



A Special Big Brother



By Merilee Booren

(Based on a true story)

"I'll walk with you. I'll talk with you. That's how I'll show my love for you" (Children's Songbook, 140).

Daniel stared out the window. He saw his friends heading to the park with a basketball. He wanted to go too.

"I can't take you today, Daniel," Mom said. "Your sister has a bad cold. And you're not quite old enough to go alone. I'm sorry."

Daniel frowned at his sister, Elise. She was sitting in her wheelchair with her toys on her lap. She was five, but she couldn't walk or talk yet. Elise coughed hard. She got sick a lot, and she couldn't go outside if it was too hot or too cold. And she had to eat through a tube in her stomach.

Daniel loved his sister, but sometimes he felt angry too. It was hard to always do what was best for Elise. He just wanted to play with the other kids. His stomach knotted in frustration.

"It's not fair!" he said to Mom. "Everything is always about Elise!" He ran down the hall to his room.

Two days later Elise's cough got much worse, and she had to go to the hospital. Daniel's grandparents came to stay with him. Mom and Dad spent most of their time at the hospital with Elise for the rest of the week.

Daniel's grandparents could take him to play with the other kids. But now Daniel was worried about Elise. He was sorry for what he had said to his mom that day. He didn't like how sometimes he couldn't go play because of Elise. But Daniel loved how she smiled when he talked to her, and being with her made him feel happy.

Daniel looked out the window, hoping to see Mom and Dad bringing Elise home.

Suddenly Daniel saw Mom's car turn into the driveway. He ran to meet her.

"Mom, I'm sorry for what I said about Elise that day I got mad," he said, hugging her tight.



Here's what I do when life's not fair ...

- Pray.
- Talk to Mom or Dad.
- Play outside.

Here's what I do ...

- Draw or write in my journal.
- Listen to good music.
- Think about what's going right in my life.



"It's OK," Mom said as she hugged him back. "I know you love her. It doesn't seem fair that we can't always do the things you want to do. It's hard sometimes for everybody. But I know we are blessed to have Elise in our family."

"I miss her," said Daniel.

"Me too," said Mom. "The doctor said she can probably come home tomorrow."

Two weeks later Daniel and Elise were both in Primary.

"Everyone find a partner and form a circle!" the Primary president said.

Daniel hurried forward and grabbed his sister's wheelchair.

"Elise is my partner," he told her teacher. He wheeled her up front to join the circle of children.

He looked over at Elise. She smiled at him, and he smiled back.

Daniel was glad Elise could be home again. He wanted to be a special brother to her. ◆

The author lives in Oregon, USA.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY ALYSSA TALLENT AND MATT SWEENEY