

ARTHUR'S TOOTH

BY MARC BROWN

Finally, Arthur had a loose tooth. He wiggled it with his tongue.

He wiggled it with his finger. He wiggled it all the time.

One afternoon while Arthur was wiggling his tooth during math, he heard a loud scream. Francine jumped up.

"My tooth just fell out on my desk!" she cried.

"Class how many of you have lost a tooth?" asked Mr. Marco.

Everyone but Arthur raised their hands.

When Arthur got home, he didn't want any milk and cookies.

"What's the matter, Arthur?" his mother asked.

"I'm the only one in my class who still has all his baby teeth" he complained.

"Don't worry," said his sister, D.W. "Before you know it, all your teeth will fall out and you can get false teeth like Grandma Thora."

Arthur persuaded Father to make a special dinner for him: steak, corn on the cob, and peanut brittle.

"I can't believe one little tooth can take so long to fall out," said Father.

The next day, Muffy brought in a whole jar of her teeth for show-and-tell.

"I got two dollars for each one," she said. "One from my dad and one from my mom. I put it all in the bank to earn interest. I'm waiting for my investment to double."

"Not me," said Francine. "I'm spending mine."

Later the class saw a movie called *Nasty Tooth Decay*.

"Between the ages of four and seven," the announcer began, "everyone begins to lose their deciduous, or baby teeth."

"Everyone except Arthur!" shouted Francine.

The whole class laughed. Arthur slid down in his seat. He wiggled his tooth as hard as he could.

In the cafeteria, Francine practiced her new tricks.

"Look!" she said. "I can keep my teeth closed, and still drink through a straw. And I can squirt water, too. Everyone except Arthur. Babies with baby teeth can't squirt water."

By the next day, Arthur was convinced his loose tooth would never fall out. His friends tried to help. Buster brought carrots for Arthur's lunch.

Sue Ellen showed Arthur how to put raisins over his teeth to make it look as for some were missing.

The Brain invented a special machine. "It's a tooth remover," he explained. "Just put your head in here."

Even Blinky Barnes wanted to help. "I can knock that tooth out in one second flat," he said.

That night Arthur spent a lot of time in front of the bathroom mirror.

He got up very early the next morning to wiggle his tooth again.

"See how much looser it is!" he told his parent.

"That's it," said his mother. "You need professional help. You're going to the dentist. Today."

"Going to the dentist?" asked Francine. "Boy, do I feel sorry for you!"

There were other patients waiting to see Dr. Sozio.

"Sorry," said the nurse. "We're running late. Have a seat."

"Arthur, you were smart to bring a book," said Mother.

Finally it was Arthur's turn.

"I wish all my patients were as good at waiting as you are," said

Dr. Sozio. "How old are you now, Arthur?"

"Seven," said Arthur. "And I still have all my baby teeth."

"I was eight before I lost my first tooth," said Dr. Sozio.

"Everyone is different."

“Really?” said Arthur.

Dr. Sozio examined Arthur’s loose tooth. “This one should fall out very soon,” he said. “Just wait.”