



THE HIDDEN STAR

by childbook.ai



Gabriel sat quietly at the dinner table as his family celebrated Raphael's latest academic award. His mother beamed with pride, his father clapped Raphael's back, and little Michael performed a silly dance that made everyone laugh. No one noticed when Gabriel slipped away from the table, feeling as transparent as the glass of water he left behind.



That night, unable to sleep, Gabriel climbed onto the roof through his bedroom window. The Manila sky was unusually clear, with stars twinkling like diamonds on black velvet. Gabriel felt a strange connection to one particularly bright star that seemed hidden behind others until you looked at just the right angle. He stayed there until dawn, feeling for the first time that something was calling to him alone.



Over the next months, Gabriel saved his allowance to buy a small telescope. He borrowed astronomy books from the library and studied star charts while his brothers slept. His grades in science began to improve dramatically, though few noticed amid Raphael's university accomplishments. Gabriel didn't mind the lack of attention anymore; he had found something that was just his own.



When Gabriel's science teacher announced an astronomy competition, he entered his research on a peculiar star pattern he had been tracking. The judges were astonished by his detailed observations of what appeared to be a previously undocumented celestial anomaly. When Gabriel won first place, his family finally saw him—truly saw him—standing in his own light rather than in his brothers' shadows. "Some stars," his father said with tears in his eyes, "shine so quietly you almost miss their brilliance."



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