

*To David
—A.B.*

*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.

Cataloging-in-Publication Data has been applied for and may be
obtained from the Library of Congress.

ISBN 978-1-4197-5396-1

Text copyright © 2021 Andrea Beaty
Illustrations copyright © 2021 David Roberts
Book design by Heather Kelly

Published in 2021 by Abrams Books for Young Readers,
an imprint of ABRAMS. All rights reserved. No portion of this book may
be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or
by any means, mechanical, electronic, photocopying, recording,
or otherwise, without written permission from the publisher.

Printed and bound in U.S.A.

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Abrams Books for Young Readers are available at special discounts when
purchased in quantity for premiums and promotions as well as fundraising
or educational use. Special editions can also be created to specification.
For details, contact specialsales@abramsbooks.com or the address below.

Abrams® is a registered trademark of Harry N. Abrams, Inc.



ABRAMS The Art of Books
195 Broadway, New York, NY 10007
abramsbooks.com


AARON SLATER, ILLUSTRATOR

by Andrea Beaty
illustrated by David Roberts
Abrams Books for Young Readers, New York



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.





It's summer, then summer, and summer once more,
and soon Aaron D. is a youngster of four.
The jasmine climbs higher. The roses have grown.
And Aaron himself has a spot of his own
for seedlings and saplings beside the slate walk,
which he illustrates daily with a bucket of chalk.





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.



It's schooltime at last!
In his sunflower socks
and poppy-red jacket and with matching lunchbox,
he marches to class with a teacher's bouquet
ready to read by the end of the day.

