

Dear Reader,

First, thank you so much for your support of *Eyes that Kiss in the Corners*. I wish I could give each of you a (germ-free) hug and look you in the eye to tell you what your support has meant in a particularly challenging year. I'm thrilled to be able to introduce its companion book, *Eyes that Speak to the Stars*. This is a book that showcases the strength of family relationships, history, and culture in the face of racist microaggressions at school.

Like its predecessor, *Eyes that Speak to the Stars* is ultimately a story about love. It is the story of the love shared between generations, the love we must develop for ourselves, and the love that we use to create change in the world.

The anti-Asian violence in Atlanta and around the country has heightened national consciousness of the racism faced by a diverse Asian community. As many have noted, this racism and violence is not new, but the history and stories of the Asian community have been rendered all but invisible in curriculum and culture. Too many of us have endured the pain and humiliation of classmates pulling up their eyes into slants and chanting gibberish meant to imitate our ancestral languages. Only when we learn the language and tools of disruption can we build toward a different future.

The lyrical prose of *Eyes that Speak to the Stars* flows with the narrator from a hurtful incident at school to empowering moments with his father, inspiring talks with his Agong, and silly antics with his baby brother. Each moment helps the narrator develop a stronger sense of identity, a greater pride in his heritage, and a deeper connection with family. Together, these moments help the narrator step into his own power.

Confronting racism, both interpersonal and structural, requires eyes that can see new possibilities. It requires finding and creating light in spite of the darkness. It requires us to be visionary.

I hope *Eyes that Speak to the Stars* can open critical dialogue about matters of race, history, invisibility, power and responsibility. I hope it pushes us to see and build toward a future of shared humanity and liberation. I hope it helps us become visionary.

With love,

Joanna Ho

