



# The Biggest Strawberry Cake

A Full English translation is available.

## 最大的草莓蛋糕

**Author:** Yi-Fei Jin **Adaptor:** Ching-Yen Liu **Illustrator:** Yu-Ling Tsai

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**BFT 2.0 Translator:** Brenda Lin

*If I were a baker, I would make caramels for my big sister. I would tell her that we should be like caramels—tough and hard to chew. When other kids make fun of us or bully us, we won't be afraid. If I were a baker, I would make a chimney cake for Grandma, thanking her for always giving me the warmest hugs, cooking delicious meals for me, and wrapping me in her love.*

Though Yi-Fei's parents are not always by her side, she is surrounded by the loving care of her family. From an early age, she dreams of giving something back, imagining herself as a baker making desserts filled with love and gratitude. As she puts it, "What I do know is that the day I become a real baker, I will make the biggest strawberry cake and invite the whole family to eat this cake, so that we can all be together."

Since 2004, the CommonWealth Education Foundation has launched the Hope Reading Program, providing free, high-quality reading resources to approximately 200 rural schools each year. The Little Writer Illustrated Story Competition, an extension of this program, encourages children from these communities to share their voices through creative storytelling. In 2021, Yi-Fei Jin, a fourth-grade student, received a Judges' Recommendation Award in the Middle Grades Picture Book category for her illustrated work *If I Want to Be a Baker*. This later became the foundation for *The Biggest Strawberry Cake*.



## Author **Yi-Fei Jin**

Yi-Fei Jin is from Taiwan's Bunun Indigenous community and received a Judges' Recommendation Award at the 2021 Little Writer Illustrated Story Competition. She loves desserts. Jin grew up with limited resources but abundant family love. She created this book as an expression of gratitude to her family, imagining all the sweets she hopes to make for them.



## Adaptor **Ching-Yen Liu**

Ching-Yen Liu is a popular writer who has published dozens of children's books and myriad stories for young readers. Liu has also hosted children's reading programs on television, continually sowing the seeds of reading through myriad forms and media. Since its inaugural year, Liu has been deeply involved with the CommonWealth Magazine Education Foundation's Hope Reading Program. Traveling to remote elementary schools, he has worked with corporate partners as both a reading instructor and volunteer trainer. Seeing the program's achievements today feels to him like having helped raise a generation of children who love reading.



## Illustrator **Yu-Ling Tsai**

Yu-Ling Tsai is a graduate of the Illustration and Animation program at Kingston University in London. Formerly a greeting card and stationery designer, she is now a freelance illustrator whose work appears in books and newspapers. While illustrating this picture book, she deeply connected with Yi-Fei's emotions and love for her family. Tsai hopes that her illustrations, together with the text, convey the same warmth to readers.

# Walking with Her to Finish the Story

by **Ching-Yen Liu**

When I first read Yi-Fei's work, I immediately wanted to meet this child.

I wanted to see what kind of girl she was. This was someone who had never baked before, yet she could create so many delightful desserts on paper using nothing but her imagination. I also wanted to tell her that I know how to make every dessert in her story, and that I could help her fulfill her wish—to express love and gratitude to her family through homemade sweets. This was the part of her story that touched me most deeply.

However, when I finally met her at the award ceremony—this slender little girl shrinking quietly beside her grandmother—I felt an even deeper sense of tenderness and concern. I listened as she spoke in a softly trembling voice about her mother leaving when she was still a baby; about how she could only ease her longing for her father by reading

his letters over and over again; and about her life with her grandmother and older sister, in which they deeply rely on one another. I found myself at a loss for words. All I could do was hook pinkies with her and promise that I would “bake” this warm, sweet, love-filled story together with her.

I believe that when the family Yi-Fei loves holds this book in their hands, they will feel the abundance of love she has poured into it. And I believe that every reader of this book will feel the same.

*This afterword has been edited for the purposes of this booklet.*

*Ching-Yen Liu is a celebrated children's book author and translator. He also served as a judge for the Little Writer Illustrated Story Competition and is the writer who adapted this book.*



How I wish I could be that baker on TV!  
Then I could make whatever dessert I wanted,  
and I could make it for everyone to eat!

If I were a baker, I would make caramels for my big sister.  
Even though I feel sad when she teases me,  
I still want to thank her for always being by my side.  
I want to tell her that we should be like caramels—tough and hard to chew.  
Even when other kids make fun of us or bully us, we wouldn't be afraid.



If I were a baker,  
I would make a strawberry mille-feuille for my aunt,  
and thank her for always bringing delicious desserts for me to try.  
One time, she told me that families should be like mille-feuilles—  
sticking together like those thousand layers!

