bounced as she worked. Soon tiny leaves pushed up through the dirt, and Maya clapped her hands.



Weeks passed, and the garden grew tall and bright. Purple coneflowers nodded in the breeze, and orange butterfly weed opened like tiny suns. Bushes grew thick and green. Then one morning, Maya heard a cheerful chirp. A little bird sat on a flower stem, no bigger than her palm. Its back was bright blue, its chest was orange, and its belly was white.



"Hello, little bird!" Maya said softly. The bird tilted its tiny black head and chirped again. It had a plump round body and a short pointed beak. It hopped from stem to stem, pecking at seeds. Maya watched from her red boots, hardly breathing. "You like my garden," she whispered. The little bird seemed to wink at her.



The next day, the little bird came back. It brought a friend with a red crest and a bright yellow chest. Then came another bird, yellow with striped wings, and one more, green with a long tail. They fluttered over the flowers like colorful kites. "Welcome, bird friends!" Maya laughed. They chirped and twittered, making the garden sound happy.



The birds found food among the native flowers. They nibbled seeds and sipped nectar. They splashed in a shallow dish Maya filled with water. They hid in the thick bushes when the wind blew. "Native plants give them food and shelter," Maya said. She felt proud of her little garden. It was busy and cheerful all day long.



One afternoon, a big gray cat crept near the garden. The birds fluttered up in a fright. "Shoo, cat!" Maya called, waving her sun hat. The cat scampered away. The little bird perched on Maya's watering can and chirped softly, as if to say thank you. Maya smiled. "You're safe here," she said. "This garden is for you."



Maya wanted to learn more about her bird friends. She found a book at the library with pictures of local birds. "Blue and orange—that's a bluebird!" she said. The red-crested one was a cardinal, the yellow one a goldfinch, and the green one a hummingbird. "My garden is a home for native birds," Maya said. She felt like a real gardener.



Maya decided to make the garden even better. She planted more native bushes and added a small birdbath. She hung a tiny wooden house from a branch. "Now you have a place to rest," she told the birds. The little bluebird sat on the birdhouse roof and sang. Its friends gathered around, chirping and fluttering. The garden felt like a party.



Then something wonderful happened. The little bird flew down and landed on Maya's glove. It sat there, warm and light, and chirped a happy tune. "You trust me!" Maya whispered. The little bird's tiny black eyes sparkled. Its friends perched nearby, watching. Maya stood very still, and her heart felt full and bright.



Maya told her friends at school about her garden. "Native plants bring wildlife close," she said. "Even small acts of care make a big difference." Her friends wanted to help. They brought seeds and little shovels. Together they planted more flowers in the school yard. "Maybe birds will come here too!" said Maya's friend, and everyone cheered.



Back home, Maya sat quietly in her garden. The little bird and its friends flew in, one by one. They fed among the flowers and splashed in the birdbath. Their colors flashed in the sunlight—blue, red, yellow, green. "You came back," Maya said happily. The garden was full of chirps and flutter and life.



Maya learned that native plants help wildlife in many ways. They feed the birds and give them shelter. They bring butterflies and bees, too. "My garden is a little world," she said. "And I take care of it." She watered her plants every day, and the birds came to visit often. The garden grew greener and brighter.



Now Maya's backyard is a cheerful place. The little bird sits on a flower stem, singing its heart out. Its friends fly over the flowers like a rainbow. Maya watches from her red boots, her yellow hat shading her eyes. "Thank you, little bird," she whispers. "You make my world brighter."



Maya knows that even small acts of care bring nature close. A handful of seeds, a little water, and a kind heart can turn a plain yard into a home for wildlife. "Anyone can do it," she tells her friends. And every morning, the little bird and its friends come back to the garden, chirping a cheerful song.