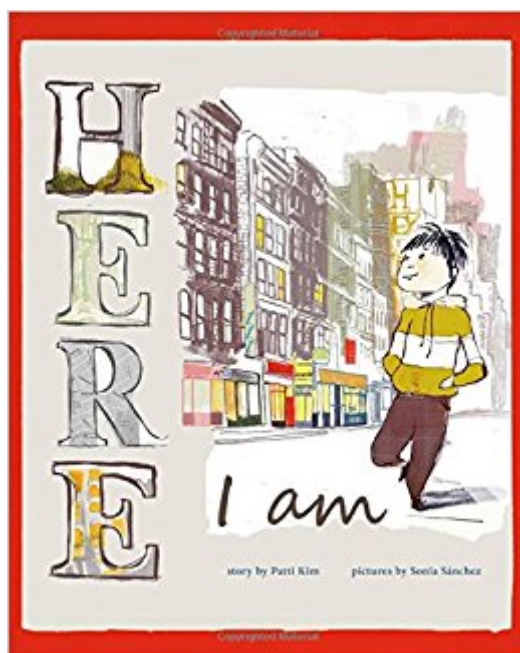


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# Here I Am



## Synopsis

Newly arrived from their faraway homeland, a boy and his family enter into the lights, noise, and traffic of a busy American city in this dazzling wordless picture book. The language is unfamiliar. Food, habits, games, and gestures are puzzling. The boy clings tightly to his special keepsake from home and wonders how he will find his way. How will he once again become the happy, confident kid he used to be? Walk in his shoes as he takes the first tentative steps toward discovering joy in his new world. A poignant and affirming view of the immigrant experience.

## Book Information

Lexile Measure: NP (What's this?)

Paperback: 40 pages

Publisher: Picture Window Books (February 1, 2015)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1479519316

ISBN-13: 978-1479519316

Product Dimensions: 8.7 x 0.2 x 10.7 inches

Shipping Weight: 4.2 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.9 out of 5 stars 14 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #242,566 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #40 in Books > Children's Books > Geography & Cultures > Emigrants & Immigrants #1628 in Books > Children's Books > Education & Reference > History

Age Range: 5 - 10 years

Grade Level: Kindergarten - 5

## Customer Reviews

This contemplative, wordless picture book weaves the tale of a young immigrant boy's first journey to his new home in America. Overcome by the foreign city and its lights, noisiness, alien shapes, and new language—depicted in nonsensical letters and symbols—the boy takes solace in a single red seed pocketed from his past, which he carries with him everywhere and which inspires colorful flights of imagination. When the seed falls out of his brownstone window, he ventures beyond his fear to discover generosity, friendship, and a new beginning, sharing the things about his past that he loves in his new place. Kim's tale is well wrought without the use of words and tailor-made for emerging readers, and it's perfectly matched by Sanchez's truly wonderful, sprawling art and colors, bringing the city to life in an understated yet warm crescendo. *Here I Am* is

a unique, smart, and welcoming book designed for starting fresh and softening fears. Grades K-3.

--Ben Spanner --This text refers to the Library Binding edition.

Vivid illustrations depict a touching wordless story of surprising depth . . . The universal tale of the irony of loss that leads to acceptance and growth is portrayed with a rich yet simple sequence of lively visuals. This is a charming and meaningful book I wish I'd had when my son was young.

--Eugenia Kim, award-winning author of *The Calligrapher's Daughter*. . . a marvelous picture book, a motile encapsulation of the turbulent world of a child uprooted from a faraway land, the confusion and sadness of his strange new world. Strongly compelling with powerful and whimsical visuals, young readers will feel deeply for and celebrate with this child as he finds himself burgeoning like a seed upon this beautiful soil called America. A must read. What a triumph. --Da Chen, *New York Times* best-selling author of the memoir *Colors of the Mountain*  
A KIRKUS BEST BOOK OF THE YEAR! Beautiful, evocative pictures tell the story of a boy who comes from an Asian land to a big U.S. city. Images in this virtually wordless, slender graphic novel range from dreamlike curlicues to bold, dark cityscapes and emotional vignettes. The boy looks out of the window of a plane, great sadness in his body language. He and his father, mother and baby sister go through a crowded airport and a noisy and bewildering city to a small apartment. He finds the subway and the streets confusing, and he does not understand anything at school. The boy cherishes a red seed he has evidently brought from home. By accident, he drops it out the apartment window and then goes on a frantic search for it, finding new and interesting places along the way. He discovers he loves big, salted pretzels and shares some with the pigeons. When a girl with bouncy braids and beads in her hair climbs a tree and hangs upside down, the red seed falls out of her pocket. She and the boy plant it together, and as the seasons pass, friendship, seed and baby sister grow. An author's note describes the storyteller's voyage at age 4 from Korea to Washington, D.C. SÃ¡nchez has captured a kaleidoscope of emotion and powerful sensations in a way children will grasp completely. It's *The Arrival* for younger readers. STARRED --Kirkus --This text refers to the Library Binding edition.

*Here I Am* by Patti Kim and illustrated by Sonia SÃ¡nchez is a wordless book yet it tells a complex story of one boy's immigration, and struggle to make America his home. Because it relies on the reader's imagination to supply the text, it becomes uniquely personal while remaining a universal story as well. As a wordless book, the success of the story relies on the quality of the artwork.

SÃ¡nchez's complex illustrations succeed. They capture the many emotions and struggles which the boy faces. The story begins with the boy peering out an airplane window. This is not the face of an

excited child thrilled to be flying the skies to an anticipated destination. Sadness paints his face. Subsequent illustrations depict signs with random letters. Their message remains gibberish to eyes unfamiliar with English. We follow the boy through his days as he confronts, confusion, loneliness, fear, sadness and isolation. Until he finds a seed which becomes a talisman for possibility, for hope and positivity. Eventually, the seed brings him friendship and a feeling of belonging. In the final illustration, the boy imagines that he sees the words "Here I am." Now he not only can recognize and read the English words, he realizes that he belongs. As part of the back matter of the book, the author includes comments that explain the back story which motivated her to write "Here I Am." With her family, she immigrated to the U.S. from Korea. with her family. This is her personal narrative but it is also more global than that. She writes, "If you are an immigrant or maybe just facing something new and different in your life, I hope my story helps you see that you're not alone." Adoption-attuned (AQ) Lens: Although this story originates from the author's personal experience immigrating to this country with her family, it still has the potential to click with kids who were adopted transculturally or transracially. The emotions and the child's journey learning to cope with being moved to an entirely new life, culture, country and language will resonate with many adoptees. Most adoptees can identify with the struggle to "fit" in a new space--family, school, community or, country. Gayle H. Swift, ABC, Adoption & Me: A Multicultural Picture Book"

A wordless book that tells a lot of stories. Rich and beautiful. Wordless books enable parents and caregivers to hear what a child is really thinking.

Great book for children.

Awesome illustration book

When a young immigrant boy arrives in New York City with his family, he is overwhelmed with all the wonder and confusion of such a big city. A closer look at the boy's pocket reveals a red seed tucked away. For some reason that seed makes him feel really good. Perhaps it reminds him of happier times. Unfortunately the red seed is of no help when it comes to the boy's struggles with learning the route to his new school and understanding the teacher and the students in the classroom. There are no words for the loneliness and anger he feels. Then one day he accidentally drops the red seed out the tiny apartment window. The seed falls on a little girl's head. She picks it up and runs away. During the boy's search for the little girl, his strange new world begins to make

"sense." "Here I Am" is a wordless picture book. The story flows in a series of framed drawings, which invoke the feeling of paging through a photo album. Because of this design Sonia Sánchez's kinetic illustrations stimulate discussion about the boy's actions and feelings. Patti Kim's poignant story about emigrating from Korea to America as a child appears in the Dear Reader section at the end of the book to help confirm the reader's thoughts about what he sees in the pictures. Any child who is faced with a new experience, or helped out a new friend, will find hope and a kindred spirit among these moving images.

I opened *Here I Am* on my e-reader and, because I didn't read the synopsis closely enough, I was surprised to find that the story is told completely in pictures. There is no text whatsoever! And it moved me to tears. The concept of portraying a child's experience of moving to a foreign land is brilliantly executed. I think my favorite part is how the signs around him - in town, in school - are complete gibberish at first, and slowly become more clear as time passes. The artwork is just stunning. It captures every feeling and new experience perfectly: lonely, overwhelmed, excited, curious, happy. The sights and smells and even motion felt so real when looking at these pages! Sanchez is a truly gifted illustrator. I remember feeling many of the same emotions as the boy in this story when my family moved to Italy when I was a kid. *Here I Am* is an encouraging book for children of immigrants, expats, or even members of the military, whether the family is moving to the United States or leaving it to live somewhere overseas. I received a copy of this book from the publisher via NetGalley in exchange for an honest review. I did not receive any other compensation for this review.

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