

My Sister Can't See Me

for Brendan

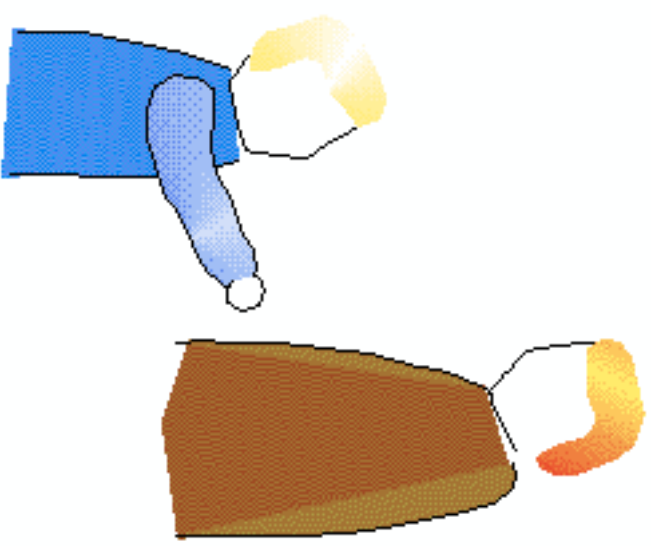
by his parents, Evelyn Eddy and Eric Anderson, with love

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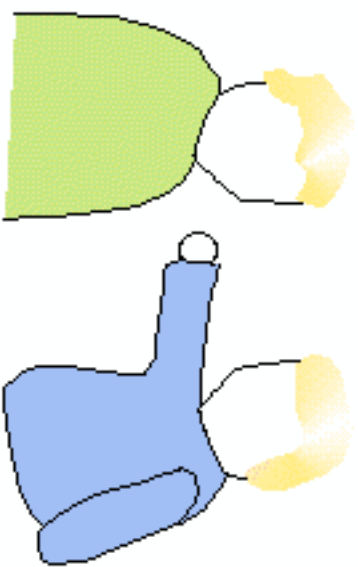
My sister can't see
me.



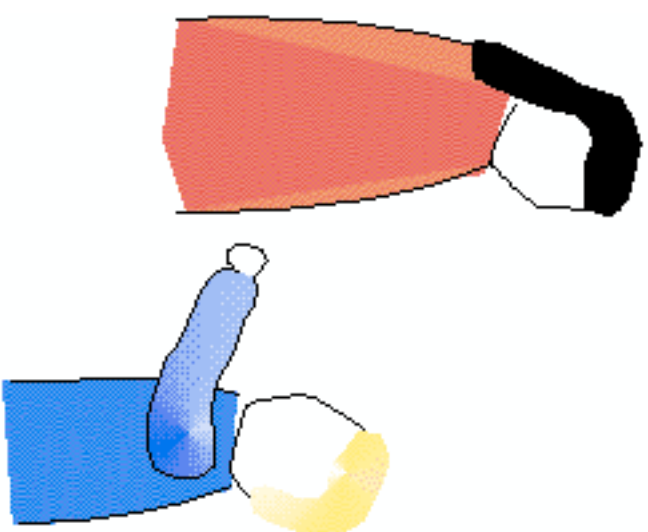
I tell everyone I
know —



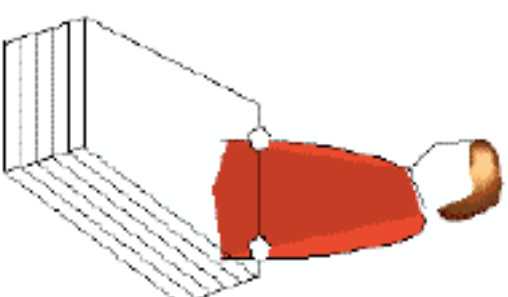
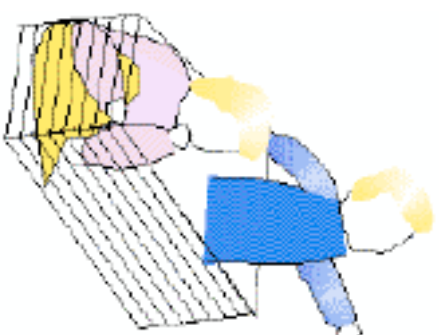
my friends,



our day care people,



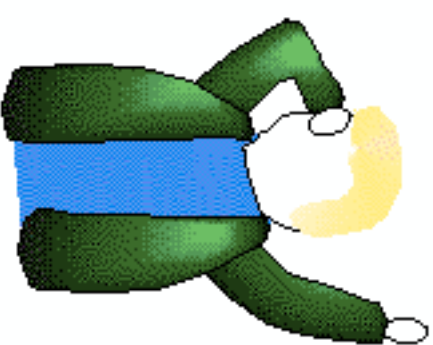
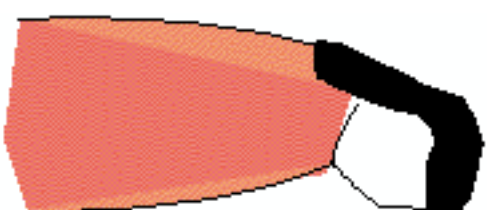
the man in the
grocery store.



My sister can't see
me.
I'm afraid it's my
fault, but Dad says
it's not.



My mom says my sister has cancer. She has tumors growing in her eyes. I say I understand.



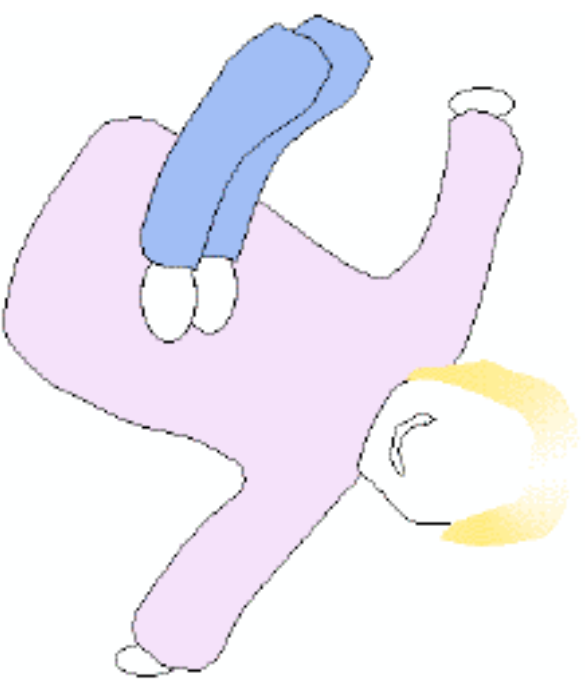
Then I go to nursery school and cry because I want to keep my coat on.

I'm afraid I'll catch
it, but Mom says
that can't happen.



My sister can't see me.

But she still laughs
when I tickle her.



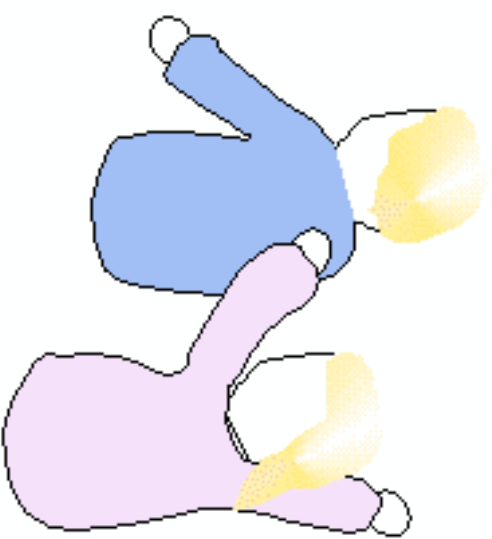
My sister can't see me.



But she still steals my
teddy bear.

My sister can't see me.

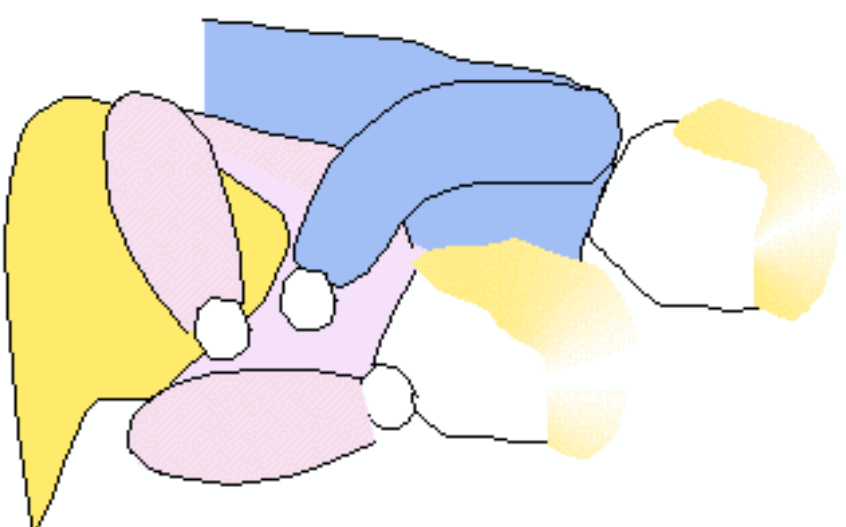
But she still tackles me
to the floor, and hugs
me, giggling and
giggling.



My sister can't see me.

But she still loves me.

And I still love her.



About this Book

This is pretty much how our son Brendan, then four, initially came to terms with his sister's cancer. He was very clear with us that he needed explanations for the big words we used in his presence with the grown-ups. He needed to know that cancer isn't like a cold--he didn't give it to her, and wouldn't catch it from her. He worried about her a lot in the initial stage and, fortunately, told us so. He is still very protective of her.

Ninety (90) percent of the children with retinoblastoma develop it before they are two. So most of their siblings are pretty young. We could not find anything geared to a pre-schooler. If this helps you, we are glad.

Retinoblastoma is a cancer of the eyes that occurs in 1 out of 15,000 children. It is caused, when in both eyes, by a genetic mutation which, eighty-eight (88) percent of the time, is original with that child, who can then pass it on to his or her children.

Our daughter, Rebekah, was diagnosed when she was fourteen months old. She was in no pain, so we didn't know there was a problem until she had gone completely blind. Through the skill and kindness of the people at the Massachusetts Eye and Ear Infirmary, the Massachusetts General Hospital, and the Harvard Cyclotron Laboratory, she has regained enough vision to become a very active, havoc-causing child. We are delighted.

Our everlasting thanks and appreciation to Shizuo Mukai, MD, Eric Grabowski, MD, Eugen Hug, MD, and the wonderful people who work with them. We owe you everything.

Eric Anderson and Evelyn Eddy, summer 1997