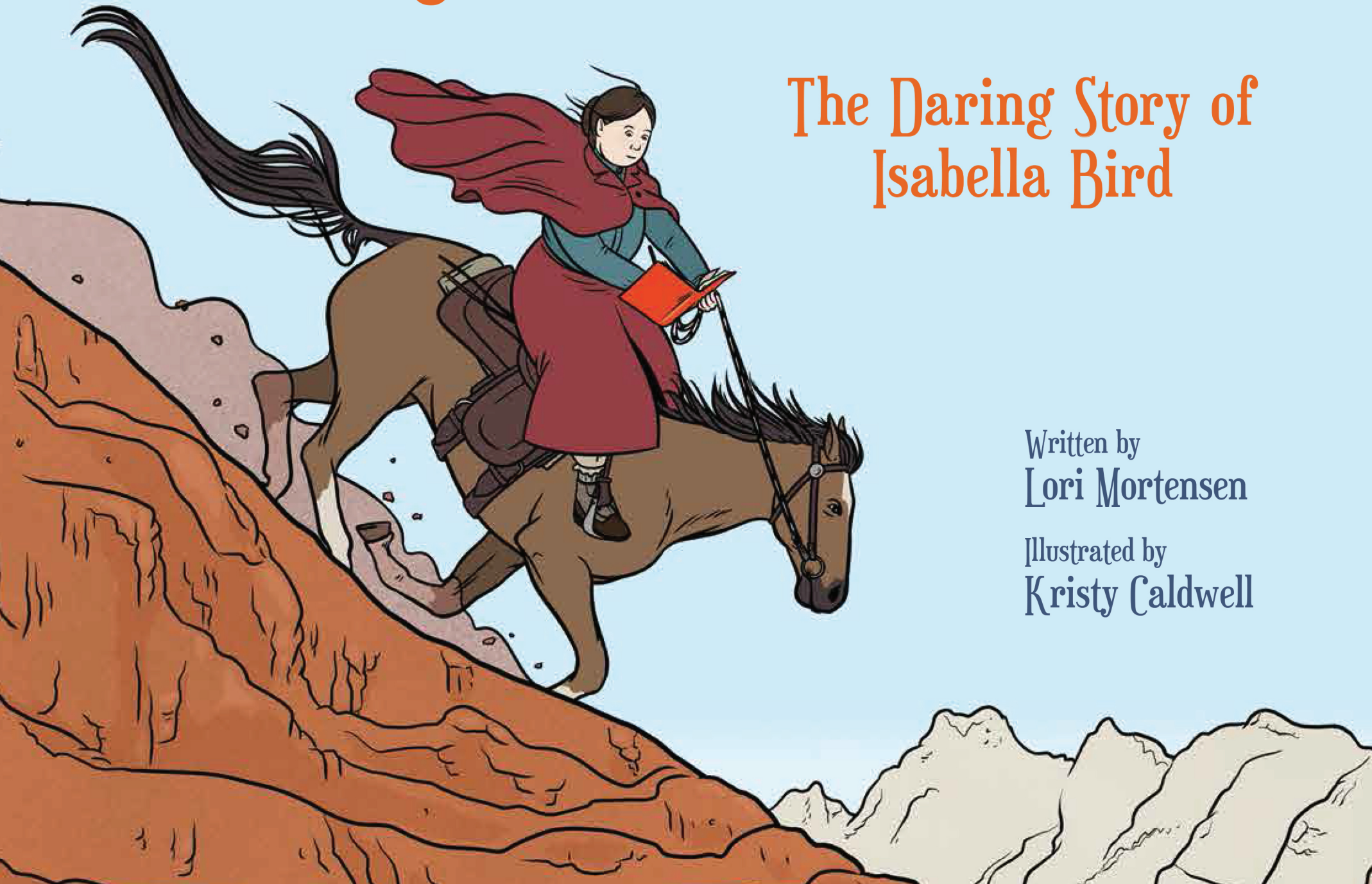


# Away With Words

The Daring Story of  
Isabella Bird

Written by  
Lori Mortensen

Illustrated by  
Kristy Caldwell





*To my daring family, and the exquisite books that  
regularly take me away with their words.*

—L. M.

*For Rachael, Kim, and Marshall*

—K. C.



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Isabella Bird was like a wild vine  
stuck in a too-small pot.  
She needed more room.  
She had to get out.  
She had to explore.

But petite Isabella,  
pale Isabella,  
proper Isabella  
was an unlikely candidate for adventure.





Born in 1831, Isabella had suffered from mysterious aches and pains ever since she was small. While her little sister Hennie scampered about their sturdy home nestled in the English countryside, Isabella rested.

*I very tired.*

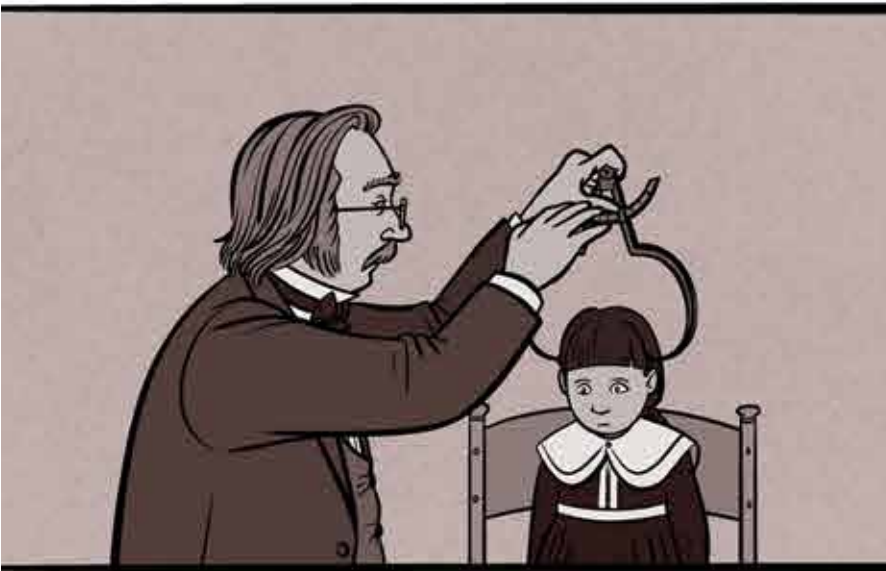
*Poor dear!  
What can be done?*

No one knew how to help her.  
Would Isabella simply wilt away?





Isabella's family took her to a number of doctors, but none of them could figure out what was wrong.



Then, one day a doctor made a suggestion. Maybe she needed fresh air.

Her father set Isabella upon his horse. Together, they visited his parishioners in the wide open air of the English countryside. As they clippety-clopped along, he drew her attention to every feature in the wayside and questioned her about them.

*What were the names of flowers?*

*roses...lilies...saxifrages...*

*What were the names of the animals?*

*hares...sheep...foxes...starlings...*

*What were the names of the crops?*

*rye...wheat...barley...*

With each question asked, young Isabella learned more.

Out in the wild, Isabella forgot about her aches and pains. She breathed in new ways to see and describe everything around her.

Question by question, word by word, Isabella bloomed.





As she grew, Isabella heard letters from her uncles in India and news from missions in Africa. She marveled at their descriptions of exotic sights.

*giant elephants, colorful saris, curious monkeys, and twisted turbans*

*pungent smells...  
curry, orchids,  
incense and smoke*

*and soaring  
temperatures...  
90...100...110!*

Her head spun with the thrilling possibilities. What faraway places would she explore? What stunning details would fill *her* letters?

