

I was terrified. When my mom climbed out of the car and started walking toward the dentist's office, I stayed where I was, shivering in the front passenger seat of our car. Then, on a stroke of pure genius, I hit the button on the side control panel that locked all the doors on the vehicle at once. I wasn't going in there. I didn't care if I had crooked teeth for the rest of my life. Do you know what they do to you in dentist offices?	15 31 49 68 87 88
I found out last night while talking on the telephone with my best friend Marcy, who got braces last year. She told me that first they strap you down in the chair, and then they whip out the drills they've been hiding behind their backs. They have to SCREW on each brace, and they only give you the tiniest bit of painkillers. Then they get out the metal wires and tighten and pull to their hearts' content.	103 120 135 151 165
Marcy also told me her dentist, Dr. Pane, pulled so hard all of her teeth fell out. She told me it had taken Dr. Pane five hours to glue her teeth back in place. I think Marcy may be stretching the truth a little, but I know some of what lies ahead of me will, no doubt, cause me great bodily harm.	182 201 219 227
My mom raps sharply on the window.	234
"Let's go, Gloria," she says.	239
I get out of the car because she has the keys in her purse anyway, and I don't want to look like an idiot because my mother had to carry me over her shoulder kicking and screaming to get my braces put on.	257 273 282
"You know you're very lucky," my mom tells me as we walk up the sidewalk. "I wanted braces when I was your age, but I couldn't have them."	298 310
I don't say anything.	314
My mom pulls open the door and then steps aside letting another woman and her son walk out. The boy smiles at me. His teeth are strapped with metal.	328 343
I pinch my lips over my tilted teeth, blushing. I can't wait until I get my braces on.	361

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