**The Golden Nest Builders**

*A story to help restore the song of life and the song of work.*

***This story is about birds having to rebuild nests after an environmental disaster that destroyed their trees and homes - I wrote it for a Japanese publication of resilience tales following the 2011 tsunami. It could be adapted for use by teachers and parents following the weeks of devastating fires in Australia – a different bird could be used, the storm and giant waves could be changed to 'fire and smoke images' and the trees could be changed to eucalypts – or the original could be used). It has been taken from my e-book entitled 'A SPOONFUL OF STORIES #3: Fairy Tales for the 21st Century.***

There were once two little sun birds that lived in a nest in a pine tree by the sea. One was a mother bird and one was a father bird. The little sun birds were nest builders.

Every day they kept themselves busy gathering sticks and twigs and weaving them together to make their nest warm and safe. They loved to sing as they worked. All day long they sang their nest building song.

Sometimes a strong wind came in from the sea and blew bits of their nest all the way to the ground. Then the little sun birds had to work hard and long to repair the damage. As they worked they sang their nest building song. Sometimes a storm cloud came down from the mountains and the heavy rain washed bits of their nest all the way to the ground.  Then the little sun birds had to work hard and long to repair the damage. As they worked they sang their nest building song. They were continually gathering, weaving and singing; gathering, weaving and singing; gathering, weaving and singing.

The little sun birds were happy with their nest building life. And of course, their nest building had an important purpose! Every spring, the warm and safe nest was the home for tiny little eggs. Every spring, tiny little sun birds hatched from the tiny little eggs. Every spring, tiny little sun birds were fed and cared for by the mother bird.

Then, when the little sun birds were big enough, they flew off to other trees to begin their new life as nest builders, all the while singing their nest building song.

Life went on, and after many years there were many little sun birds living contentedly in many nests in many trees by the sea.

But one day everything changed in the life of the little nest building birds. Far out from the coast, a storm began swirling and twirling around like an angry beast, sending raging winds and giant waves towards the shore. The waves flooded the land and many trees were washed away. The wind blew so strongly that any of the nests left in the remaining trees were completely blown away.

Some of the little sun birds managed to fly up high in the sky to escape the flooding water. They circled and circled around until they were too tired to keep on flying. Then they flew back down to find somewhere to rest, landing in the branches of the trees that had stood strong through the storm. They huddled together, shivering with cold. Many of their family had gone, their homes had gone and their song had gone.

But little birds cannot rest for long. Little birds need to fly. Little birds need to build nests. Their song had gone but the work needed to go on.

The little sun birds began to fly far and wide to gather sticks and twigs. The song had gone but the work needed to go on. They worked through the autumn, they worked through the winter, they worked through the spring – gathering and weaving, gathering and weaving, gathering and weaving.

Slowly but surely many new bird nests began to fill the branches of the strong pine trees. The little sun birds worked hard and long. The song had gone but the work needed to go on.

By the middle of spring, the nests were ready to be the home for tiny little eggs. The nests were safe and warm and many tiny little sun birds hatched from many tiny little eggs. The new little sun birds were cared for by the mother birds in their warm and safe nests, and miracle of miracles, they began to sing a new song.

When the new little sun birds were big enough, they flew off to other branches of the pine tree to begin their life as nest builders. And as the new little sun birds worked, they sang a new nest building song. And so life went on. The new little birds worked all day long and as they worked they sang their song.

And around the strong trees, slowly, slowly, very slow, some new little trees started to grow. Hopefully it would not be too long, before these new little trees would be strong – strong enough for many more little sun birds to build their nests while singing their nest building song.

​*Note: ​​​This story can be found, along with many more, in the following e-book (for Kindle and Kobo):*

***A SPOONFUL OF STORIES #3: Fairy Tales for the 21st Century***

*Fairy Tales for the 21st Century is a compilation of modern therapeutic tales written for global, national and community challenges to help build resilience and develop positive values.**Children and adults alike can be touched, comforted, inspired, enthused and strengthened by their metaphoric messages.*

*In the twenty stories in this collection, obstacles are overcome, difficult tasks are achieved, characters are transformed, good triumphs over evil and timeless truths are upheld. This book is a storyteller’s contribution to finding hope within the environmental and social conflict and trauma of our times.*