



## A Tiny Mark

It started out as a small red dot on my son's forehead. I noticed it when I put him in his high chair. I rubbed my finger over it. It wasn't a food stain. The next day it was bigger, redder. I asked my husband about it. "What red mark?" I pointed to it. "I don't see anything."

I asked my mother when I dropped my son off before going to work. She didn't see it either. No one saw it. Every time I mentioned it, people looked at me like I was crazy. They told me to relax. I was just a nervous first-time mother. So I stopped talking about it.

I watched it grow bigger every day. Once it had grown to the size of a quarter I could recognize a face in it. The face often matched my son's expression, but not always. Its little mouth was animated. It twisted its shape but never made a sound.

One morning over breakfast, when the face had grown so large it fit over my son's like a mask, he turned to me and said his first word, "mama"

My husband let out a laugh. "Did you hear that? He just said mama. I think that's his first word!"

I sat down, "Yes, I think it is his first word." I smiled at my husband, hiding my terror, knowing where that first word had come from.