



Gap Teeth Girl

醜小芽兒

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Little Tooth is a cheerful little girl who always flashes the brightest smile in photos. As she grows older, she reaches the milestone of losing her baby teeth. Excited and curious about this sign of growing up, Little Tooth eagerly anticipates the moment when she finally loses one of her milk teeth. However, the experience doesn't go quite as she expected, leaving her feeling frustrated and disappointed.

Every child goes through the stage of losing teeth, but reactions from others can sometimes create insecurities, making children hesitant to show their smiles in photos. This story, written by experienced children's author Ching-Yen Liu and professional dentist Chun-Tai Lu, and illustrated by I-Chu Tsao beautifully captures this heartwarming growing-up journey.

The book aims to help children navigate the frustrations and challenges of growing up, teaching them proper dental hygiene while encouraging parents and children to embrace the tooth-losing process together. It inspires families to welcome this natural step in life with excitement and joy.



Author **Ching-yen Liu**

As a child, Ching-yen Liu was afraid of dentists—until he met the gentle and attentive Uncle Donkey, who not only helped him overcome his fear but also became a storytelling partner, inspiring and guiding others through his work. Today, Liu translates children's books, writes stories, and hosts children's TV shows.



Author **Chun-tai Lu (Uncle Donkey)**

Chun-tai Lu, known as Uncle Donkey, graduated from Taipei Medical University with a degree in dentistry. He also holds a master's degree from the National Taiwan University College of Public Health and a doctorate in dentistry from Kaohsiung Medical University. With 40 years of experience treating patients at Changhua Christian Hospital, he has also written extensively about dentistry.



Illustrator **I-Chu Tsao**

I-Chu Tsao studied clay sculpture in college and later worked as a storyboard and film set design artist. A lover of Korean culture, she is an artist and translator with a wide range of interests. She believes artistic creation can express feelings that words cannot convey and that creating art requires living well. Her work has been nominated for Korea's Nami Island International Picture Book Illustration Prize and the World Illustration Award.

Losing Teeth to Embrace New Beginnings: A Picture Book to Give Children the Courage to Face the Next Stage of Growth

by Tzu Ning Huang

In a person's life, milk teeth typically stay until around the age of seven, after which there's a period when both milk teeth and permanent teeth coexist. During this time, children usually experience noticeable physical changes, and it is a time when they become especially aware of others' opinions and start to form their own sense of aesthetics. A gap-toothed smile can feel awkward and uncomfortable, and many children may feel angry or insecure about themselves during this phase. However, this period is actually a great opportunity to guide children into recognizing the new stage of their growth.

Gap Teeth Girl tells a simple story about a young girl's process of losing and growing teeth. From the gap in her smile to the growth of new teeth, she initially feels self-conscious and insecure when her new teeth are mocked. Over time,

she learns to accept her new, unique, and perfect smile. The growth of teeth takes time, just like how the ugly duckling needs time to transform into a swan. With a simple narrative and the illustrator's warm, gentle strokes, this book becomes a great choice for parent-child reading. It not only helps children navigate the physical changes of this stage but also addresses the emotional changes they may face. For parents, it provides an excellent opportunity to address and support their children's emotional reactions during this time.

Tzu Ning Huang is an editorial consultant. She loves to listen and tell stories, enjoys conversations and encounters with others, and appreciates time alone. She also likes to use photography and writing to explore the world. Now she works as an editor of Books from Taiwan 2.0.

When Children Lose Their Baby Teeth: A Note from the Author

by Chun-tai Lu

When children begin to lose their baby teeth, they often go through a stage where their new teeth appear oddly mismatched with the shape of their face. Sometimes, the newly emerged front teeth are large, resembling a rabbit's teeth, with a noticeable size difference compared to the smaller baby teeth. Additionally, the new teeth may appear more yellowish compared to the pristine whiteness of baby teeth, with gaps that don't align neatly. What can be even more concerning is when sharp "extra teeth" begin to sprout near baby teeth that haven't yet fallen out. This is the "ugly duckling stage" that every child experiences during the process of losing their baby teeth.

The emergence of teeth follows a

specific sequence. After the four upper front teeth grow in, the next to appear are not the canines but the premolars, followed by the canines. Permanent canines are significantly wider than their baby tooth counterparts. As they emerge, along with adjustments in bone and tooth alignment, the gaps between the front teeth gradually close or improve, resulting in a more harmonious dental arrangement over time.

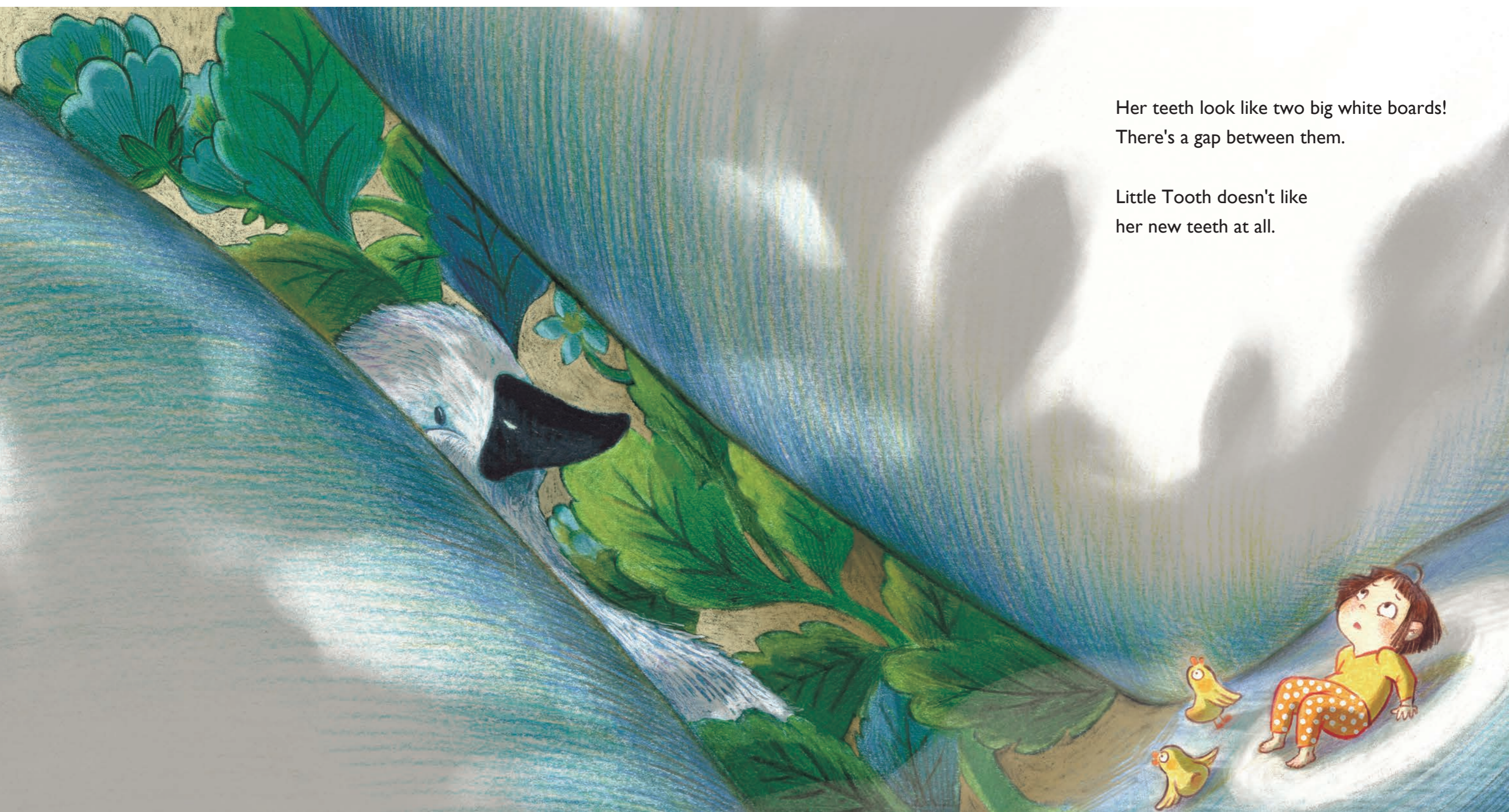
The "ugly duckling stage" is most noticeable between the ages of seven and nine. During this time, the gaps between the front teeth tend to be more pronounced as children begin losing their baby teeth. Combined with the yellowish tint of permanent teeth and their mismatched size, their smile

often resembles that of a duckling still shedding its down feathers. However, these conditions naturally improve or even disappear entirely with age, bone development, and the emergence of canines.

It is normal for permanent teeth to appear slightly more yellow than baby teeth. As children grow, factors like sun exposure and other natural changes will minimize the visibility of these color differences, making teeth whitening treatments unnecessary at this stage. If sharp "extra teeth" appear, it is advisable to have them removed early to ensure they do not obstruct the space needed for other teeth to grow. If gaps between the front teeth remain as other teeth come in, orthodontic or corrective measures

can be considered to address alignment issues.

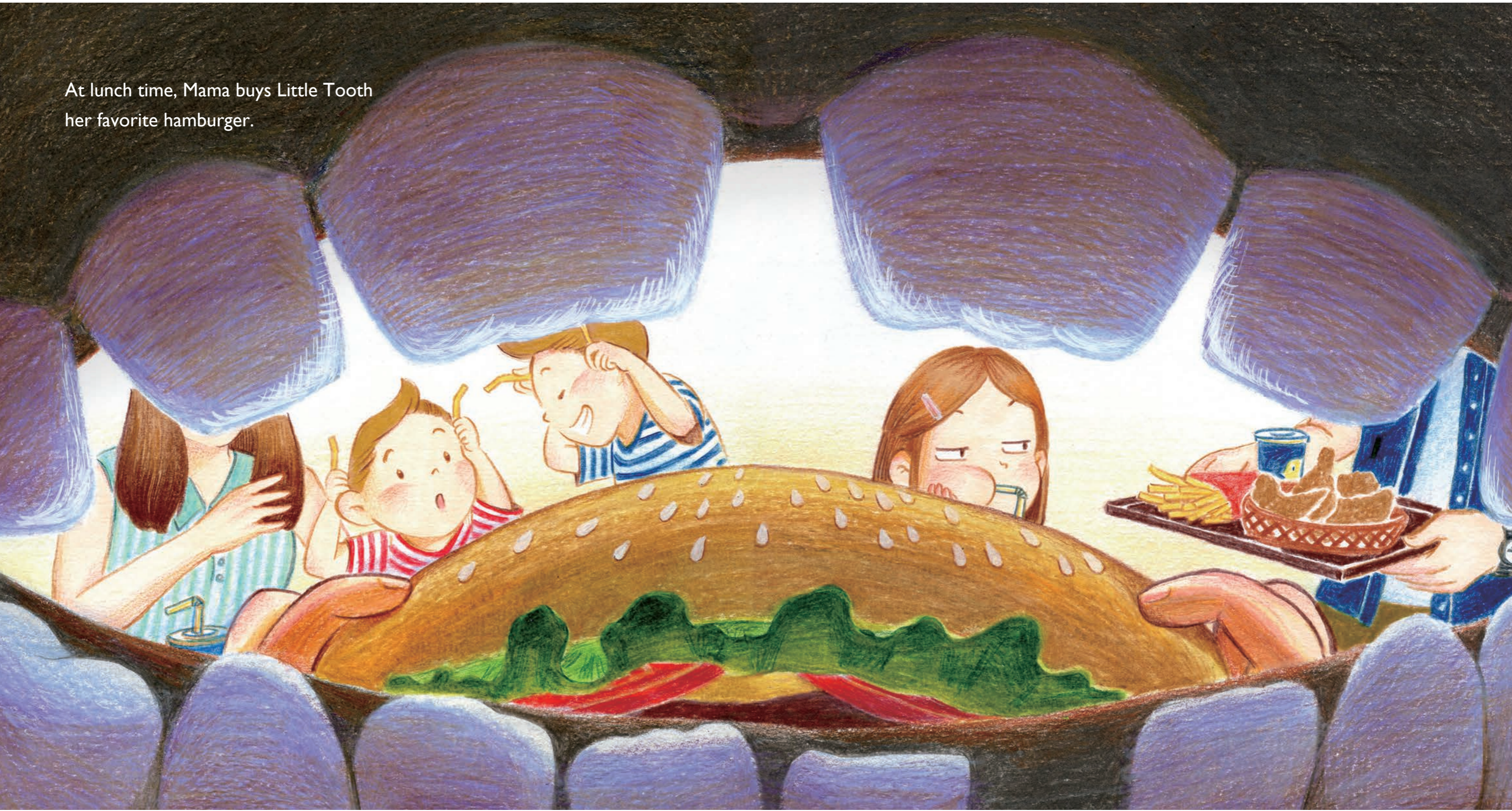
This foreword has been edited for the purposes of this booklet.



Her teeth look like two big white boards!
There's a gap between them.

Little Tooth doesn't like
her new teeth at all.

At lunch time, Mama buys Little Tooth
her favorite hamburger.



Little Tooth stops crying.

"Actually, the new teeth are bigger,
to help you get ready for growing up."

Uncle Donkey says, "Don't worry. Just be patient.
Ugly ducklings become beautiful swans."

