Joanna Ho is the New York Times bestselling author of Eyes that Kiss in the Corners and Playing at the Border: A Story of Yo-Yo Ma. She is passionate about equity and inclusion in books and education and 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. Visit her at www.joannahowrites.com.

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A companion to the New York Times bestseller Eyes that Kiss in the Corners

## Eyes that Speak to the Stars

By Joanna Ho Illustrated by Dung Ho

A young boy notices that his eyes look different from his friends'.

They have big, round eyes. The boy realizes that his eyes rise to the skies and speak to the stars, shine like sunlit rays, and glimpse trails of light from those who came before—in fact, his eyes are like his father's, his agong's, and his little brother's, and they are visionary.

Eyes that Speak to the Stars is a stunning companion to the acclaimed Eyes that Kiss in the Corners. Joanna Ho's elegant, lyrical words and Dung Ho's extraordinary celestial illustrations inspire readers to recognize their own power and strength from within and redefine what it means to be truly you.

Eyes s that Speak Sta

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Ages 4-8





## Eyes that Speak to the Stars

By Joanna Ho Illustrated by Dung Ho

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For my agong, who took me on early morning walks up the mountains of Hong Kong. For Dad, who used to carry me on his shoulders, and for Harv, the Agong who looks at his grandkids like they're the only answers that matter.—J.H.

To my dad. No matter where I go in life, you're always in my heart.—D.H.

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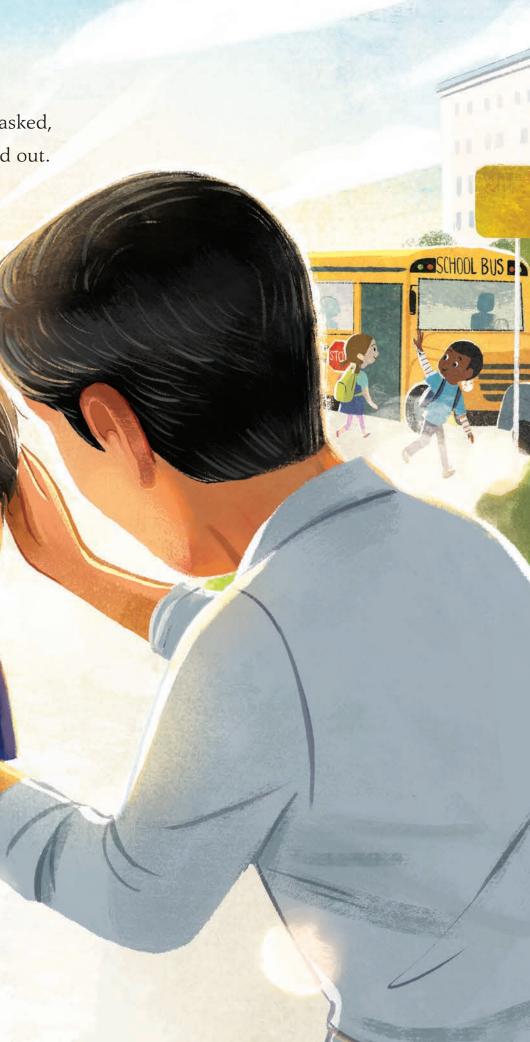
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First Edition

I stared at my toes where it was safe. "What's wrong?" Baba asked, and all my hurt tumbled out.

The other day, when Baba picked me up from school, I didn't run in for a hug the way I usually do;

5



"Kurt drew a picture of our friends," I said.
"He pointed at a person with eyes like two lines stretched across his face and told me,
"That one is you."

"But it didn't look like me at all."

iv friends

**(**).





Baba's eyes that rise to the skies and speak to the stars are filled with all the surprises he can't wait to give me throughout the day. When he lifts me above his head and cries, "Ready for takeoff!" before running through the house like we're headed toward the heavens, his eyes shine like runway lights and tell me,

Lift your arms, my son. You're going to soar above the clouds. Baba always looks up, and his eyes are just like Agong's.



Agong's eyes that rise to the skies and speak to the stars gaze into the distance

like they're looking at the world through lenses of time.

> The voices of ancestors whisper in his ear, speaking in lilting languages of rice paddies climbing mountains like stairways to the sky,

> > Mazu's miracles showing mercy from on high, and mango milk from night markets lit with bulbs of light.

Agong has an answer for every question I ask on our early morning walks, but when I hug him good night,he cups my face in his handsand looks at melike I am the only answer that matters.

Agong holds the wisdom of generations, and his eyes are just like Di-Di's.



Di-Di's eyes that rise to the skies and speak to the stars are closed so long,

411

I grow an inch

waiting for him to wake up.

When Di-Di's eyelids finally flutter open, I orbit his crib,

> making funny faces and singing silly songs until his laugh grows so big it spreads up his cheeks and makes his eyes squeeze shut again.



He looks at me like I'm the world, but he is the sun, filling my days with light.

Di-Di's eyes that rise to the skies and speak to the stars are just like mine.



My eyes shine like sunlit rays that break through dark and doubt. They lift their sights on paths of flight that soar above the clouds.

My eyes gaze into space and glimpse trails of light inviting me into impossibilities. The comets and constellations show me their secrets because I am the emperor of my own destiny.

I read a brighter future in the stars and will fight to make it reality.



My eyes that rise to the skies and speak to the stars are visionary.



They are Baba and Agong and Di-Di. They are me. And they are powerful.

