



# Rare Bird: A Memoir of Loss and Love

By Anna Whiston-Donaldson

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*I wish I had nothing to say on the matter of loss, but I do. Because one day I encouraged my two kids to go out and play in the rain, and only one came home....*

**Now a *New York Times* bestseller!**

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### On the other side of heartbreak, a story of hope rises.

On an ordinary September day, twelve-year-old Jack is swept away in a freak neighborhood flood. His parents and younger sister are left to wrestle with the awful questions: *How could God let this happen?* And, *Can we ever be happy again?* They each fall into the abyss of grief in different ways. And in the days and months to come, they each find their faltering way toward peace.

In *Rare Bird*, Anna Whiston-Donaldson unfolds a mother's story of loss that leads, in time, to enduring hope. "Anna's storytelling," says Glennon Doyle Melton, "is raw and real and intense and funny."

With this unforgettable account of a family's love and longing, Anna will draw you deeper into a divine goodness that keeps us—beyond all earthly circumstances—safe.

This is a book about facing impossible circumstances and wanting to turn back the clock. It is about the flicker of hope in realizing that in times of heartbreak, God is closer than your own skin. It is about discovering that you're braver than you think.

### Praise for *Rare Bird*

"In her beautiful, clear-eyed prose Anna brings to life complex miracles: that the anchor of being strong is tied to feelings of unbearable weakness; that the ache of grief is often accompanied by glittering beauty; and that all we do not understand is more important to making sense of life than what we know. Her story, as well

as Jack's story, is gorgeous, bold and true, and no one will be unchanged in reading it."

— **Stacy Morrison, Editor in Chief, BlogHer; author of *Falling Apart in One Piece***

"This is not a book; it is a kaleidoscope. With every turn of the page, a new discovery is made that forever alters your view of pain, joy, heartache, time, hope, and healing. As I journeyed through Anna's divinely written prose, I found myself unable to stand by as a passive recipient of her message. I needed to act. Because of Anna and Jack, I talked with my child about heaven. I walked around the pool's edge to sit beside a grieving woman. I looked into the darkest places of my soul and for the first time, I did not look away. If you yearn to stop hiding from that which prevents you from truly living, step into the kaleidoscope that is *Rare Bird*. Turn the page—wake up, stand up, comfort, love, and live. Turn the page—let your eyes be opened to the light that exists in whatever darkness you face."

— **Rachel Macy Stafford, New York Times best-selling author of *Hands Free Mama***

"A masterpiece of hope, love, and the resilience and ferocity of the human spirit."

— **From the foreword by Glennon Doyle Melton, Momastery.com; author of *Carry On, Warrior***

"*Rare Bird* is not just another well-written story of love, loss, and the aftermath of death, but it is a story that clearly shows the constant presence and grace of a loving God. It gives assurance and comfort to those whose hearts are grieving, and hope to those who are afraid."

— **Mary C. Neal, MD, New York Times best-selling author of *To Heaven and Back***

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### **Rare Bird: A Memoir of Loss and Love By Anna Whiston-Donaldson Bibliography**

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## Editorial Review

### Review

“Profound, tender, honest—and utterly unforgettable.”

— **Gretchen Rubin**, author of #1 New York Times bestseller, *The Happiness Project*

“Will touch every reader who picks it up.”

—**The Washingtonian**

"In this powerful debut memoir, blogger Whiston-Donaldson tells the tragic story—of the death of her 12-year-old son Jack. The author is an emotionally insightful guide to the territory of grief. She notes the relationship of grief and shame, the comforts and sorrows of sex, and the hideous fights between bereaved parents. From its disarming opening sentence (“I thought the first book I’d write would be about painting furniture”), the book avoids sentimentality. The book is well paced—the reader knows from the start that the author’s child is dead, but doesn’t know precisely how he dies for some chapters—and is underpinned by a steady drumbeat of faith, as Whiston-Donaldson negotiates a new relationship with God after Jack’s death. She feels deeply loved by God, “almost as if I’m wrapped in a soft, cotton batting,” but she is also “disappointed and hurt... and the only broken body I can picture right now is Jack’s.” Whiston-Donaldson’s compelling account belongs on the shelf next to Richard Lischer’s *Stations of the Heart*."

—**Publishers Weekly**

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### About the Author

**Anna Whiston-Donaldson** is a popular blogger at An Inch of Gray. A graduate of James Madison

University and Wake Forest University, she taught high school English for six years before becoming a full-time mom and writer. She lives with her husband, Tim, and daughter, Margaret, in suburban Washington, DC.

## **Users Review**

### **From reader reviews:**

#### **Craig Baker:**

Do you have favorite book? When you have, what is your favorite's book? Book is very important thing for us to understand everything in the world. Each e-book has different aim or goal; it means that publication has different type. Some people truly feel enjoy to spend their time for you to read a book. They are really reading whatever they consider because their hobby is actually reading a book. Think about the person who don't like looking at a book? Sometime, man feel need book if they found difficult problem as well as exercise. Well, probably you will want this Rare Bird: A Memoir of Loss and Love.

#### **Patsy Hall:**

This Rare Bird: A Memoir of Loss and Love book is simply not ordinary book, you have it then the world is in your hands. The benefit you obtain by reading this book will be information inside this e-book incredible fresh, you will get information which is getting deeper you read a lot of information you will get. That Rare Bird: A Memoir of Loss and Love without we comprehend teach the one who looking at it become critical in thinking and analyzing. Don't end up being worry Rare Bird: A Memoir of Loss and Love can bring any time you are and not make your case space or bookshelves' grow to be full because you can have it with your lovely laptop even telephone. This Rare Bird: A Memoir of Loss and Love having very good arrangement in word and also layout, so you will not experience uninterested in reading.

#### **Joel Jones:**

The book with title Rare Bird: A Memoir of Loss and Love possesses a lot of information that you can understand it. You can get a lot of benefit after read this book. That book exist new expertise the information that exist in this book represented the condition of the world currently. That is important to yo7u to be aware of how the improvement of the world. This book will bring you inside new era of the globalization. You can read the e-book in your smart phone, so you can read that anywhere you want.

#### **Janet Baltimore:**

In this era which is the greater particular person or who has ability in doing something more are more treasured than other. Do you want to become among it? It is just simple approach to have that. What you need to do is just spending your time not much but quite enough to experience a look at some books. One of many books in the top list in your reading list is usually Rare Bird: A Memoir of Loss and Love. This book that is qualified as The Hungry Hills can get you closer in turning into precious person. By looking upwards and review this book you can get many advantages.

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