

Lucky Diaz

is a multi-Latin Grammy Award-winning and six-time Emmy-nominated musician and songwriter. His work has been praised by NPR, *Billboard* magazine, and the *New York Times*. In 2020, his album *Buenos Diaz* was named an official selection of notable works for children by the American Library Association. He currently lives in Los Angeles with his wife, Alisha, and daughter, Indiana Maven. His favorite paleta flavor is horchata. www.luckydiazmusic.com

Micah Player

began his career designing and illustrating for Paul Frank Industries in Southern California. He is the author of *Chloe, Instead* and the illustrator of several books and games for children, including *Vote for Our Future!* and *Friday Night Wrestlefest*. He lives in a little house beneath a giant tree in the Utah mountains, with a lovely schoolteacher named Stephanie. They are the parents of two rad kids, one Yorkshire terrier, and several Casio keyboards. His favorite paleta is fresas con crema. www.micahplayer.com



Jacket art © 2021 by Micah Player
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PALETERO MAN

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HARPER

PALETERO MAN

by Latin Grammy winner
LUCKY DIAZ

illustrated by
MICAH PLAYER

Listen to
the live song at
www.hc.com/paleteroman

Ages 4–8

What's the best way to cool off
on a hot summer day?
Run quick! And find Paletero José!

Ring! Ring! Ring!
Can you hear his call?
Paletas for one!
Paletas for all!

Inspired by the Lucky Band's popular
song of the same name, *Paletero
Man* is a truly refreshing tale of
determination, kindness, ice pops—
and the true meaning of being part
of a community.

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by Latin Grammy winner
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MICAH PLAYER



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In loving memory of Tilt Tyree, 1977-2020. He turned daydreams into memories, and friends into family. Micah and Lucky

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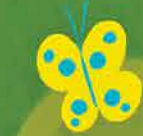
To Alisha. The dreamiest of dreamers.—L.D.

For my mom, lover of words and hider of the good ice cream.

Sorry for all the times I found it.—M.P.



In the hottest month,
on the hottest day,
in the city of Dreamers,
California—LA,

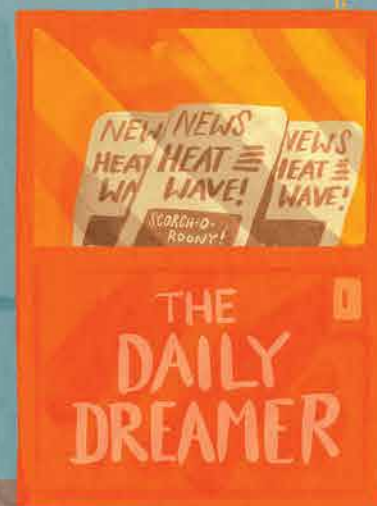


I grab my dinero
and make my way
to find my friend
Paletero José!

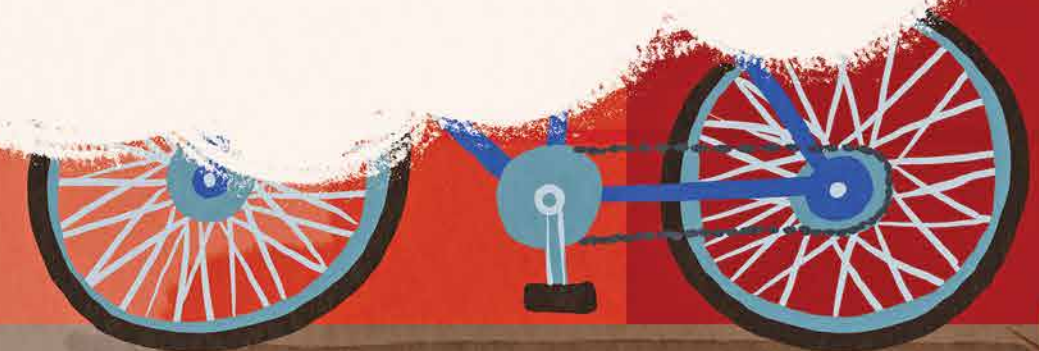


Pushing his cart
full of cool treats,
bailando, he dances
to mariachi beats.

He has dozens of flavors.
Mmm—I can already taste.



Will he have my favorite?
There's not a second to waste!



There's Tío Ernesto!
He asks, "Tamale today?"



¡No, gracias, Tío!
Where's Paletero José?

"RING! RING! RING!"



Can you hear his call?

Paletas for one!
Paletas for all!



“Hola, querido.
Would you like a sample today?”

¡No, gracias, señorita!
Where’s Paletero José?

Una aroma is calling,
caught in the breeze.
It’s a BBQ smell
coming from Ms. Lee’s!



"RING!
RING!
RING!"

Can you hear his call?
Paletas for one!
Paletas for all!

The only way
to beat this heat
is with an icy-cold
paleta treat.

There's my friend
from the bike shop.



Lo siento, Frank.
There's no time to stop!



"RING!"

"RING!"

"RING!"

Can you hear his call?
Paletas for one!
Paletas for all!



Will he have all the flavors,
the colors I love?
Horchata, canela,
the kind I dream of.

¿Chocolate, elote,
sandía, o fresa,
arroz con leche,
miel, o cereza?



Can you hear his call?
Paletas for one!
Paletas for all!

Here he is!
Paletero José!
Finally, I'll get cool
on this very hot day!



Here he is!
Paletero José!
Finally, I'll get cool
on this very hot day!



He has all my favorites!
Can it be true?
¡Chocolate, vainilla,
y melón, too!

But today I'd like piña.
Do you have that sabor?
He smiles a big smile—
“¡Claro! Para ti, ¡el mejor!”

I reach into my pocket
to pay for my paleta . . .



¡Mi dinero! My money!
¡Está perdido!
It's missing. It's lost!
¿Donde se a ido?

What will I do?
What can I say?
How can I buy
my paleta today?



And just at that moment,
who do I see?

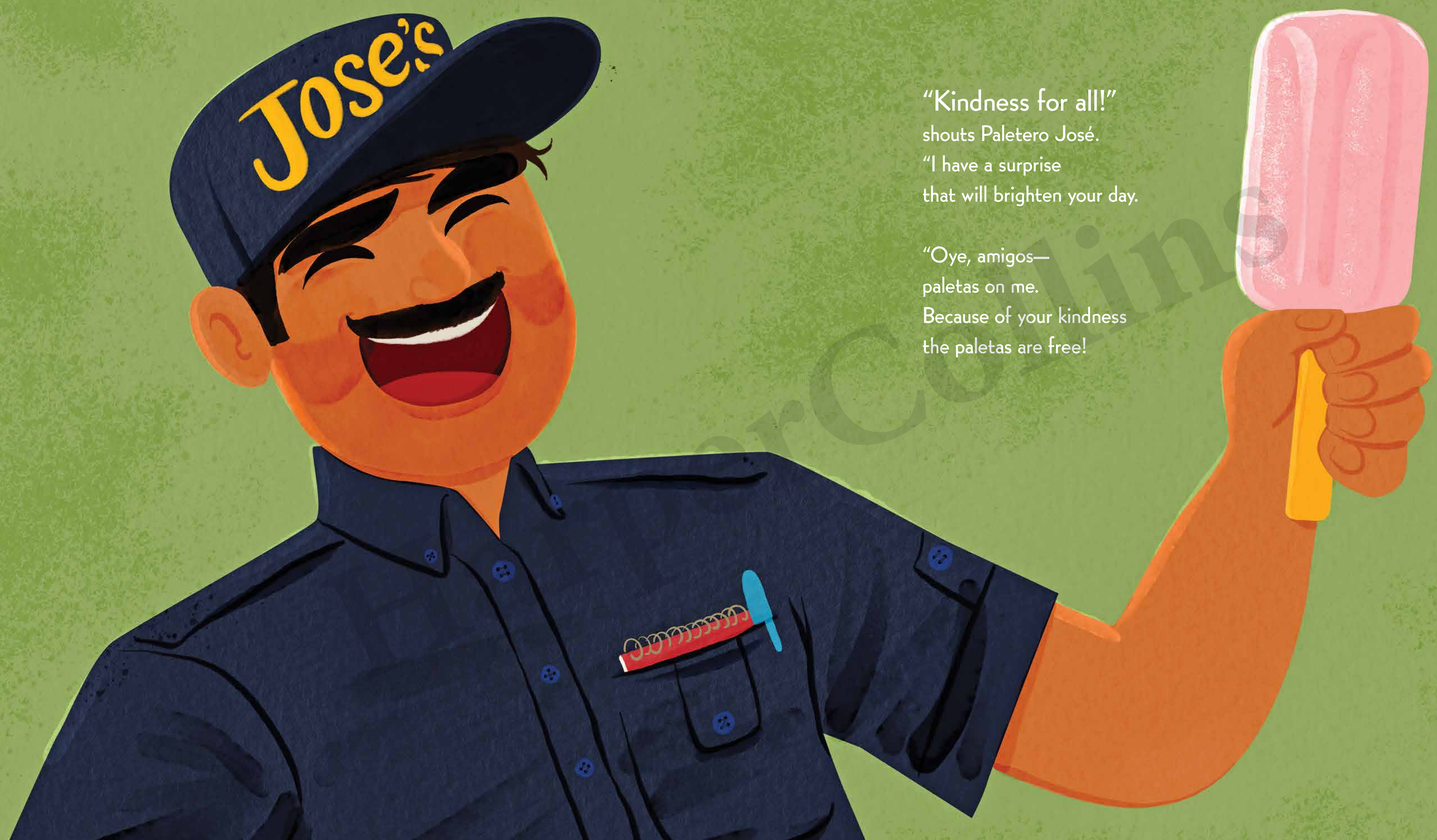
My neighborhood friends,
Tío, Frank, and Ms. Lee.



"We called out your name
when we saw your coins drop,
but you must have not heard us,
because you didn't stop."



Muchas gracias, amigos.
What would I have done?
I guess I dropped my money
when I was on the run.



"Kindness for all!"

shouts Paletero José.

"I have a surprise
that will brighten your day.

"Oye, amigos—
paletas on me.
Because of your kindness
the paletas are free!"

“Whether it’s stormy
or whether it’s sunny,
whether or not
you have any money,



“I’ll always help out
an amigo in need.



Yo te prometo—



an amigo indeed!”



In the hottest month,
on the hottest day,
we have fun in the sun
with Paletero José.

"RING! RING! RING!"

We can hear his call!
Paletas for one!
Paletas for all!





Author's Note

The smell of street tacos, the vivid rainbow colors of vendor umbrellas, and the sounds of children choosing their favorite flavor from the paletero cart on a Saturday afternoon. These are some of the sights and sounds of Eighth Street in Los Angeles. My neighborhood, my home, and my inspiration for *Paletero Man*—the book and song.

Spanning the neighborhoods from Koreatown to Boyle Heights, Eighth Street has endless numbers of taquerias, K-town BBQs, colorful murals, and vendor-lined streets. This historic stretch is also the birthplace of the immigrant street food vending culture in Los Angeles. Snack trips to the elotero cart (Mexican street corn), visits to our friend selling tamales out of her cooler on the corner, and, of course, weekend paletas in the park really shape our lives and fill our stomachs.

As a Mexican American and an Angeleno, I've taken great pride and joy in writing and sharing this picture book with you. And as a Chicanx parent, being able to celebrate our vibrant culture and read this book with my daughter is really the most special experience of all.

I hope you taste and imagine the fun of choosing your own refreshing paleta when reading *Paletero Man*.

Buen provecho,

Lucky Diaz