


#1 NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLING AUTHOR OF  
**EVERYTHING, EVERYTHING**

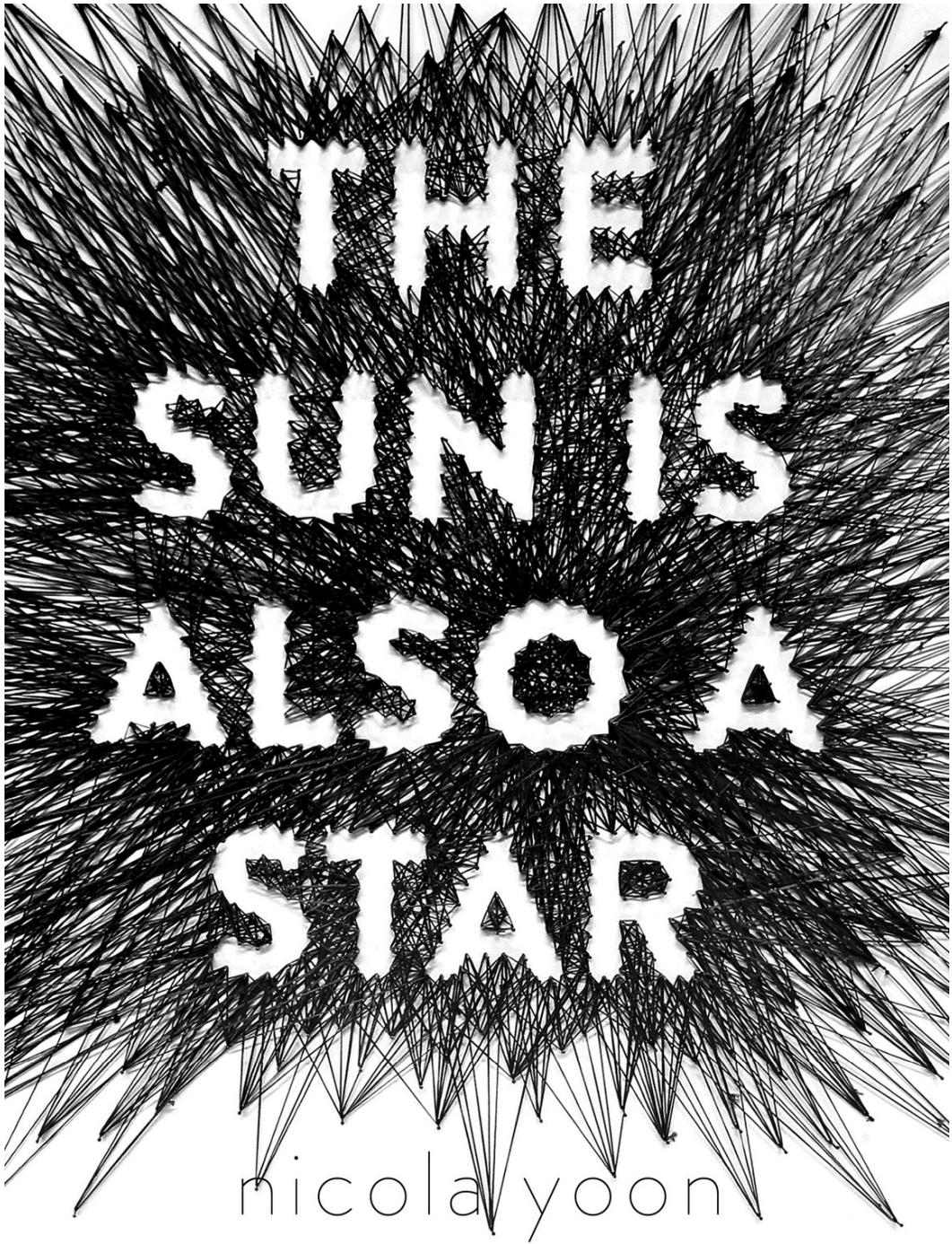


nicolayoon



Also by  
Nicola Yoon

*Everything, Everything*



nicola yoon

DELACORTE PRESS

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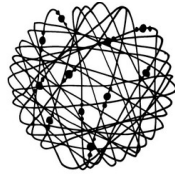
*For my mom and dad, who taught me about dreams and how to catch them*

*It does no harm to the romance of the sunset to know a little  
about it.*

—*Pale Blue Dot*, Carl Sagan

*Do I dare  
Disturb the universe?  
In a minute there is time  
For decisions and revisions which a minute will reverse.*

—*The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock*, T. S. Eliot



# prologue

CARL SAGAN SAID that if you want to make an apple pie from scratch, you must first invent the universe. When he says “from scratch,” he means from *nothing*. He means from a time before the world even existed. If you want to make an apple pie from nothing at all, you have to start with the Big Bang and expanding universes, neutrons, ions, atoms, black holes, suns, moons, ocean tides, the Milky Way, Earth, evolution, dinosaurs, extinction-level events, platypuses, *Homo erectus*, Cro-Magnon man, etc. You have to start at the beginning. You must invent fire. You need water and fertile soil and seeds. You need cows and people to milk them and more people to churn that milk into butter. You need wheat and sugar cane and apple trees. You need chemistry and biology. For a really good apple pie, you need the arts. For an apple pie that can last for generations, you need the printing press and the Industrial Revolution and maybe even a poem.

To make a thing as simple as an apple pie, you have to create the whole wide world.



# daniel

## *Local Teen Accepts Destiny, Agrees to Become Doctor, Stereotype*

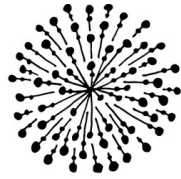
It's Charlie's fault that my summer (and now fall) has been one absurd headline after another. Charles Jae Won Bae, aka Charlie, my older brother, firstborn son of a firstborn son, surprised my parents (and all their friends, and the entire gossiping Korean community of Flushing, New York) by getting kicked out of Harvard University (*Best School*, my mother said, when his acceptance letter arrived). Now he's been kicked out of *Best School*, and all summer my mom frowns and doesn't quite believe and doesn't quite understand.

*Why you grades so bad? They kick you out? Why they kick you out? Why not make you stay and study more?*

My dad says, *Not kick out. Require to withdraw. Not the same as kick out.*

Charlie grumbles: *It's just temporary, only for two semesters.*

Under this unholy barrage of my parents' confusion and shame and disappointment, even I almost feel bad for Charlie. Almost.



# natasha

MY MOM SAYS IT'S TIME for me to give up now, and that what I'm doing is futile. She's upset, so her accent is thicker than usual, and every statement is a question.

"You no think is time for you to give up now, Tasha? You no think that what you doing is futile?"

She draws out the first syllable of *futile* for a second too long. My dad doesn't say anything. He's mute with anger or impotence. I'm never sure which. His frown is so deep and so complete that it's hard to imagine his face with another expression. If this were even just a few months ago, I'd be sad to see him like this, but now I don't really care. He's the reason we're all in this mess.

Peter, my nine-year-old brother, is the only one of us happy with this turn of events. Right now, he's packing his suitcase and playing "No Woman, No Cry" by Bob Marley. "Old-school packing music," he called it.

Despite the fact that he was born here in America, Peter says he wants to live in Jamaica. He's always been pretty shy and has a hard time making friends. I think he imagines that Jamaica will be a paradise and that, somehow, things will be better for him there.

The four of us are in the living room of our one-bedroom apartment. The living room doubles as a bedroom, and Peter and I share it. It has two small sofa beds that we pull out at night, and a bright blue curtain down the

middle for privacy. Right now the curtain is pulled aside so you can see both our halves at once.

It's pretty easy to guess which one of us wants to leave and which wants to stay. My side still looks lived-in. My books are on my small IKEA shelf. My favorite picture of me and my best friend, Bev, is still sitting on my desk. We're wearing safety goggles and sexy-pouting at the camera in physics lab. The safety goggles were my idea. The sexy-pouting was hers. I haven't removed a single item of clothing from my dresser. I haven't even taken down my NASA star map poster. It's huge—actually eight posters that I taped together—and shows all the major stars, constellations, and sections of the Milky Way visible from the Northern Hemisphere. It even has instructions on how to find Polaris and navigate your way by stars in case you get lost. The poster tubes I bought for packing it are leaning unopened against the wall.

On Peter's side, virtually all the surfaces are bare, most of his possessions already packed away into boxes and suitcases.

My mom is right, of course—what I'm doing is futile. Still, I grab my headphones, my physics textbook, and some comics. If I have time to kill, maybe I can finish up my homework and read.

Peter shakes his head at me. "Why are you bringing that?" he asks, meaning the textbook. "We're leaving, Tasha. You don't have to turn in *homework*."

Peter has just discovered the power of sarcasm. He uses it every chance he gets.

I don't bother responding to him, just put my headphones on and head for the door. "Back soon," I say to my mom.

She kisses her teeth and turns away. I remind myself that she's not upset with me. *Tasha, is not you me upset with, you know?* is something she says a lot these days. I'm going to the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) building in downtown Manhattan to see if someone there can help me. We are undocumented immigrants, and we're being deported tonight.

Today is my last chance to try to convince someone—or fate—to help me find a way to stay in America.

To be clear: I don't believe in fate. But I'm desperate.