



Ollie disappoints the Captain

School was OK, and Ollie enjoyed his lessons and found himself putting his hands up and answering questions in class.

When the bell rang at the end of the day, Ollie ran all the way to the changing rooms in the sports hall to get ready for football practice.

With Self-confidence and Self-control on his shoulder, the training session went really well. He ran rings around the other boys and girls and scored three goals!

At the end of the session, the PE teacher called everyone together and said, “Right, time to pick the team for Saturday’s match.”

All the boys and girls were nervous, as they all wanted to be picked. Ollie wanted to play number 10 like Mr Wilcox used to.

The teacher called out the names one at a time and gave them each the shirt they would be wearing on Saturday. When it got to number 10, Ollie felt quite nervous despite Calm and Confidence trying to sit on Nervous and stop him being nervous!

“And number 10 this weekend will be Ollie!”

Ollie started leaping in the air and shrieked “YES!!!!!!”

Calm grabbed him and made Ollie settle and stand still again.

“Right,” said the teacher, “and last but not least, our goal keeper this weekend will be Adam Bowler.”

All the boys and girls gasped and shook their heads.

Adam nearly fell over – he never got picked for anything! The reason Adam never got picked for anything was because he was a bit clumsy, always dropping things or knocking things over. Poor Adam was a lot bigger than other children his age, and being bigger and being clumsy meant he got laughed at a lot by the other boys and girls.

“Sir – NO!” yelled the kids. “He’s no good! Pick someone else. He will make us lose!”

At this, Adam’s eyes began to fill with tears, and he looked very upset.

“Please, Sir, not Adam. We will lose. Please don’t choose him!” taunted the other children.

“I will pick who I want,” said the teacher, “and I will not have this behaviour – you will all apologise to Adam at once!” The boys and girls muttered sorry under their breaths.

“Now, Adam, put this shirt on and I want the team I just picked to have a five-minute knock-around against the rest of you, so we get used to one another for Saturday.”

All the children picked for the team kept protesting.

Adam stood alone and started to put his shirt on.

Suddenly all the boys and girls started laughing at Adam. The shirt was too small, and he couldn’t get it on. As he struggled, he began to cry, and then tried to run off embarrassed and upset, but he tripped over the bag the shirts had been in and fell in the mud.

The children stood around Adam, laughing. All, except Ollie.

Ollie thought it was very funny too, but he found that as much as he wanted to laugh he couldn’t – Sadness had appeared on his shoulder.

“Oh, go away,” said Ollie, “I want to laugh. This is funny. He is too big for the shirt!”

But Sadness just got bigger.

Then the Captain appeared. “Ollie, this is not a time to laugh. Can’t you see how upset Adam is?”

“But it’s funny,” said Ollie, but try as he might, he couldn’t laugh.

“It’s not funny,” said the Captain. “How do you think Adam feels right now with all of you being so cruel?”

“It’s his fault,” said Ollie. “He is just fat and clumsy.”

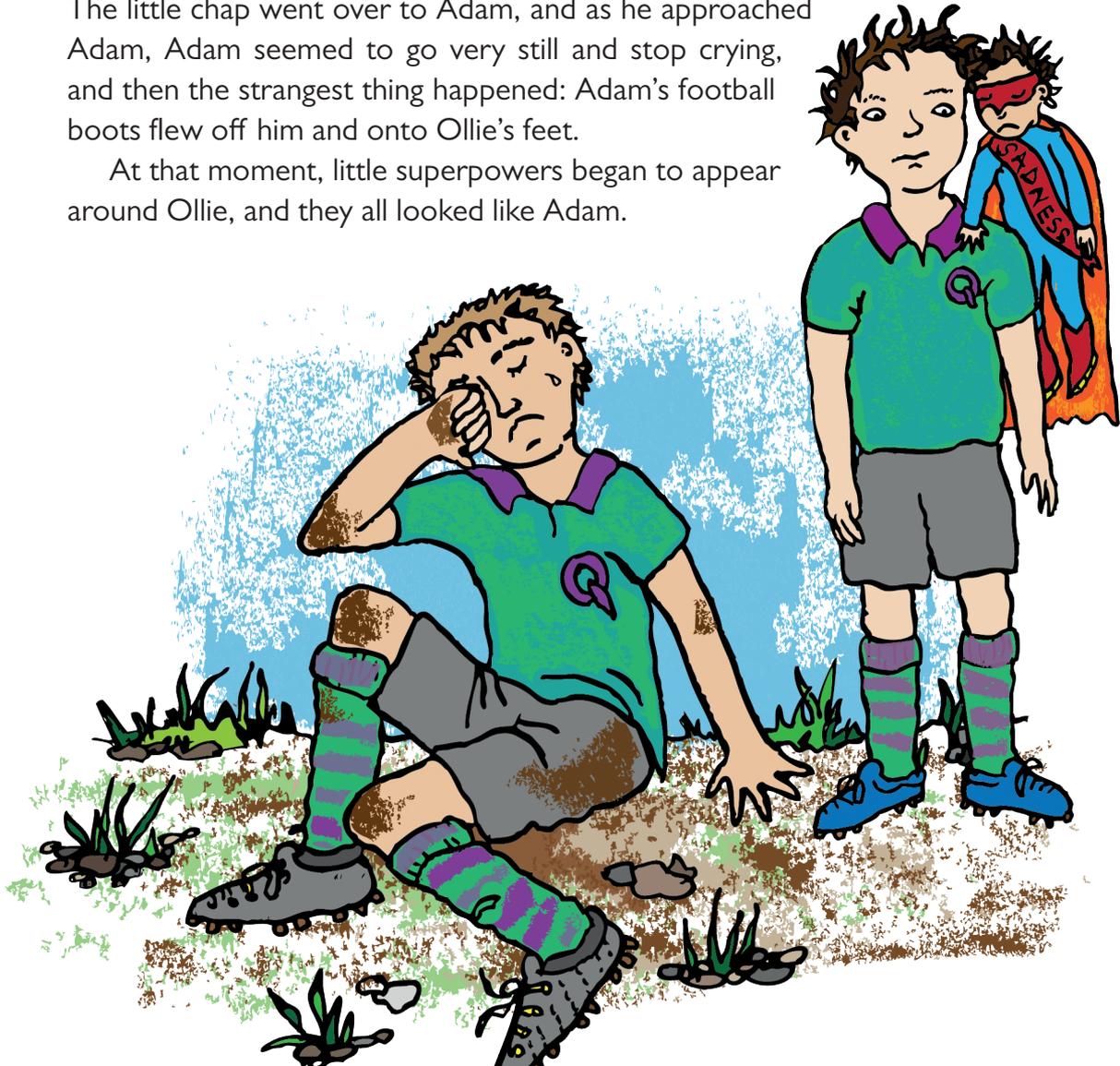
“Ollie,” said the Captain, and Ollie could hear that he was really cross, “I am disappointed in you. You are all bullying Adam. Don’t you remember what it felt like when you were bullied?”

“Well, yes,” said Ollie, still trying to laugh but feeling sadder and sadder. “But I was bullied because I was smaller than Simon and George – Adam is bigger than all of us!”

“That’s quite enough, Ollie. It is time you met one of your most important superpowers!”

At that, a little chap with a long word on his shirt appeared. The little chap went over to Adam, and as he approached Adam, Adam seemed to go very still and stop crying, and then the strangest thing happened: Adam’s football boots flew off him and onto Ollie’s feet.

At that moment, little superpowers began to appear around Ollie, and they all looked like Adam.



There was Embarrassed, and Sad.

“What’s going on?” said Ollie. “I have never seen anyone else’s superpowers before. How come I can now?”

“You can see them because of Empathy. Empathy takes someone’s shoes and puts them on you, and then you can see that person’s superpowers as if they were your own. And you can see and feel what that person is feeling,” explained the Captain.

“What – who – what does Empathy do?” asked Ollie, amazed at what he was seeing. No one else seemed to see the little chaps all cowering next to Adam.

“Empathy,” said the Captain, “is a very special superpower you have – through him you can see and feel what someone else is feeling. You can see and feel someone else’s superpowers just by putting their shoes on!”

“I can see them alright – but I can’t...” as Ollie spoke, he suddenly felt very frightened and scared. Just like Adam.

“Oh, I don’t like this superpower,” said Ollie, feeling worse and worse, as he began to feel really sad and embarrassed

“It is a very important and powerful superpower, Ollie, and one of the special ones you will learn to use that will make helping other children so much easier for you,” said the Captain.

At that moment, the teacher yelled at all of the team and sent them back into the changing rooms. Ollie went over to Adam and helped him to get up.

“It’s OK, Sir. I will be in in a minute,” said Adam, trying to hide his tears.

The teacher and the other kids ran off to the changing rooms. All, except Ollie.

“Aren’t you going to laugh at me, too?” said Adam to Ollie.

“No,” said Ollie, “I can’t.”

“What do you mean? You can’t?” said a tearful Adam.

“Well, I can see you’re embarrassed and sad...” said Ollie.

“I am not!” said Adam, trying to be brave. Bravery appeared next to him, but disappeared again very quickly because Adam was so sad.

“You are,” said Ollie, “I can, well, I can see you are...”

“I am not,” cried Adam.

“We are Sad and Embarrassed,” said Adam’s superpowers.

Ollie was gobsmacked. He could hear Adam’s superpowers!

“Hello,” said Ollie, not sure what else to say.

“Hello,” said Adam’s superpowers.

“Why is Adam so sad and embarrassed?” asked Ollie.

“Adam feels like this because he is clumsy and trips over things all the time. The other children, they call him names because he is bigger than they are.”

“I think being big would be great!” said Ollie. “It would make him the best goal keeper. But why is Adam so clumsy?”

“Because he won’t wear his glasses, so he can’t see properly and that’s why he knocks things over and bumps into things,” explained Embarrassed.

Ollie had never seen Adam in glasses. “Why won’t he wear them?” he asked.

The superpowers explained that they were not very nice glasses. His Grandma had bought them for him, and she had chosen the frames. When Adam put them on, even his big brother laughed, so Adam refuses to wear them.

“Wow,” said Ollie, “so Adam is not really clumsy. It’s just because he doesn’t want to wear his glasses!”

“Well, what can we do?” asked Ollie.

At that, the superpower named Empathy stepped forward. “Allow me, Ollie!” said Empathy.

“Well,” said Empathy, “it’s a real shame that Adam’s grandmother doesn’t know that the glasses she bought Adam are causing him so much trouble. I am sure if she did she would get him a better pair that he really likes, but Adam doesn’t want to hurt her feelings.”

“Why don’t you tell your grandma about your glasses, and maybe she would get you another pair?”

“Of glasses! I don’t wear...” said Adam abruptly, slightly puzzled that Ollie knew about his glasses.

Ollie did not know what to say. Adam looked cross and even more embarrassed and turned to go back to the changing room.

Ollie realised Adam had not seen or heard any of the conversation with his superpowers!

“Whoa,” said Ollie, “will he be ok?”

“Well, now that you know what the real problem is, maybe you can help,” said Empathy.

“Well, I do believe that Adam’s grandma might be the new lady moving into the old peoples’ home today, so you might be able to mention this to Mr Wilcox. I am sure he will think of something,” said Empathy.

“Good idea, Empathy,” said the Captain. With that, he saluted and disappeared.

Ollie turned to Empathy, “Will you always be around? Because without you I would not have known why Adam was clumsy, or how to help.”

“I will always be a part of you Ollie, I’m one of your most useful and powerful superpowers. You need to learn to use me, so you can help other children, just by standing in their shoes and feeling what they feel rather than what you think they feel, I let you see the whole picture, not just a little bit.”

“Don’t go,” said Ollie. “I can’t see without you.”

“I know, but you’re learning to,” said Empathy from somewhere inside Ollie.