



A Friend Named Effy



Johnathan has a special friend named Effy, who lives inside his body. Usually they get along well enough, but on occasion Effy decides to act up and hurts Johnathan, making him feel bad.

What is the best way to deal with such a friend?

"A Friend Named Effy" was written for you, children who suffer from FMF (Familial Mediterranean Fever). Johnathan and Effy are here to remind you the most important lesson: Even when things are hard, you have your imagination on your side, and that is the best thing in the world.

We hope that you enjoy this book and its enchanting illustrations.



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A Friend Named Effy

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design and production



Content Management





It's so nice to meet you, my name is Johnathan,
I'm six and a half years old, and quite the little man.
I know how to read, and also can write,
I love soccer, painting and flying my kite.

In general, I'm a really nice boy.
Chocolate, games and the spring are reasons for great joy.
I hate math, and homework gets in my way,
and there is nothing nicer than snuggling on a cold day.







I'm a little special, not everybody knows,
it's because I have a secret friend that on occasion shows.
His name is FMF, Mom keeps on saying,
and Dad says he can be pretty entertaining.

We've known each other for a while, so I named him Effy,
sometime he can make me feel quite iffy.
He gives me a fever,
makes my tummy and muscles sore.
Then I have to miss fun stuff at school,
which annoys me even more.

This Effy of mine sometimes just turns up,
making my body feel like it's burning up.
He makes me sick when I'm most unprepared,
often, when I'm excited or scared.









As long as I can remember, he's always been.
Sometimes he's calm and collected
and sometimes plain mean.
On occasion he's annoying and irritating,
but usually just there, quietly waiting.

I know that Effy is a part of me,
and that we can live together in harmony.
Taking my medication calms him down
so, I always do so without as much as a frown.

Sometimes I have to be brave and get a shot,
to tell you the truth, it doesn't hurt (a lot...).
Sometimes I even get to brag and shout:
"A shot is nothing to cry about!".







When things calm down and all is good,
I focus on all things that kids should:
Like sports, drawing, reading and playing,
I don't have a fever and nothing is aching.

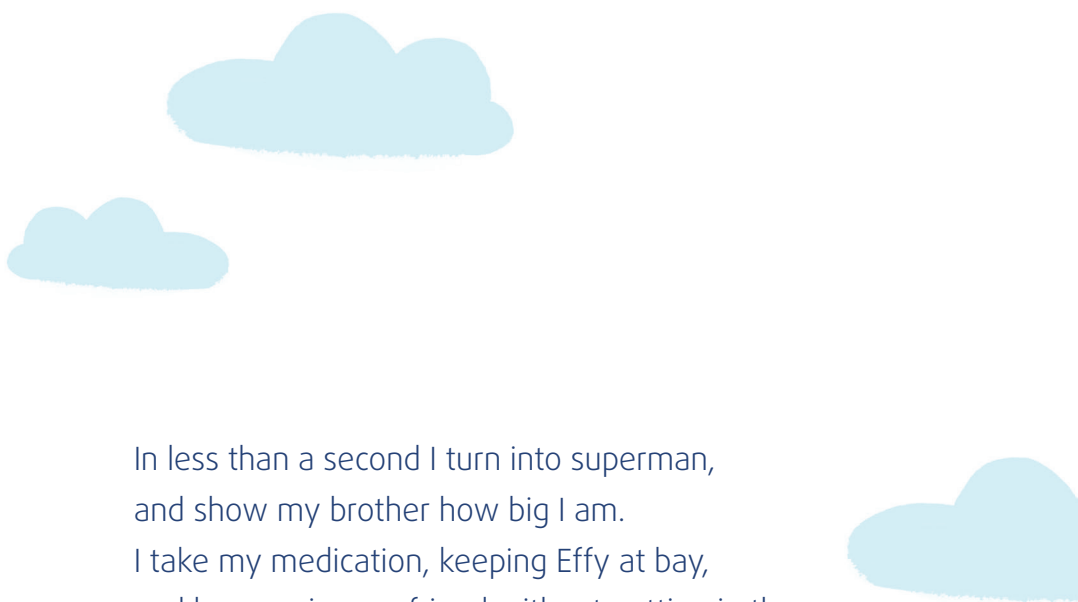
My tummy is calmer
and so is my heart.
Into the classroom I go,
the day ready to start.

Sometimes I enjoy missing a day of school,
Other times I'm embarrassed that I might be breaking a rule.
It can be annoying, and often makes me sad,
definitely a reason for me to feel mad.

When Mom says "it's time for your meds"
Dad gently gives me a pat on the head.
My sister pours a glass of water, for the taste
and I swallow the pill in a haste.







In less than a second I turn into superman,
and show my brother how big I am.
I take my medication, keeping Effy at bay,
and he remains my friend without getting in the way.

Sometimes, before a big party or a holiday break,
I worry that my tummy may ache.
That I might feel really bad,
or that the pain will make me weak or sad.









And then I remember how special I am,
because with my medication Effy is nearly tame as a lamb.
Everybody occasionally gets sick or feels bad,
but my medicine is the best cure that can be had!





If Effy returns, as he sometimes can,
I'm not worried, for behind me is my entire clan.
I remind myself that he is just a pest,
and everyone has times when they aren't feeling their best.

I'm a hero, and pretty brave
(at least that's what my family says when they rave).
I know that things are going to be OK,
exactly like Mom and Dad always say.



Dear Parents,

This booklet is designed to help you and your child cope with living with FMF (Familial Mediterranean fever).

As parents of a child who is suffering from a chronic illness, you may encounter various questions about disease management, such as: Why it is important to follow the doctor's instructions, even if they cause discomfort? Should the child share his experiences with his friends? What to do in cases of emotional distress? I suggest that you first read this book in private with your child, in a quiet and pleasant environment. Be close to your child, hold them near you or on your lap. By reading the book together you can hold an open conversation about your child's thoughts and feelings about their disease. Through reading, the child can identify with the central character and thus feel that they are not alone in coping. Reading also enables your child to differentiate themselves from others and to empower them, via their unique situation.

In the future, you might suggest that your child read the book along with other significant people in their lives (siblings, grandparents and friends). If you feel that your child would like to share their story with their classmates, you may ask the teacher to read the book with the class and discuss it with them.

The book is designed to be read and re-read at various stages throughout your child's coping with the challenges of their disease.

Noa Sher,
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