

For Sam, Linnea, and Wallace.
May you follow your own voices, too. — D.R.

Big thanks to my assistant/husband Wenchen. — R.Q.

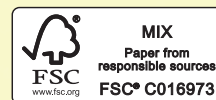
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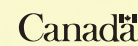
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BY *Dan Riskin* ILLUSTRATED BY *Rachel Qiuqi*



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It was finally time for Fiona's first flight,
but Fiona didn't feel ready.

It was too dark!
What if she hit a wall or got lost?
How was she supposed to fly
when she couldn't see a thing?

She took a deep breath
and opened her wings . . .

. . . but her toes

were too scared to let go.



Mama called out from a shadow nearby:
“Fiona, remember . . . LISTEN.”

Then Mama unhooked her feet and was gone.

Listen to what? It made no sense.



But Fiona didn’t know what else to do,



so she hung from the ceiling
and twisted her body,
pointing her big round ears
in every direction.





Fiona heard many of the sounds she was used to.

The steady **bibble-babble-bubble** far away,

a **SPLAT, SPLAT, SPLAT** down below,

and a very faint **takka-takka-tik** nearby.


Although Fiona couldn't see what made those sounds,
they were familiar. They made her feel safe.

But how would listening help her fly?
What was Mama talking about?

takka-takka-tik

bibble-babble-bubble

SPLAT, SPLAT, SPLAT



Fiona missed being carried by Mama.
She missed the stars in the sky,
the smell of the fruits that Mama ate,
and the taste of warm milk.

What if she never learned to fly?
Would she ever go outside again?

Fiona sniffled, then started to whimper.