



Smile with Simon



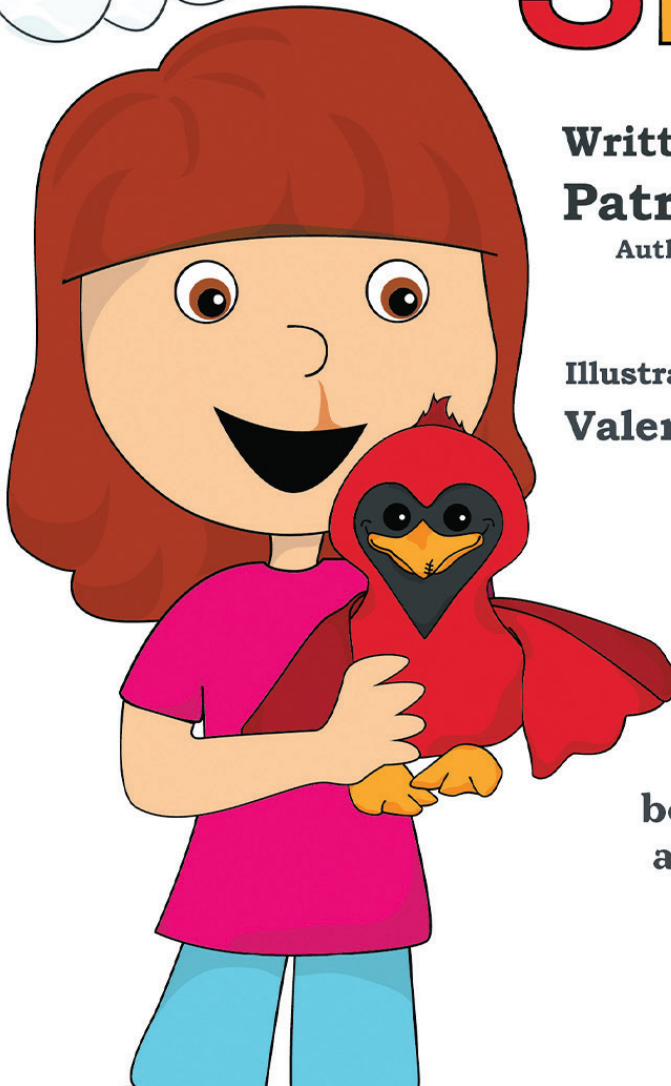
Written By:

Patricia Ann Simon R.N.

Author of Simon and the Buddy Branch

Illustrated By:

Valerie McCord



**How a bird named Simon,
born with a gap in his beak, and
a girl named Patty, born with a
cleft lip, became friends.**

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I would like to thank my family. They helped shape my personality, face obstacles, and share credit on every goal I have achieved. They taught me about kindness, and that everyone is different and beautiful.

I would also like to thank my wife, Colleen Fallon, for her constant love and support. I love her with every beat of my heart.

And finally, to my wonderful friends. You saw beyond my scar. You gave me unconditional love and have made my heart **smile.**

FOREWORD

Writing a book addressed to very young children requires special skills and talent.

Writing a children's book for children born with facial differences, based on personal experience, requires not only skills and talent, but also courage.

Patricia Simon was able to write two colorful books, *Smile with Simon* and *Simon and the Buddy Branch*, in an effort to educate children, parents, and educators dealing with children born with facial differences.

The message is simple but also very powerful: be tolerant and embrace children born with facial differences. Be supportive because they are wonderful human beings and deserve warm acceptance, not exclusion.

There is a message for the children born with facial differences as well: be brave—you are great kids, and with the support of your doctors, family, and community, you will have a successful future.

I spent my entire career treating patients born with facial differences, and I want to congratulate Patricia Simon for this beautiful initiative.

As a patient of mine said once, “It does not matter how you look outside but how you feel inside!”

This patient, Natalie, is about to graduate from college and enter the workforce with a big smile.

Thanks, Patricia!

**Mimis Cohen MD, FACS, FAAP
Professor and Chief Division of
Plastic, Reconstruction and Cosmetic Surgery
University of Illinois, Chicago
Director Craniofacial Center UIC**

Once upon a time,
there lived a **bright red cardinal**
named **Simon**.



Simon's favorite thing to do was
to fly from tree to tree,
chirping as loudly as he could.

Simon was not an ordinary bird.
He had a scar in the middle of his beak.



Simon's family and friends called his scar his
"badge of courage."
This is the story of how he earned it.

Simon hatched from his shell
with baby-brown feathers
and a gap in his beak.

The gap made it hard for him
to eat and grow strong enough to fly.



Simon's mother and father
loved him very much, and wanted to help.

But Simon was smaller
and weaker than his
brothers and sisters.

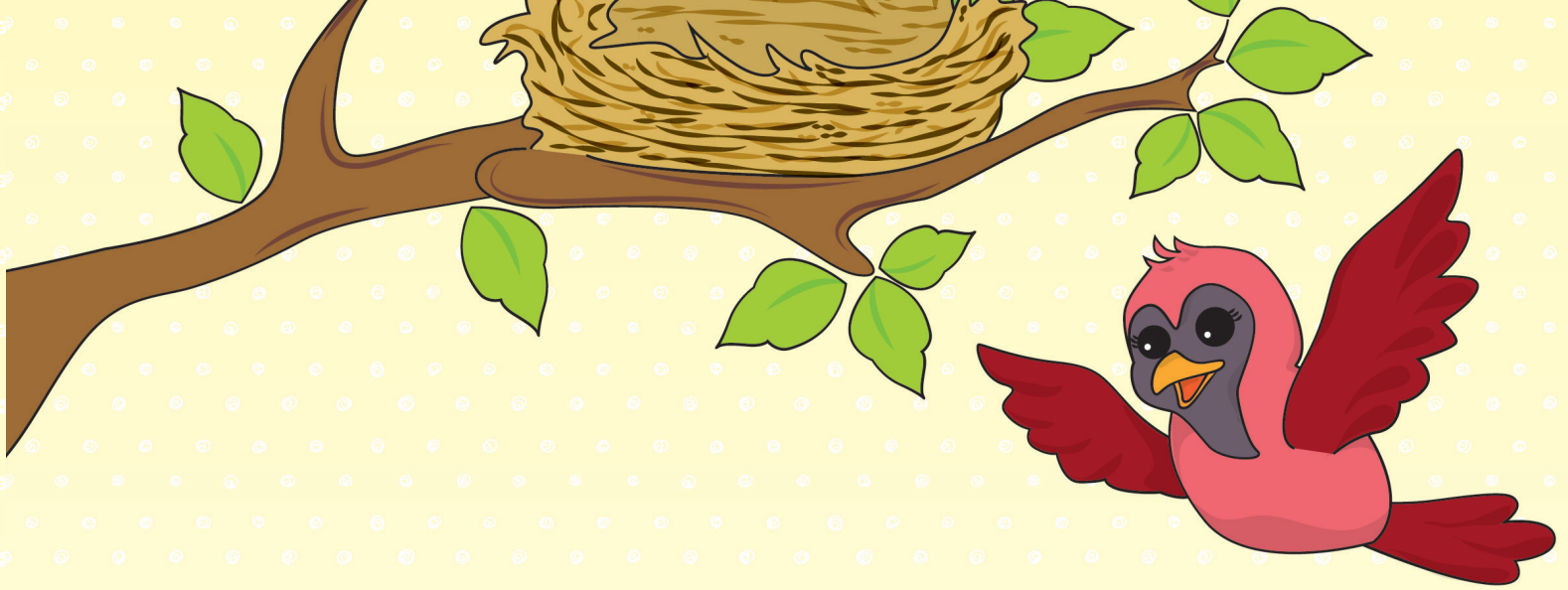




One day, Simon was chirping his favorite song and accidentally fell out of the nest.



“Help!” he cried as he tumbled to the ground.



Luckily, Simon landed on a soft patch of grass.
“Are you okay?” his mother asked.

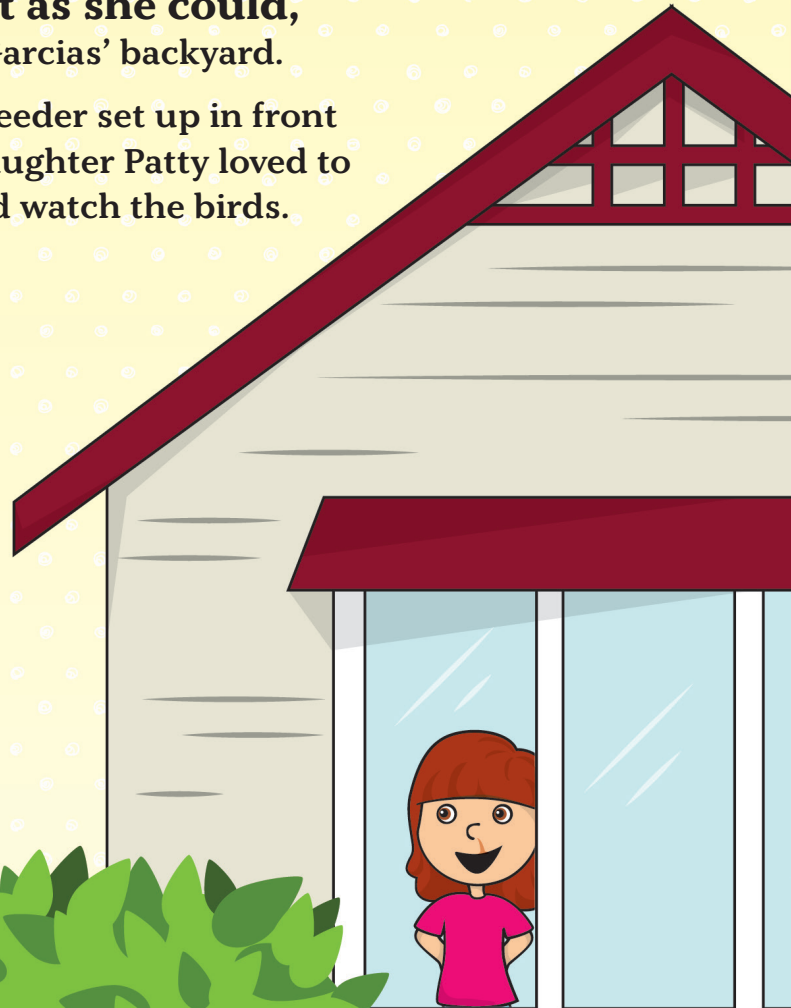
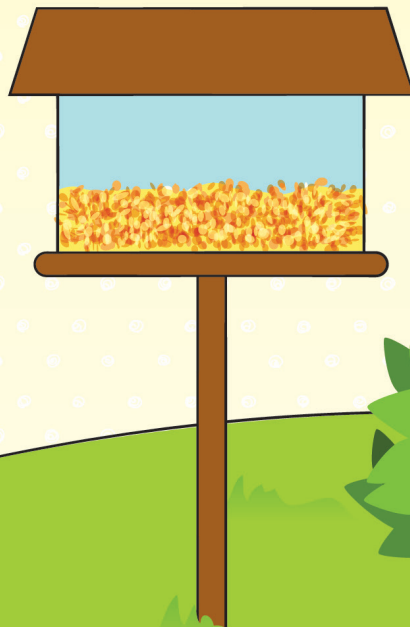
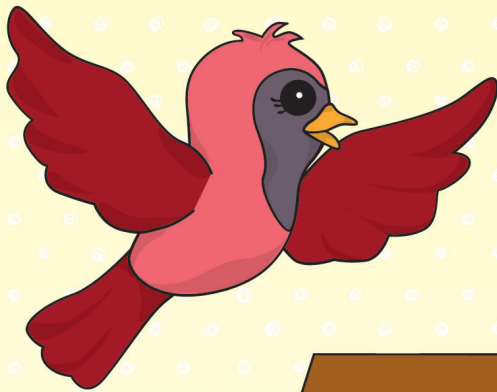
“I’m okay, Mom!” Simon replied,
“But I can’t fly back to the nest!”

Simon’s mother knew she needed to find
help fast. “I know just who to ask,” she said.



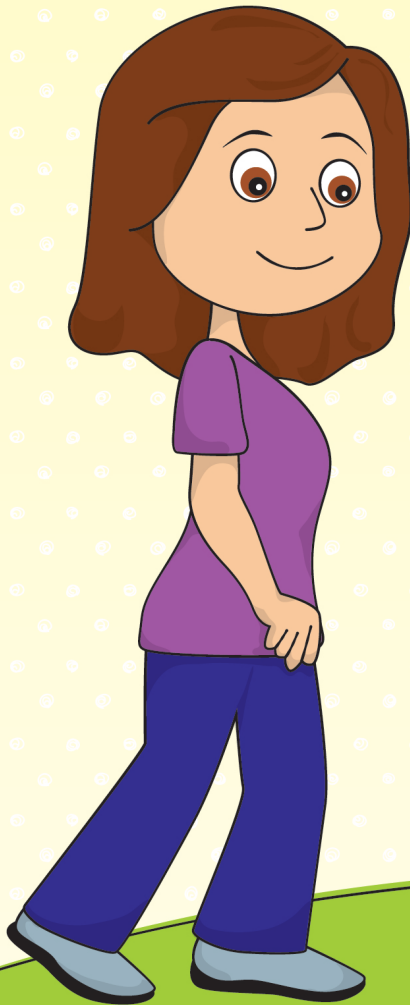
Chirping loudly and flying as fast as she could,
Simon's mother headed straight to the Garcias' backyard.

The Garcias had a bird feeder set up in front
of a big window. Their daughter Patty loved to
sit by the window and watch the birds.



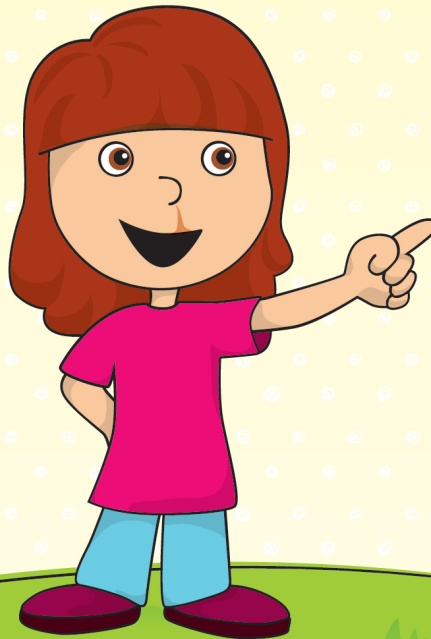
"Help!" Simon's mother flew to the glass when she saw
Patty at the window. **"Simon needs help,"**
she chirped while fluttering her wings.

As soon as Patty saw Simon's mother, she knew something was wrong.
Patty ran and got her mom, Mrs. Garcia, and they came outside.



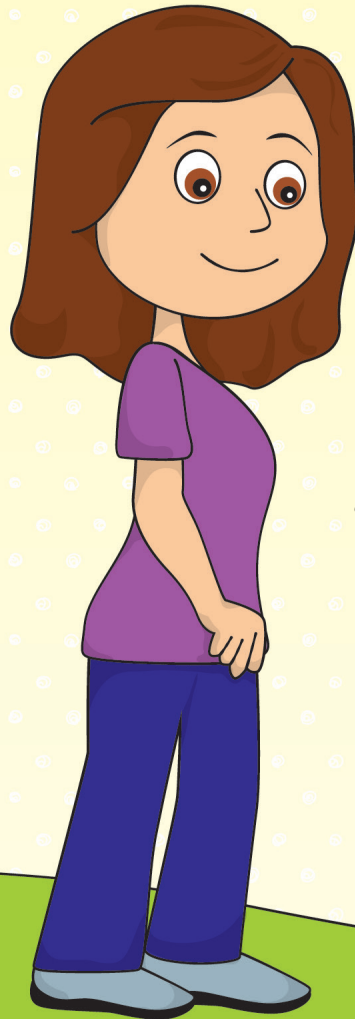
"There!" Patty pointed
to Simon's mom.

**"I wonder what
she wants,"**
said Patty's mom.



"Follow me!"
Simon's mother tweeted.

**Patty and her mother followed Simon's mom to where
Simon was sitting on the grass.**



**"Look mom,
it's a baby bird!"
said Patty.**

**Patty's mom said,
"Do you see his beak,
Patty?"**





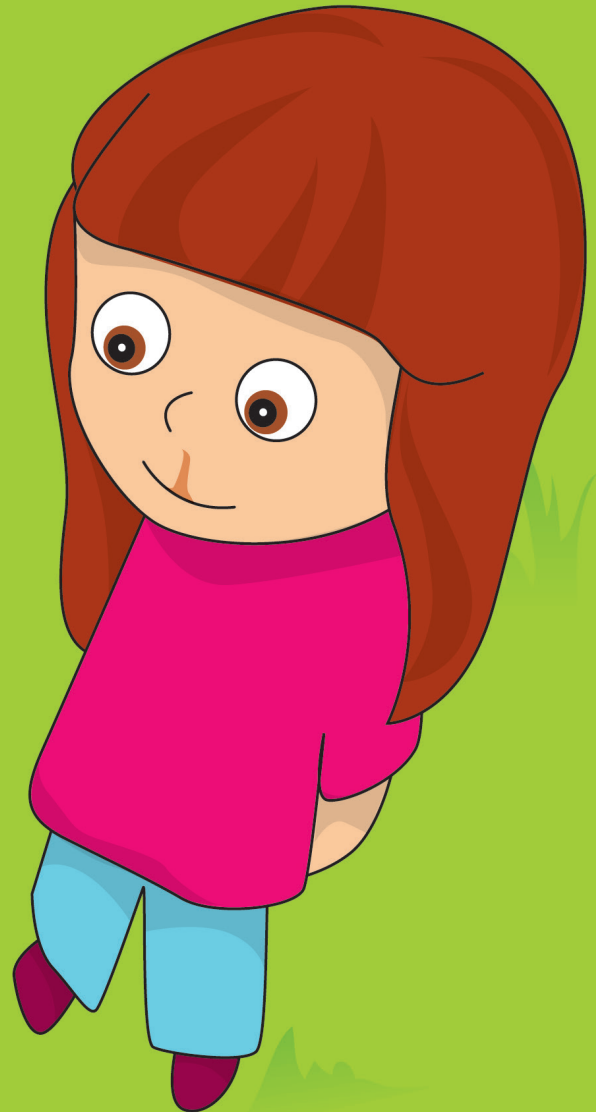
When Patty saw the gap in Simon's beak, tears filled her eyes. **"He's just like me, Mom."**
She pointed to the scar on her lip.

"Can we help him?" Patty asked.
"We can try, honey," Patty's mom said.
"We can try."



**Patty's mom hurried back to the house and
returned with a shoebox and a soft towel.**

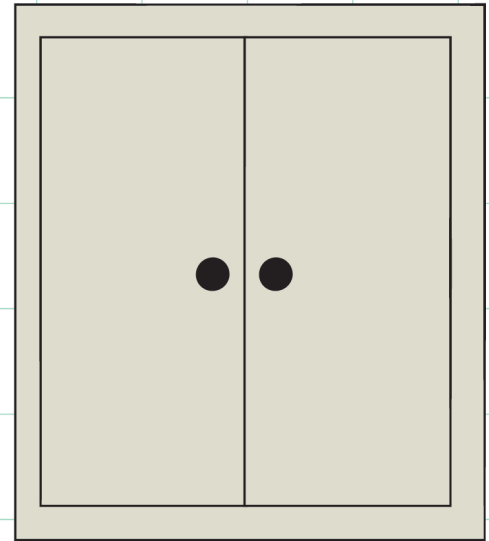
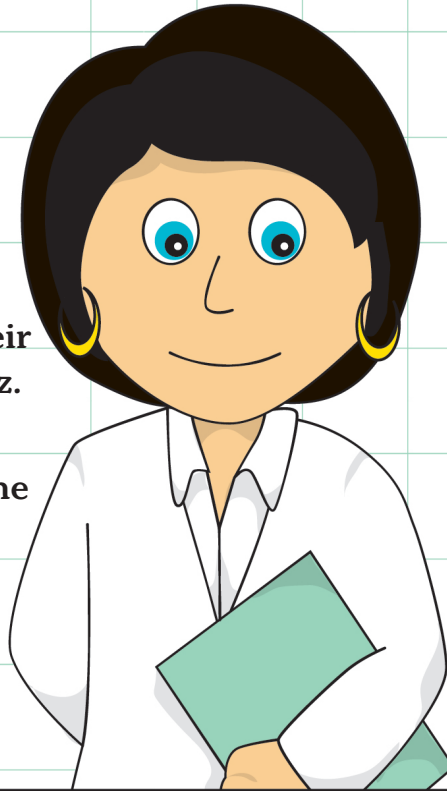
**Gently, she picked Simon up and
put him in the box.**



**"Let's go see Dr. Cruz,"
Patty's mom said.**

Patty and her mom
took Simon to see their
veterinarian, Dr. Cruz.

"Oh my,"
Dr. Cruz said when she
saw Simon's beak,
"this is unusual."



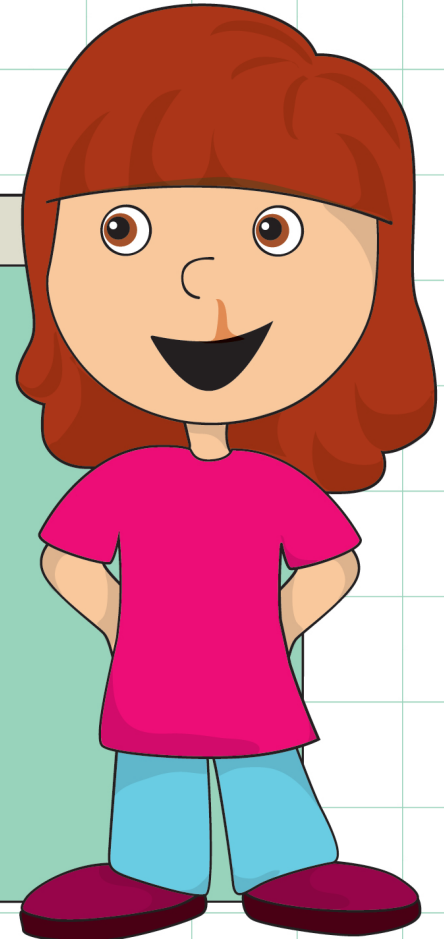
"His beak has a gap like my lip used to have," Patty said.

"Can you help him?"

"I'll try my very best," Dr. Cruz answered.

"Do you have a name for your little friend?"

"Simon." Patty smiled. "His name is Simon."



While Patty and her mother waited for Dr. Cruz to fix Simon's beak, they talked about the scar on Patty's lip.

"You were very small when the doctors fixed your cleft lip," Patty's mom said.

"Will Simon have a scar too?" Patty asked.

"Yes, but it will be easier for him to eat and sing."



"Sometimes kids laugh at my scar," said Patty.

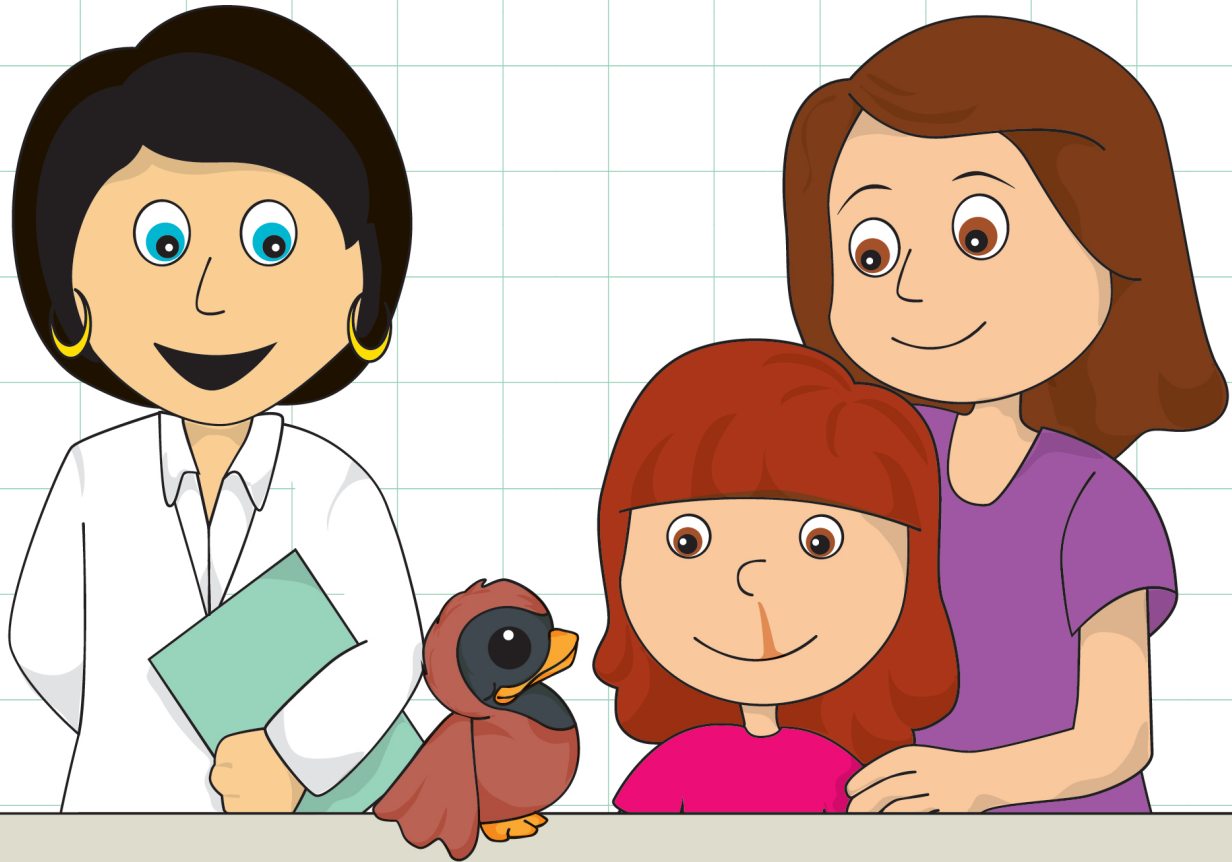
"Do you think other birds will make fun of Simon?"

"I don't know, but I hope not,"
Patty's mom said.

"Do you remember what we called your scar?"

"My badge of courage." Patty smiled and touched her lip.

"Now Simon will have a badge of courage too!"



When Simon woke up after his operation, he saw Dr. Cruz, Patty, and her mom looking down at him.

"Eeep!" he chirped. His head was fuzzy and his beak felt heavy.
"He's awake..." Patty whispered, tugging on her mother's arm.

"The operation went very well," said Dr. Cruz.
"Simon will be sleepy for a little while,
**but he should be able to eat, drink,
and sing much better now."**



Patty and her mom took Simon home
and gently placed him back in his nest.

“Goodbye, Simon,” Patty said. “I’ll see you in a couple of days.”

Simon's parents were very happy to see him.

They chirped and sang to welcome him home.

The next morning, Simon woke up very hungry. He chirped and chirped until his mother asked, **"Are you hungry? Would you like breakfast?"**



"Oh yes!" Simon opened his beak so his mother could feed him. **He ate and ate until his tummy was full!**

Over the next few days, Simon grew
**stronger and
stronger.**



He was excited to show his new beak to the other
birds, but was also a little scared.

"You have a funny scar on your beak,
but I think you look cool,"
Simon's sister Susie said.

**"Simon, you are
beautiful inside and out,"**
said Simon's parents.



Soon, all the birds in the neighborhood
stopped by to hear Simon's story and
admire his new beak.

**"The scar on my beak is called a
badge of courage,"** Simon explained.

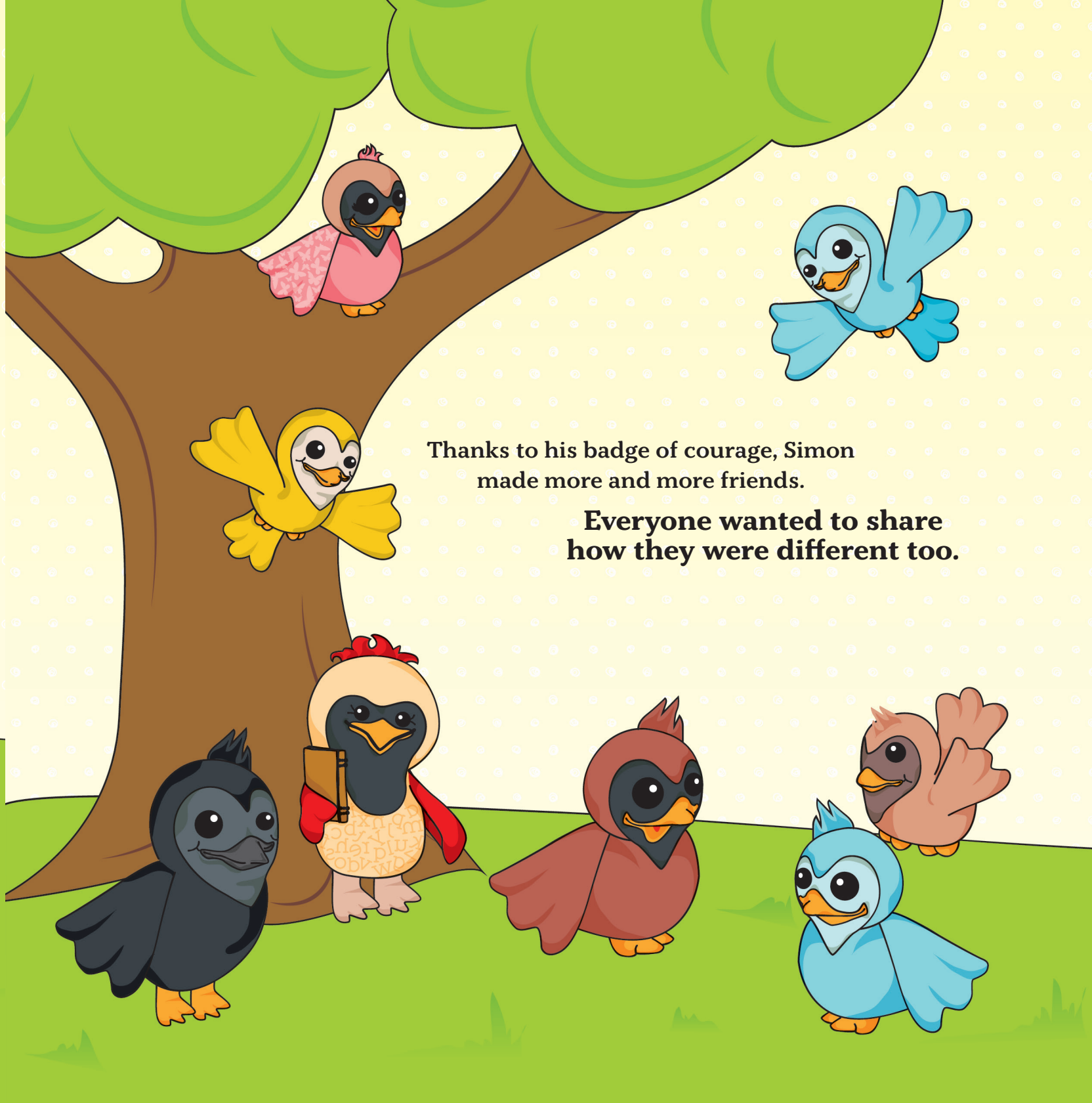
"The nice people in the house
next door helped me."



"Well, you look a little different now,"
said Jose, the big black crow, "but that's okay."

**Everyone is different,
but we are all still alike."**





Thanks to his badge of courage, Simon
made more and more friends.

**Everyone wanted to share
how they were different too.**

**Simon's favorite new friend
was Coco, a small robin who loved
to tell stories and teach.**



**"Looking at your beak makes me smile,"
said Coco. "I have so much fun laughing and chirping
with you that I don't even notice your beak."**

One day, while Simon and Coco were talking,
something magical happened.
Simon's baby-brown feathers started to change color.

First, the soft downy feathers close to his skin
turned pink. Then, the feathers on his wings
changed to a bright, **beautiful red.**

"Look," Simon said.
"My feathers are smiling!"

"Yes," chirped Coco.
"They're very beautiful."



Simon was so excited by his feathers that he had to fly.

He flapped his wings and zoomed into the sky.

He zipped from tree to tree, smiling and calling
for all the birds to join him.

"Come fly! Come fly!" he sang.
"We are different, but we are beautiful!
We have a voice, so let's sing."



**"Let's spread our
wings** and seize the day,
remembering to be kind
along the way."

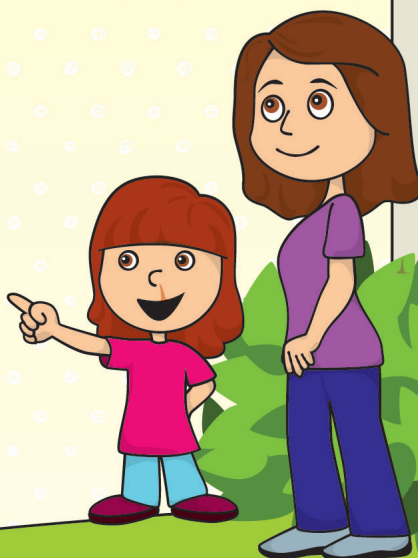
Soon, all the birds were coloring the sky with their beautiful
songs and smiles. They got so loud, that Patty and her mom
came out of the house to see what was happening.



**"Look! Simon's feathers
turned red," said Patty.**

**"Yes, and he has some new
friends too," said Patty's mom.**

**"What a wonderful way
to celebrate his badge
of courage."**





Smile with Simon
and be kind!



SMILE WITH SIMON



We may not be the same
and if we were it'd be a shame
you have a voice let go and sing
open up just spread your wings
you've got to feel good about yourself
you've got to feel good about yourself

I am different but I am beautiful
we are different but we are beautiful
we're still alike in many ways
cardinals, sparrows and blue jays
we fall sometimes but that's okay
pick yourself up and seize the day



so smile with Simon and be kind
smile and see what you will find
so smile with Simon this is his song
his badge of courage makes him strong

we are different but we are beautiful
Simon can lift you up my friend
so come fly and watch as we ascend
true friends are out there you will see
lean on them in times of need

so smile with Simon and be kind
smile and see what you will find
so smile with Simon this is his song
his badge of courage makes him strong



SIMON'S FAVORITES

AboutFace.ca

ACPA American Cleft Palate-Craniofacial Association

Bear Necessities Pediatric Cancer Foundation

Beauty with a Twist

BORN A HERO, Pfeiffer's Health and Social Issues Awareness

Camp About Face

Cary Kanno-Musical Artist

Children's Craniofacial Association (CCA Kids)

CleftProud

Cuddles For Clefts

Doctors Without Borders

Emory Cleft Project-Dept Human Genetics, Emory Univ School of Medicine

Face the Future Foundation Illinois

FACES: The National Craniofacial Association

Facing Forward Inc

Love Me Love My Face: Jono Lancaster

MyFace

National Organization for Rare Disorders (NORD)

Noordhoff Craniofacial Foundation Philippines, Inc

Operation of Hope Worldwide

Operation Smile

Patients Rising

Pete's Diary: Peter Dankelson. Motivational Speaker

Rare Disease Legislative Advocates (RDLA)

Joe Rutland -CleftThoughts

Smile Train

Solidarity Bridge.org

St. Jude Children's Research Hospital

UI Health Craniofacial Center at the UIC College of Medicine

ABOUT PATRICIA ANN SIMON

I am a RN and was born with a cleft lip and palate.

I have written four books, *Smile with Simon*, *Simon and the Buddy Branch*, *Simon and Patty Go To Camp*, and *Simon and the Bully*. These children's books resonate with young people suffering from similar craniofacial differences.

My first children's book, *Smile with Simon* is about a cardinal named Simon, who's born with a gap in his beak. His gap made it difficult for him to eat, smile, and sing. In the story, he meets a young girl named Patty, who relates with Simon because she has a cleft lip.

I wrote a second book, *Simon and the Buddy Branch*, which further stresses the importance of kindness, love, and acceptance in the lives of children with facial differences.

My aim is to help children born with facial differences understand that it's okay to be different. I want to remind them that they are beautiful.

I am also a member of American Cleft Palate-Craniofacial Association (ACPA), Children's Craniofacial Association (CCA), Cleft Community Advisory Council (CCAC) for Smile Train, and former board member of Face the Future Foundation, which supports the efforts of University of Illinois Health Craniofacial Center.

I have given a keynote speech for the Inaugural Cleft Lip and Palate Team Day at Morgan Stanley Children's Hospital in New York Presbyterian Hospital,

My book, *Smile with Simon* was translated to Tagalog so that it could be used at a Philippine speech camp.

I created a webpage, www.smilewithsimon.org which features videos and songs that reinforce the message we are all different, and to be accepting and kind.

**Books can be purchased directly through my website:
www.smilewithsimon.org**