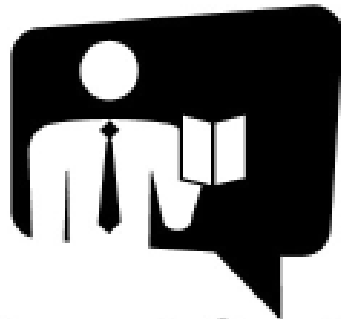


SpeechGeek



Season Seven: Fall 2009



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My Brother and I

by Leanna Schwarchan

ANNA. My mother always told me I was lucky to have a twin brother like Adam. I knew when I was a little girl that my family wasn't normal. See Adam and me were born 1 ½ months too soon. I turned out okay, but Adam didn't. The doctor told mom he had Dys-Autonomia.

DOCTOR. Dysautonomia?

MOTHER. Yes. Your son's heart is weak, which in return makes the rest of his organs a little weak. He'll have frequent vomiting and infections, and he'll have a mild case of mental retardation.

DOCTOR.

ANNA. Growing up with a brother like Adam, my family defiantly had its hard times. Just because he was a little slow, everyone always thought he was a complete retard. But I knew that he wasn't and so did Adam. I was always there to stick-up for Adam at school but I didn't treat him any different at home.

ANNA. Hey Adam, what are you playing?

ADAM. Cars.

ANNA. Can I play, too?

ADAM. Yeah! You can be... the fire truck!

ANNA. Okay, what should I do with it?

ADAM. Put out fires with it Anna, Duh!

ANNA. Oh yeah. (Siren noise) Wow this is a bad fire. I think we'll need back up. Adam, we need the tanker!

ADAM. 10-4 here it comes, Anna! (*siren noise*)

ANNA. We're going to need more back up. I'll bring the ambulance!

ADAM. No! Anna, the ambulance has to stay there.

ANNA. But it's a big fire, Adam. We need the –

ADAM. No, the ambulance has to stay right there! Ugh-oh...

ANNA. What's wrong, Adam?

ADAM. I don't feel too good.

ANNA. Eew! Mom!

MOTHER. What's all this screaming about? Adam are you all right? Come into the kitchen and let's get you cleaned-up and then you can help mommy make supper. Anna your dad will be home in a little I trust you can run along and play until then.

ANNA. I know mom says she loves both me and Adam the same. It's just because Adam's always sick, so mom spends all her time taking care of him. It seems like mom never has time for me, but luckily dad always did, at least most of the time.

FATHER. Hey! I'm home from work.

ANNA. Hey, Dad!

FATHER. Hi, Anna, how was your day at school?

ANNA. It was great!

ADAM. Hey dad.

FATHER. Hi, Adam, and how was your day?

ADAM. It was good.

MOTHER. Hi, sweetheart, not long until supper will be ready.

ANNA. Dad! Dad! There was these boys at school who were picking on Adam, and I told them to leave him alone or else.

FATHER. They were picking on you again, Adam?

ADAM. Yeah, they were being mean to me.

FATHER. They were only being mean because they're scared that you're smarter than they are. So don't worry okay?

ADAM. Yeah, okay.

FATHER. Now let's go clean up for supper. After our food settles, Anna, we can continue our wrestling match.

MOTHER. Oh, and honey, after we eat we need to run Adam up to the hospital again. I think his ear infection is getting worse.

ADAM. Anna, do we have to play catch today? My ear still hurts.

ANNA. It'll be fun, Adam, and don't worry I won't make you run back hurts me today.

ADAM. All right, Anna. Then get ready to catch... Anna? Anna! Mom!

MOTHER. Adam, what's wrong?

ADAM. It's not me. It's Anna, mom!

MOTHER. Anna? Anna! Anna, can you here me?

DOCTOR. Mr. Haley, Mrs. Haley?

MOTHER. What's wrong with Anna, Dr. Roberts? What's wrong with our little girl?

ADAM. Where's Anna?

DOCTOR. Hello, Adam. Mr. And Mrs. Haley, Anna has kidney failure.

MOTHER. Kidney failure, she, she can't live without her kidneys!

DOCTOR. We've run some tests, and our diagnostics show Anna's condition has progressed so far that with her being as young as she is, she only has about 48 hours left to live.

FATHER. We have donors for these types of things, don't we? What about a donor?

DOCTOR. We've looked at the few people on the list... none of them match Anna. The only donor that we could find soon enough that would perfectly match Anna...

MOTHER. ... is Adam.

FATHER. Could we do that doctor?

DOCTOR. With Adam's weak heart, his two barely stable kidneys make one useful one for his own body, but it could work perfectly fine in

Skyrockets

by J. D. Taylor

Kids sometimes try to one-up each other based on what their parents do. In little towns, it's the mayor's kids who come out on top; in minor media markets, the spawn of local news anchors reign supreme. Here at Coronado High School in Redondo Beach, almost everyone's mom or dad is a rocket scientist. My dad's no exception; the difference is their parents all *actually* work for NASA or Boeing. My dad, Kris Langley, is an actor who plays Navigator 1st Class Mitchell Manning on *Astral Adventures*. Channel 8, Saturday nights at 9. I've gone through the last six years of school with my dad branded "fake" by my classmates. But whatever. My dad would fly in a heartbeat if he could. Plus, he does his own stunts for the show, and that automatically makes him a total badass in my book.

Astral Adventures started when I was ten, and a few days after the first episode aired Dad took me to the studio in Burbank. After he showed me around and introduced me to people whose names my prepubescent brain quickly erased from memory, my most enduring impression of the experience was that it all seemed so easy. Not to cheapen the careers of my classmates' parents, but I never really thought it took too much to fly. In a way, Dad agrees. He says to this day that it comes down to two things—imagination and ingenuity. Good set design doesn't hurt, either.

I'm not supposed to talk about this, but my dad keeps a box of slightly illegal fireworks in the basement: skyrockets, massive artillery shells, firecrackers that would set off car alarms in a two-block radius. Awesome stuff like that. One time Mom found it, and she blew up—figuratively speaking. She ordered him to get rid of the fireworks, and he told her he would do it the next day. That night he drove me out to a cliff and we lit a bunch of them off, stopping only when the sky was too smoky to see the explosions. The next morning, Dad took the box out to the trash. Mom watched him like a hawk the whole way. But she didn't notice that he only threw away the ones we already lit off. We've still got a bundle of them downstairs that Mom doesn't know about. I guess that's what family researchers mean when they refer to "bonding."

I get home early from school one Tuesday because band practice is cancelled and the message light on the machine is blinking. It's from a production assistant on the *Astral* set. He's frantic and doesn't really make sense, so I call the studio. The receptionist sounds like she's been crying when she answers.

Apparently during a shoot where the *Astral* starship was attacked by alien forces, the pyrotechnics went off heavier than expected and the whole set caught fire

instantly. Three people were killed. Two were stunt players, and the third... I hang up the phone because even though I know it's coming, I don't want to hear anyone say it. I don't turn on the television, use the computer, I don't do ANYTHING because as far as I'm concerned, it's a bad dream and if nobody confirms it, it didn't happen.

But ten minutes later, Mom comes home from her job. I can't even open my mouth to speak before she crushes me in a hug. Neither of us can even cry.

I don't go to school for the rest of the week and only come back the next Monday, after the public visitation. My classmates don't talk to me about it, but there's a lot of whispering, and that's way worse than offering false sympathies.

Shawn Carson's the worst—my mortal enemy since fourth grade. He's tall, popular, and dumb as a dirty sleeping bag...so, everything I'm not. His parents are both engineers at NASA in Pasadena, so don't ask me how he turned out so stupid. Maybe his mom drank while she was pregnant or something.

He stops me at my locker between 4th and 5th hour. "Hey Tony," he says, "sorry about your dad the 'star fighter.'"

I clench my teeth. "Thanks, but he was a navigator."

"Navigator? He was an actor. Get over yourself."

I can hear him snickering while I walk away. Unbelievable.

I don't want to go to the will reading with my mom after the funeral; the less said about any of it, the better. But I go to keep her steady, and after everything is said and done, the attorney says that my dad wanted to be cremated and sent into space on a rocket, like Gene Roddenberry, Timothy Leary, and Scotty from *Star Trek*. Totally the kind of company Dad kept, minus the LSD.

Predictably, I love it and Mom's kind of nervous, but she comes around, and why not? A rocket launch is the way Dad wants to go. It's his last wish. Simple as that.

After the cremation Mom calls and finds some *Astral* staffers who know some people at Pasadena, and a launch date is set for a month later on a Saturday. It's not cheap, but I guess they do these things fairly often. I can't wait for it. Finally my dad will get to fly with the people at NASA, and all their kids won't be able to say anything about it. For the first time in weeks, I'm happy.

The day arrives and we're down at the launch site. The rocket is beautiful—orange,

Star Child

by Natalie Pronk

- ANDIE.** Do you know what this is? Yes, it's a drawing. But do you know what it's a drawing of? No. It's not a meatball! This is where I'm from. On this star. You can't see it right now, because it's daytime, but at nighttime when the stars wake up, my star shines biggest.
- My daddy told me that when we see stars, we see what they were like millions of years ago. See, they shine and give off light and it takes all that time to get to us. It's like they haven't changed in millions of years. Or if they did, no one can tell by looking at them. My daddy says that's like me. You can't tell by looking at me, but I'm changed. On the inside.
- I draw my star a lot, so I don't forget what it looks like. At school, Ms. Mitchell throws them away. I feel bad. My star keeps me safe at night, but I can't keep it safe from Ms. Mitchell. I have to keep drawing it. So I draw it. I draw it. I draw it as big as I can!
- MOM.** Hello, my big smile.
- ANDIE.** That's my mom. She calls me her big smile and I always laugh because no one can be a smile. She likes my star.
- MOM.** Oh Andie, it's beautiful.
- ANDIE.** Yeah, it's great. My daddy's there.
- MOM.** On your star?
- ANDIE.** Yes, he went away last year at the hospital. But he promised to wait for me there.
- MOM.** (*wipes away tears*) It's wonderful. I'll hang it up
- ANDIE.** On the fridge. That's where the important things go.
- MOM.** Of course. And now, you need to get ready for school.
- ANDIE.** Oh. I don't like school. Mom says I do, but I don't. But I have to go every day. I sit in the third row, by Jackson. He is not a fan of bathing. I say he smells, but mom says that's rude. I have to say he's not a fan of bathing. There is Peter who can't talk, he's nice and there's Jenny who eats everything. I have lost so many crayons to that girl. I like my classmates, but sometimes Ms. Mitchell makes me sad.
- The bus ride is long and the neighbor boy, Jason makes faces at me.

- JASON.** Yo, what's wrong with your face?
- ANDIE.** I'm autistic. What's your excuse?
- ANDIE.** My daddy taught me to stand up for myself. He said that the world was always going to be a hard place for a star-child like me. So he taught me to be brave and to say things like "I'm autistic. What's your excuse?"
- JASON.** Oh yeah, well at least I'm not a retard.
- ANDIE.** I don't like it when they say that. It makes me glad that someday I will go to my star.
- MITCHELL.** Good morning students. I would like you all to take out your crayons and draw your favorite animal.
- ANDIE.** Jackson drew a fly. Jennifer drew a goat. Then she ate it. I drew my star.
- MITCHELL.** Andie, you keep drawing the same thing and I can't keep giving you a grade for the same thing.
- ANDIE.** It's not the same. This is my star from the left side.
- MITCHELL.** I need you to stop drawing the star.
- ANDIE.** No.
- MITCHELL.** Andie if you don't stop drawing the star,
- ANDIE.** No.
- MITCHELL.** You will be in trouble.
- ANDIE.** No. No.
- MITCHELL.** Stop. It's not real.
- ANDIE.** It is real. My star is real! I want to go there! Daddy is there. Daddy! Daddy!
- MITCHELL.** Andie, stop making a scene. It's a drawing! (*rips the page*)
- ANDIE.** No!
- ANDIE.** She called mom. I said to say "hi." After school we had a meeting.
- MITCHELL.** Frankly, I'm concerned. Your daughter is obsessed with this business about a star.
- MOM.** Ms. Mitchell, I don't see any problem with my daughter being a very imaginative and bright child.
- ANDIE.** Yes. I am bright. I sparkle like a star. Like a shooting star.
- MOM.** Yes, you do sweetheart.
- MITCHELL.** Ms. Richards, this is exactly what I mean. You keep encouraging this nonsense.
- ANDIE.** It's not nonsense. My daddy's there.
- MITCHELL.** Sweetheart, your daddy is dead.

The Maids of Boverly Inn

b; Rodrigo Garcia

The audience finds Marta cleaning a hotel room as Elisa enters. Marta is 45 years old. Elisa is 19 years old. They are maids at the Boverly Inn. All scenes take place in hotel rooms at the Boverly Inn.

SCENE 1

MARTA. (cleaning) You're late.
ELISA. Get off my back.
MARTA. Have you made the beds yet?
ELISA. No.
MARTA. And would you like to explain to me why not?
ELISA. Because I just got on duty.
MARTA. Well, you're two minutes late.
ELISA. Sorry.
MARTA. Sorry isn't going to get these beds made.
ELISA. Have the sheets been washed?
MARTA. You were supposed to do that. So...no!
ELISA. Well, then I need to wash them.
MARTA. No time!
ELISA. What do you mean no time?
MARTA. No time! If Marta says no time, then there is no time.
ELISA. I'm not putting dirty sheets on the bed, Marta.
MARTA. You have to...
ELISA. No, I won't.
MARTA. Yes, you will. And it's not like it matters anyway.
ELISA. Marta, I am new here. I can't be losing my job because of some dirty sheets.
MARTA. What!? Do you think a manager is going to walk in here and smell the sheets? Put the stupid sheets on the bed! (pause) NOW!
ELISA. We're going to get caught.
MARTA. Trust me, there are worse things happening in this hotel than a couple of maids making dirty beds.
ELISA. Like what?
MARTA. Oh, nothing big – just prostitution, cross dressing, drug deals, murders.
ELISA. Are you serious!? At the Boverly Inn? I mean I expect that at a place that isn't as nice, but not here...
MARTA. I forget sometimes how new you are.
ELISA. I'm not that new...I've been hired for three months now.
MARTA. (plotting) Right...how 'bout you those sheets on the bed and then I'll give you some extra training...

ELISA.

(suspicious and leary) Oh, okay. That sounds....good.

SCENE 2

ELISA. Ok, room 208 is set up and ready.
MARTA. (pilfering through guests belongings) Great.
ELISA. What are you doing?
MARTA. Snooping.
ELISA. I can see that. Marta, you really shouldn't be doing this. It's very um...unprofessional.
MARTA. Excuse me, but I don't think there is anything *professional* about cleaning shit off of shower walls and picking up used condoms from the ground, ok!?
ELISA. But you can't be looking through people's things.
MARTA. And why the hell not!?
ELISA. Would you like someone doing that to your things?
MARTA. Ok, first, Marta could never afford to stay in a hotel that is why she works at one. Ok, next, Marta is not a dummy and would keep her things safe and hidden. (picks up something) Unlike this idiot. Who brings whips and chains to the nicest hotel in New York City? (pause) Don't answer that.
ELISA. I'm just saying, it's not safe to be doing things like that.
MARTA. You need to live a little, honey. Besides, I don't steal anything. I just like to pretend.
ELISA. Pretend?
MARTA. Yes, didn't you play pretend when you were a little girl or did you have no fun then, either?
ELISA. Well, yes, I used to play dress up all the time with my sisters...
MARTA. See? This is just like dress up except I'm not pretending to be a princess in a castle...I'm pretending to be...well, something other than a dumb maid.
ELISA. I know what you mean...
MARTA. Ah, then you aren't as boring as I thought. Hey, are all the rooms clean on this floor?
ELISA. Yeah.
MARTA. The floor seems quiet. You know, there's hours before these rooms have to check out.
ELISA. What's your point.
MARTA. Let's play!
ELISA. Oh, Marta...I'm still too new to be doing stuff like this. You're going to get me fired.
MARTA. I will not. Come, this room is boring...we must find others to pretend in.
(They leave one hotel room and go into another hotel room)
ELISA. Marta...this isn't a good idea...
MARTA. (knocking) Housekeeping! Housekeeping!

Confessions of a Preteen Sidekick

by Deanna Markstrom

SCENE 1

MARK.

(Looking in a mirror, putting on outfit) At some time in their life, everyone wishes they could be something...more. Bigger, faster, smarter...or just...special. Everyone dreams of doing something extraordinary, of being famous, of standing out or, you know, being loved. I mean, not in an icky, mushy Valentine's Day kind of way, but in the way when you're on a float in a parade and people shout, "I love you! You're my hero!" Yeah. That kind of way. But back to my point. Daydreaming of being super is one thing, but for me, it's a regular afternoon.

**AWESOME.
MARK.**

Elastic Lad!

(Offstage to Super Awesome Guy) Hang on, Super Awesome Guy, I'm talking to some people right now! *(to audience)* Sorry about that...like I was saying...

AWESOME.

(Clears throat) Elastic Lad! Crime doesn't hang on to anything...except the coattails of society!

MARK.

(To SAG) Okay! Be right there. *(to audience)* Like I was saying, while most people just *dream* of being super – *(puts on goggles)* I *am* super. A super sidekick, at least.

SCENE 2

MARK.

I first discovered my super stretchy abilities when I was in the fourth grade. We were playing baseball in Jimmy's back yard.

JIMMY.

Man, I love playing baseball in my backyard!

TODD.

If you love it so much, then why don't you marry it!

JIMMY.

Ha ha ha.

STEVE.

That's because he's in love with Annie Wilson.

TODD.

Oooh....

JIMMY.

Aw, knock it off!

MARK.

And as usual, the guys were more interested in giving Jimmy a hard time for liking girls than in actually playing baseball. So in the eighth inning, Jimmy is up at bat, Todd is pitching and I'm out in the outfield with Steve.

STEVE.

Outfield stinks.

MARK.

I know, Steve. Let me finish.

STEVE.

Sorry.

MARK.

Thanks. *(to audience)* So Todd pitches Jimmy his Super Sneaky Curve Ball and Jimmy practically knocks the stitches off of the ball I didn't know you had it in you, Jimmy.

TODD.

Neither did I.

JIMMY.

Um. Are you going to run to first base?

JIMMY.

MARK.

Oops. Yeah.

I mean, this ball flew up so high, I thought it was gonna come down with chunks of cloud on it...

STEVE.

Yeah, it was practically on the sun...

MARK.

Be quiet, Steve. This is my story. Besides – you weren't even paying attention to the ball. You were off daydreaming about pudding.

STEVE.

Sorry, you're right. I do love to think about pudding.

MARK.

Mmmm...tapioca.

LIKE I was saying...as the baseball was coming toward me, I realized that it was headed straight for Mrs. Larrington's brand new stained glass window. And I was really worried because we had already broken Mrs. Larrington's old stained glass window playing ball – and if it happened again our parents said we wouldn't be able to play baseball again until we were thirty! So I dove down and reached my arm as far as I could and...

JIMMY.

And...

STEVE.

And...

TODD.

.... AND...?

MARK.

And I caught it!

ALL.

Yess!

MARK.

I couldn't believe it! But while everyone was cheering or groaning – I looked at my arm. My arm was about a foot longer than it usually was and seemed to be made of elastic. I pulled it in and looked around, making sure nobody saw what happened. But apparently, one person did see my amazing catch.

SCENE 3 – On the Phone

VOICE.

Hello, is this Mark Cooper?

MARK.

It is. May I ask who is calling?

VOICE.

Yes, this is a Mysterious Voice.

MARK.

That's your name?

VOICE.

Yes. It runs in the family. My mother is High Pitched and my dad is Inside.

MARK.

Inside where?

VOICE.

No, his name is Inside. Inside Voice, but enough about my family, Mark Cooper. I'm part of a secret underground society that is always on the lookout for "special" people with "special" abilities. We've been watching you – and we saw what you did at the baseball game.

MARK.

Really?

VOICE.

Yes, good save. We want to assign you to be a sidekick to Super Awesome Guy.

MARK.

No way! THE Super Awesome Guy?

VOICE.

Yes. The one and only.

MARK.

That sounds...uh...AWESOME!

VOICE.

Great, Mark. Now, there are three rules you have to promise to abide