## To David

For all my fellow illustrators who tell stories with their art -D.R.

The illustrations in this book were made with watercolors, pen, and ink on Arches paper.

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## AARON SLATER, ILLUSTRATOR

by Andrea Beaty
illustrated by David Roberts

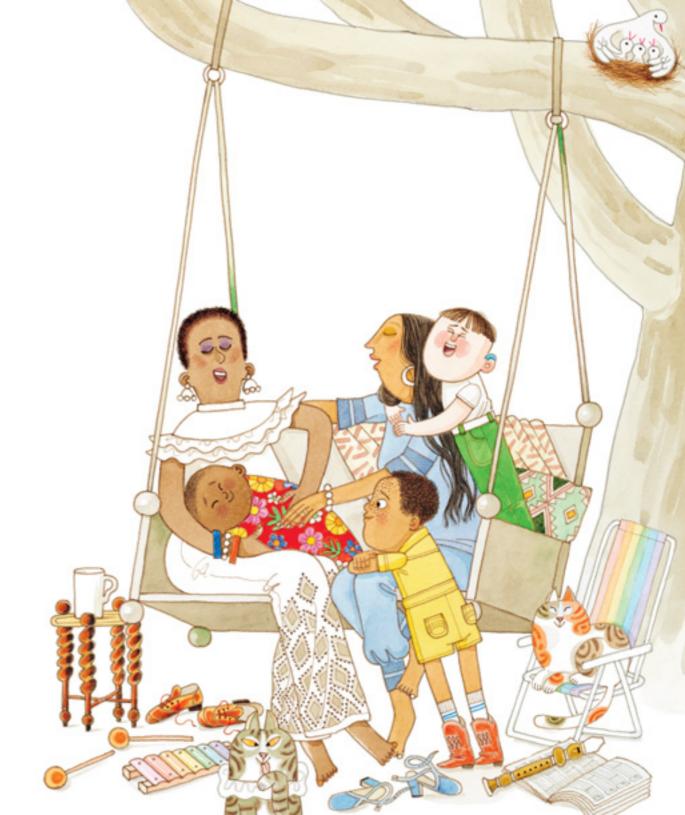
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At the end of the garden, in the soft, fading light, when the day turns to dusk and the dusk into night, the sweet scent of jasmine floats into the air to mix with the music of laughter, and there . . . Aaron D. Slater soaks it all in with his flowery blanket tucked under his chin. Words drift like music. Melodious. Mild. A sweet summer song for a sweet summer child who drifts off to sleep as the cottonwoods sway at the end of the garden. At the end of the day.













But what he loves most—what makes Aaron's heart sing is to listen to books in the old garden swing.

To write stories, he thinks, is the greatest of things.



But first, he must read. It's the best place to start, and young Aaron wants to with all of his heart. But the words are just squiggles, and try though he might, & IL Tad THAC NOBAA DELH MITH NEVE WIETH HE HOLOHT TLE DNA

even with help Aaron can't get it right.
"Why can't I do it? Why is it so hard?"

He goes back to drawing on slate in his yard.

