

**Joanna Ho** is passionate about equity in books and education. She has been an English teacher, a dean, and a teacher–professional–development mastermind. She is currently the vice principal of a high school in the San Francisco Bay Area. Homemade chocolate chip cookies, outdoor adventures, and dance parties with her kids make Joanna’s eyes crinkle into crescent moons. Keep your eyes open for her next book, *Playing at the Border*. Visit her at [www.joannahowrites.com](http://www.joannahowrites.com).

**Dung** (pronounced Zung) **Ho** was born and raised in Hue Imperial City, Vietnam, where she studied graphic design at the Hue Arts University. She finds inspiration in nature—the beauty of plants, flowers, and leaves. She also loves to draw interesting characters with unique personalities. Now she lives in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, where she continues to learn and develop her art, something she loves doing. When she’s not drawing, she loves spending time cooking (eating), watching movies, and tending her plants. Visit her at [www.behance.net/hanhdung](http://www.behance.net/hanhdung).

Ho • Ho

*Eyes that Kiss in the Corners*

# Eyes that Kiss in the Corners

By Joanna Ho

Illustrated by Dung Ho

**A young girl notices that her eyes look different from her friends’.**

They have big round eyes and long lashes. The girl realizes that her eyes kiss in the corners and glow like warm tea, crinkle into crescent moons, and are filled with stories of the past and hope for the future—in fact, her eyes are like her mother’s, her amah’s, and her little sister’s, and they are beautiful.

*Eyes that Kiss in the Corners* is a dazzling, lyrical ode to loving oneself. Joanna Ho’s tender yet powerful words and Dung Ho’s vibrant illustrations inspire readers to recognize their own beauty and strength, igniting a revolution of self-discovery and confidence.



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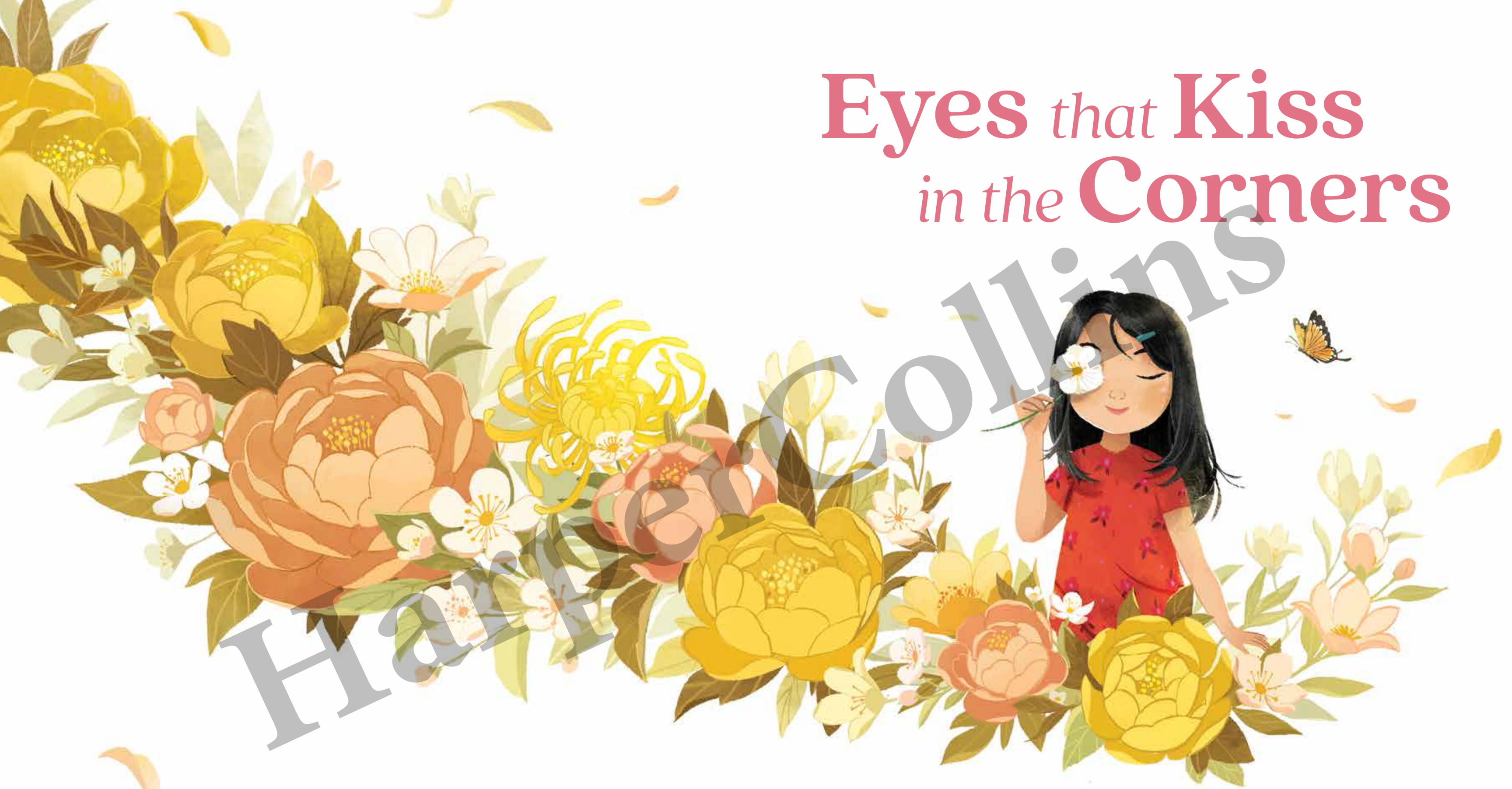
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Illustrated by Dung Ho

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❖  
First Edition

For Aila. You are a revolution.  
—J.H.

To my mama and my sisters.  
—D.H.





Some people have  
eyes like sapphire lagoons  
with lashes like lace trim on ballgowns,  
sweeping their cheeks as they twirl.  
Big eyes, long lashes.

Not me.

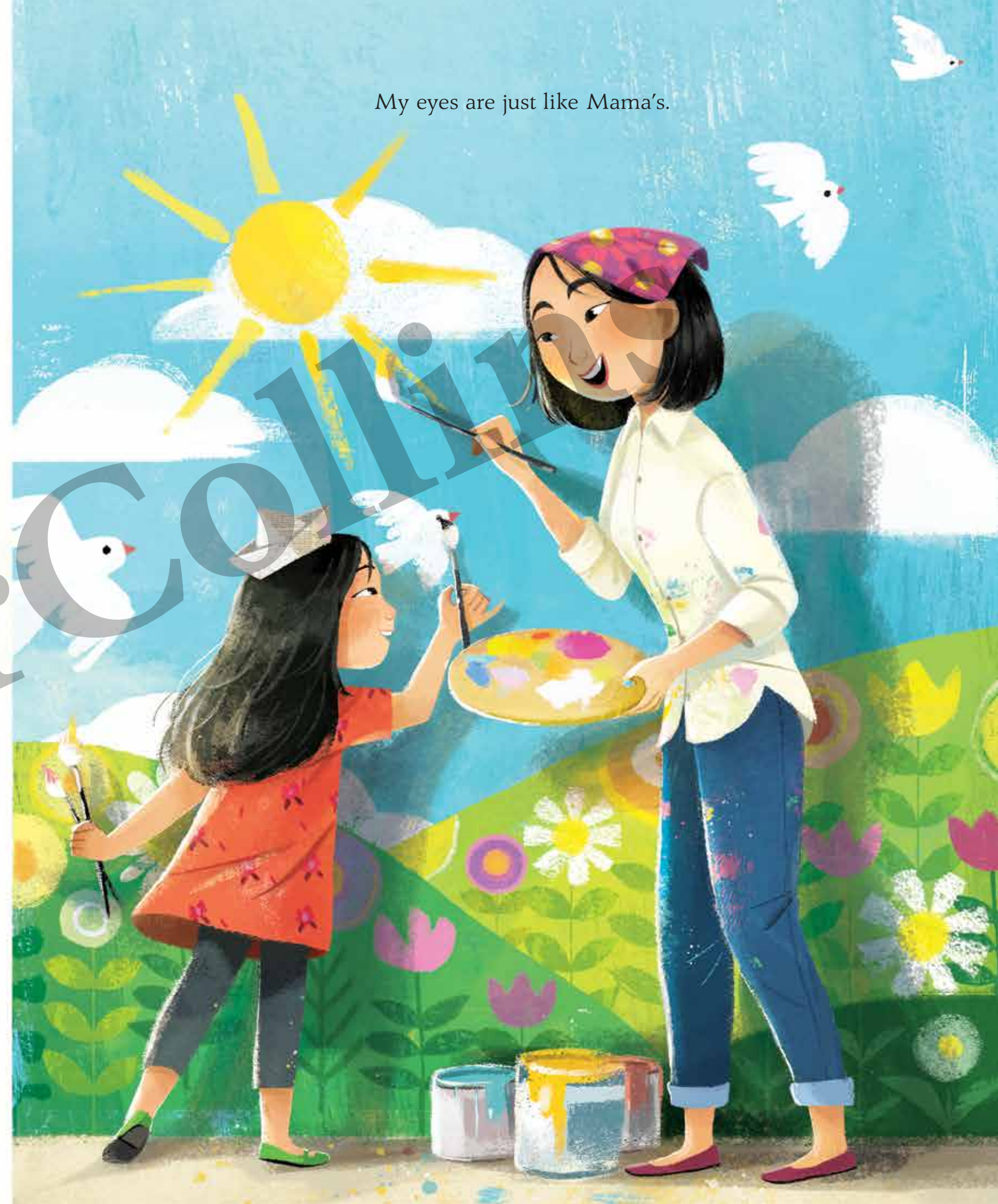




I have eyes that kiss in the corners and glow like warm tea.



My eyes are just like Mama's.





Mama's eyes that kiss in the corners and glow like warm tea  
crinkle into crescent moons

when she comes home from work.

She scoops me in her arms,


eyes sparkling like starlight,

and tickles me

until we laugh ourselves onto the floor.





An illustration of a mother with dark hair and a yellow shirt reading a book to her daughter. The daughter is lying in bed with a patchwork quilt, wearing a pink shirt. A window in the background shows a crescent moon and stars. A lamp with a star-patterned shade is on the left, and a shelf with toys is on the right. A large 'HarperCollins' watermark is across the center.

When Mama tucks me in at night, her eyes tell me  
I'm a miracle.

In those moments when she's all mine,  
flecks of dancing gold tell me  
I'm hers too.



My Mama is my sun and sky,  
and her eyes are just like Amah's.





Amah's eyes that kiss in the corners and glow like warm tea  
don't work like they used to.

But she sees all the way into my heart  
and can even read my mind.



Her eyes are filled with so many stories;  
I can fall inside them  
and swim until time stops.





baubles of lychee on trees,  
and mountains that reach for the sea.

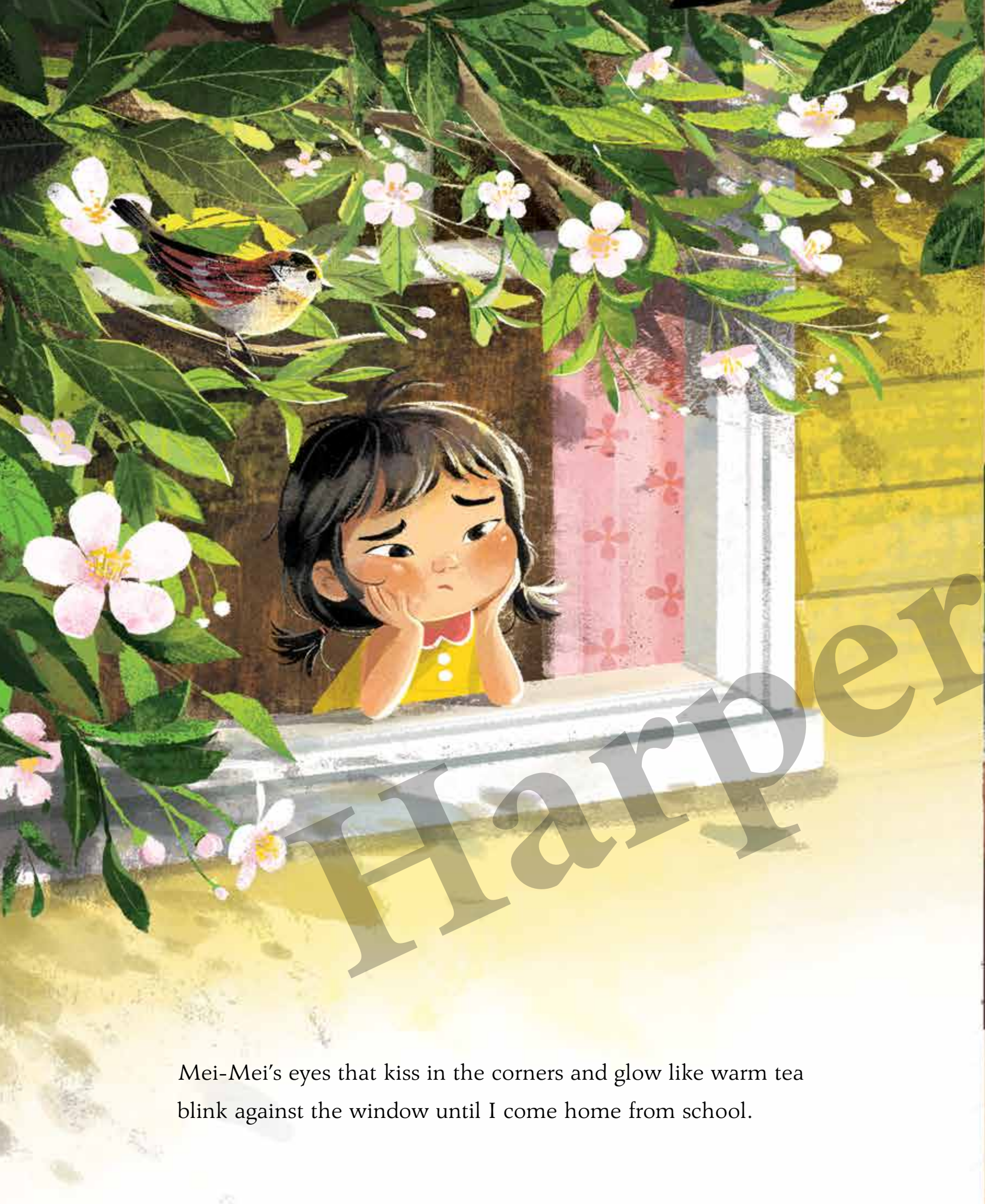
I see  
Guanyin with the Monkey King  
sitting on a lotus, serene,





My Amah never ages,  
and her eyes are just like Mei-Mei's.





Mei-Mei's eyes that kiss in the corners and glow like warm tea  
blink against the window until I come home from school.



They disappear  
beneath her two-tooth smile  
when I walk in the door.



She toddles after me,  
gazing up at me  
like I am her best present.

I hope she looks at me like that forever.

Because when she looks at me in that Mei-Mei way,  
I feel like I can fly.







Mei-Mei's eyes that kiss in the corners and glow like warm tea  
are just like mine.





My eyes crinkle into crescent moons  
and sparkle like the stars.  
Gold flecks dance and twirl  
while stories whirl  
in their oolong pools,  
carrying tales of the past  
and hope for the future.



My eyes find mountains  
that rise ahead  
and look up  
when others shut down.

My lashes curve like the  
swords of warriors  
and, through them,  
I see kingdoms in the clouds.





My eyes that kiss in the corners and  
glow like warm tea  
are a revolution.





They are Mama  
and Amah  
and Mei-Mei.

They are me.  
And they are beautiful.









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