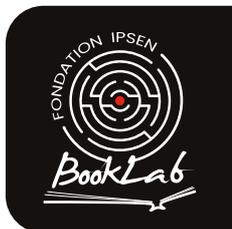


Sonia Goerger and Élodie Garcia



Sacha. the Little Cat

CHILDREN OF GENETICS



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Sacha, the Little Cat

CHILDREN OF GENETICS





Sacha is a mischievous little cat. He has a soft coat and big green eyes. He loves to joke with and tease his mom.

"Where are you, Sacha?" calls his mom.

"Boo!" yells Sacha.

He leaps out from his hiding place, startling her.

Sacha bursts out laughing. He laughs so much that he loses his balance. He falls to the cold kitchen floor. Mother Cat rushes to help him up.

“Careful little one! You’ll hurt yourself,” she says, concerned.

“I’m okay mom!” says Sacha, running off to play.





A few hours later, Sacha joins his friends at the small park in front of his house.

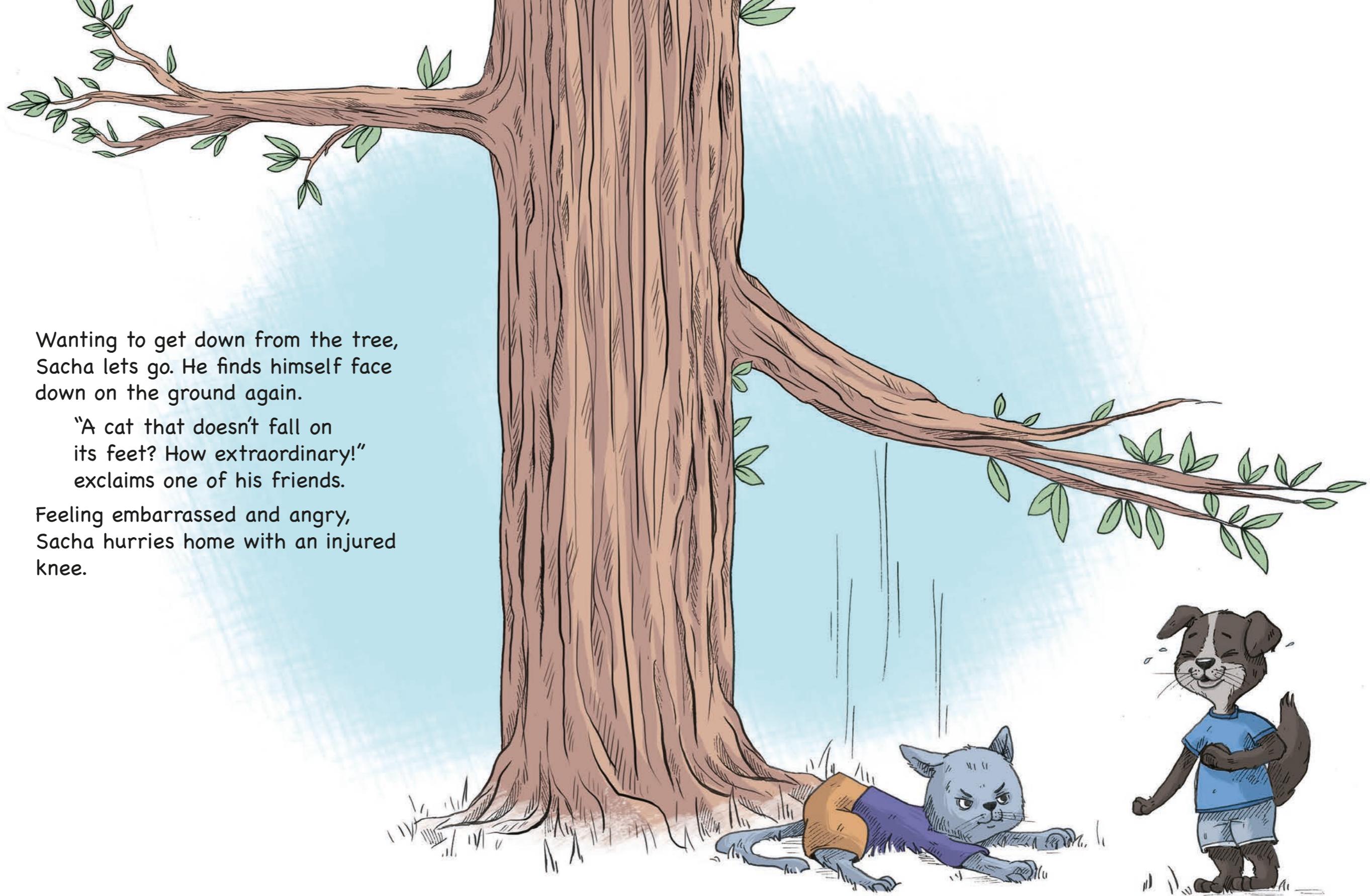
Together, they play a game of 'perched chat'. Sacha climbs up into the tree and settles himself on a branch. His friends look up at him, excited. He shouts proudly, "I'm perched!"



Wanting to get down from the tree, Sacha lets go. He finds himself face down on the ground again.

"A cat that doesn't fall on its feet? How extraordinary!" exclaims one of his friends.

Feeling embarrassed and angry, Sacha hurries home with an injured knee.





When Sacha gets home, he tries to explain his injuries to his mother. She gently tends to his knee. But she is very worried about Sacha falling so often. She decides to take her injured child to the doctor.

Since he was little Sacha has always been a fragile cat. He prefers to walk on his tiptoes and gets tired very quickly.

Mother Cat has always believed that this is because Sacha likes to play tricks and is clumsy.

Sacha sits in the waiting room after the doctor has examined him. His mom and dad are in Doctor Renard's office. Soon Dr Renard asks Sacha to join them.

The doctor explains:

"Sacha, it's not your fault that you fall so often. Your muscles aren't doing their job. This is why you get tired so quickly going up the stairs. It's also the reason that you fell from that tree branch."

Sacha thinks about what the doctor has just said. He frowns.





Dr Renard says gently, "Sacha, we do not have a treatment to help your muscles get better. But we can help you live with it.

A wheelchair will help you move around more easily. You can use it on days when you feel more tired than usual. You can also use it for long journeys."

Feeling frightened, the little cat begins to cry.

He thinks to himself: "Stuck in a wheelchair? Out of the question! How can I play 'perched cat' in a wheelchair?"

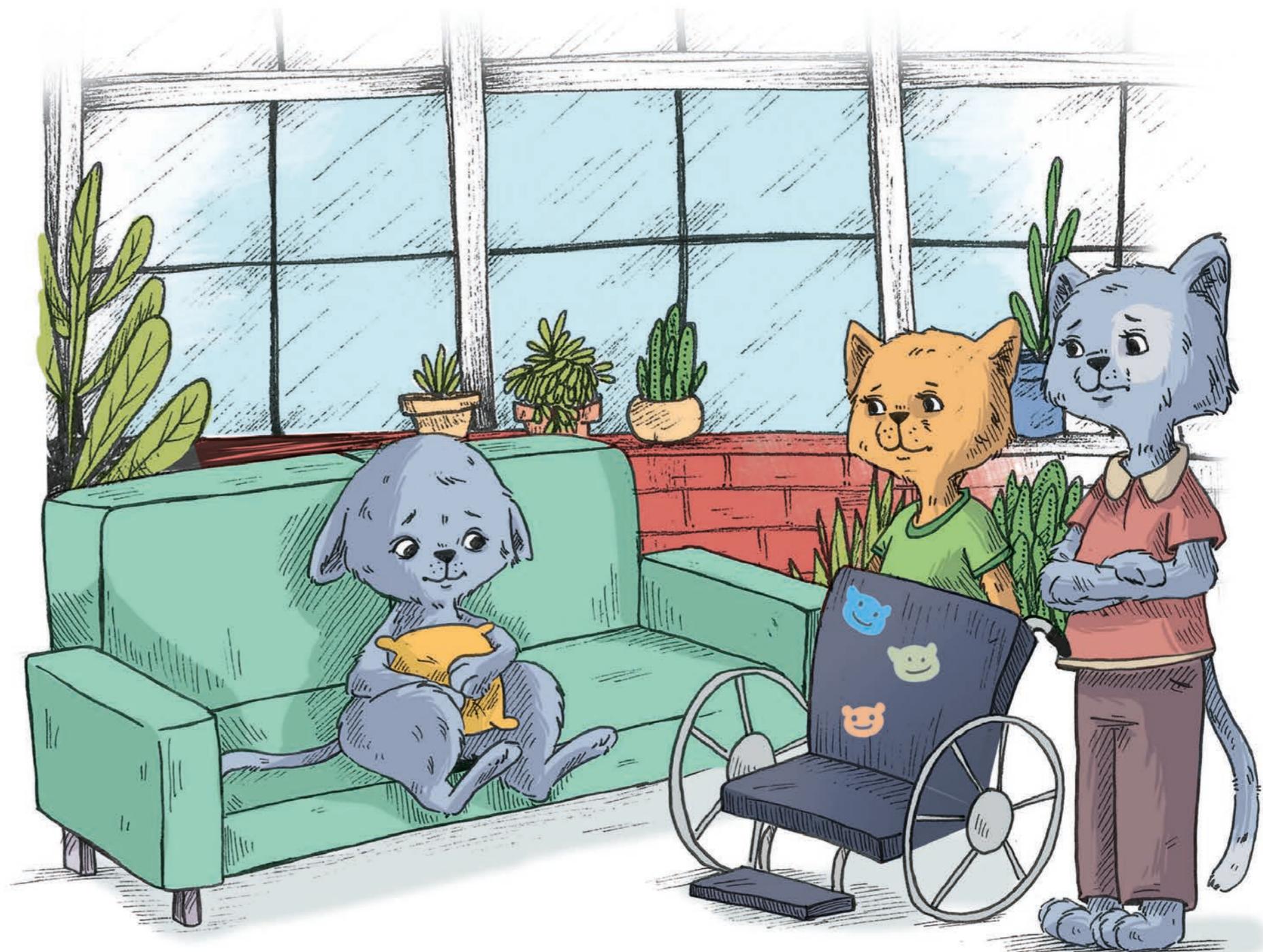
Sacha feels angry. He curses his muscles for not doing their job. He also does not want to believe what Dr Renard is saying.

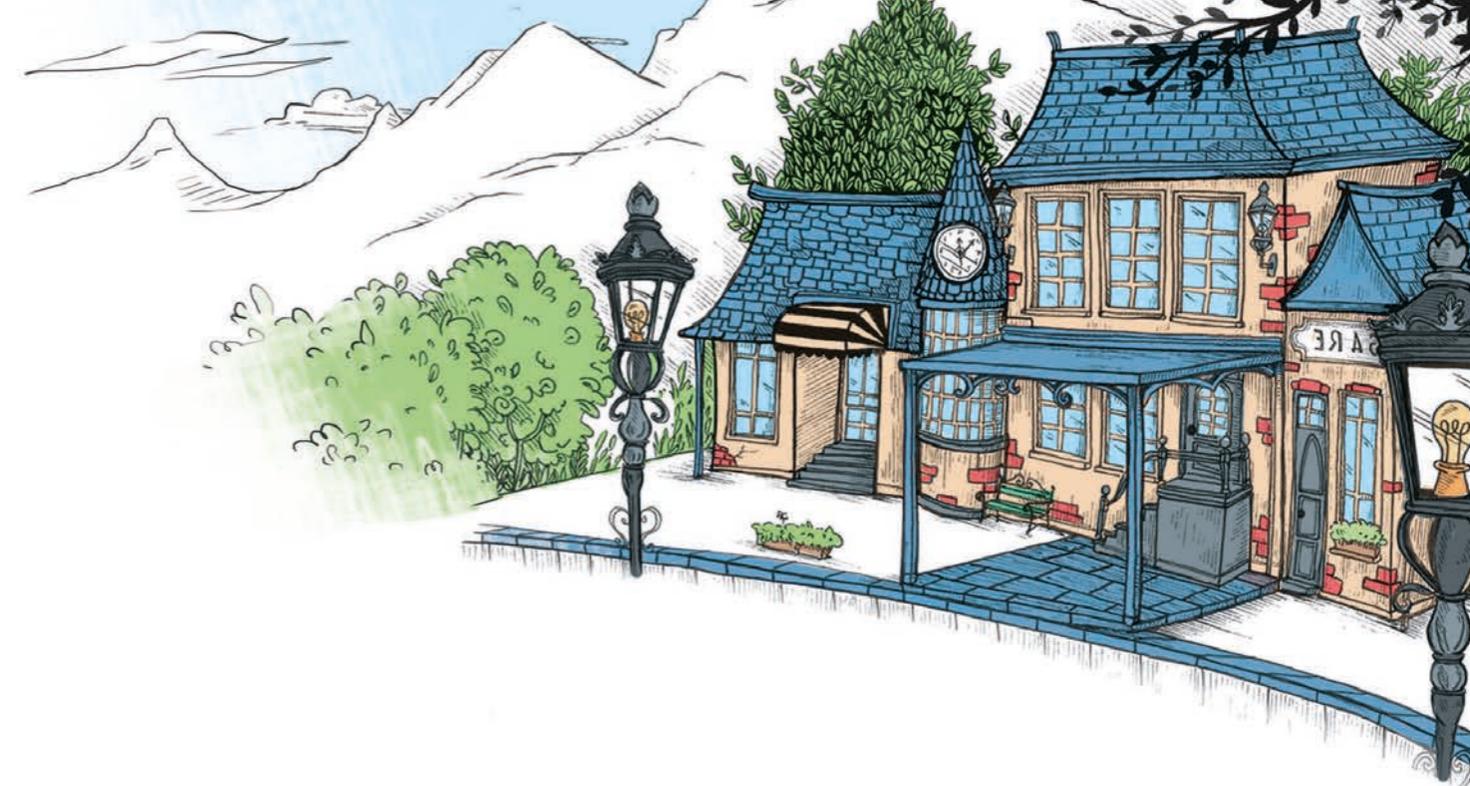
A few days later, Father Cat arrives home with a surprise for Sacha. It is a new wheelchair decorated with stickers. Sacha shifts his gaze from the TV to the wheelchair, and then back to the TV. He keeps a straight face. He doesn't say a word.

Mother and Father Cat don't know what to do. They don't know how to make their child smile again.

They want to see the joyful Sacha make jokes and play games.

Suddenly, Mother Cat has an idea ...





"Where are we going mom?"
Sacha asks, slightly annoyed.

"You'll see Sacha. It's a surprise!"
says Mother Cat with a smile.

The two arrive outside a building.
Mother Cat pushes Sacha in his
wheelchair.

There are many children in
wheelchairs. Some are playing soccer,
using the wheels of their chairs to
kick a ball. Sacha looks at his mother
who gives him an encouraging look.

"You see Sacha, other children have wheelchairs. Just like you. They can still take part in different games and play just like any other kids their age," says Mother Cat.

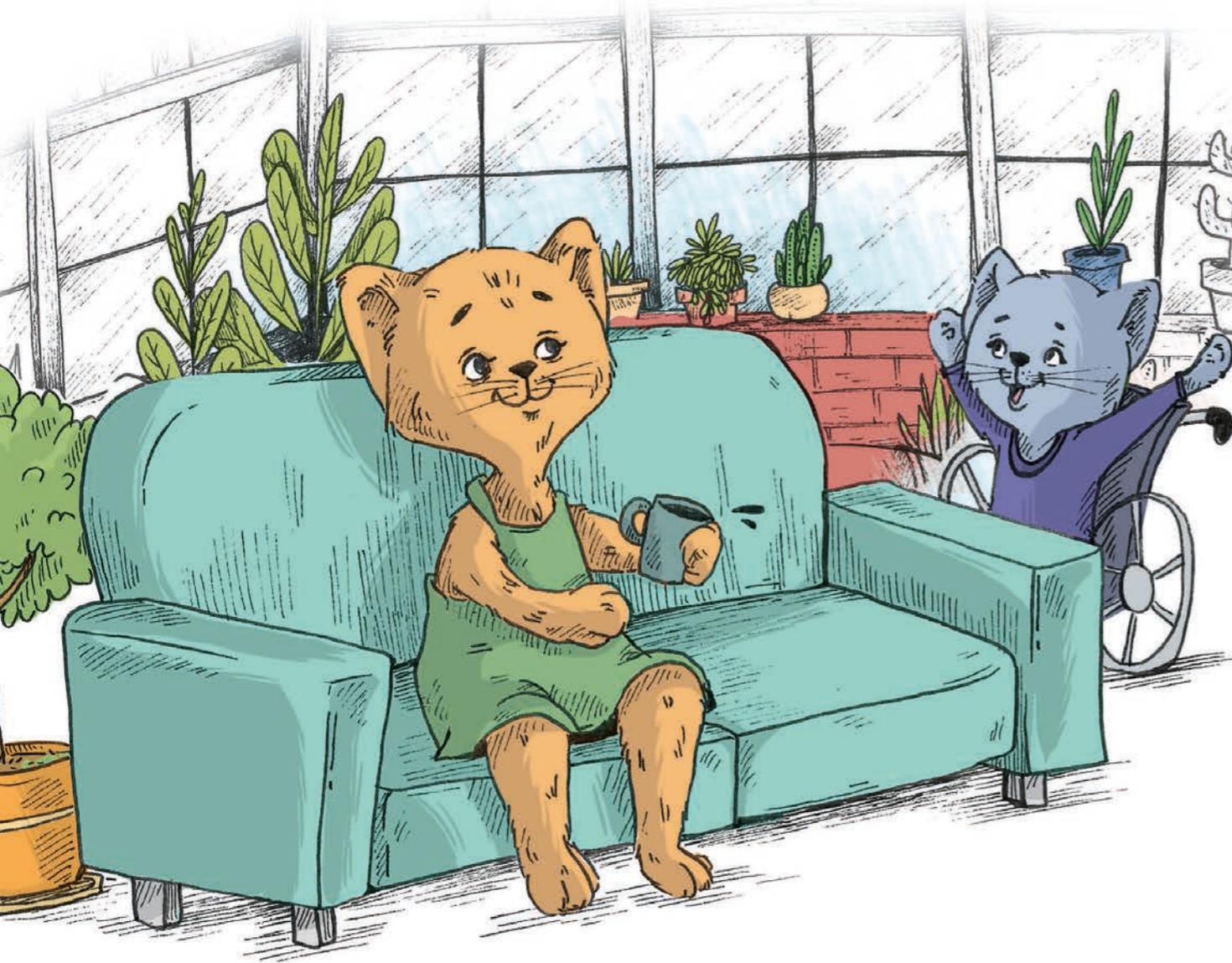
Sacha feels shy but approaches the children. They invite him to play straight away.

"Your racing car is so great!" shouts a rabbit pointing to Sacha's wheelchair.

"Let's race!"

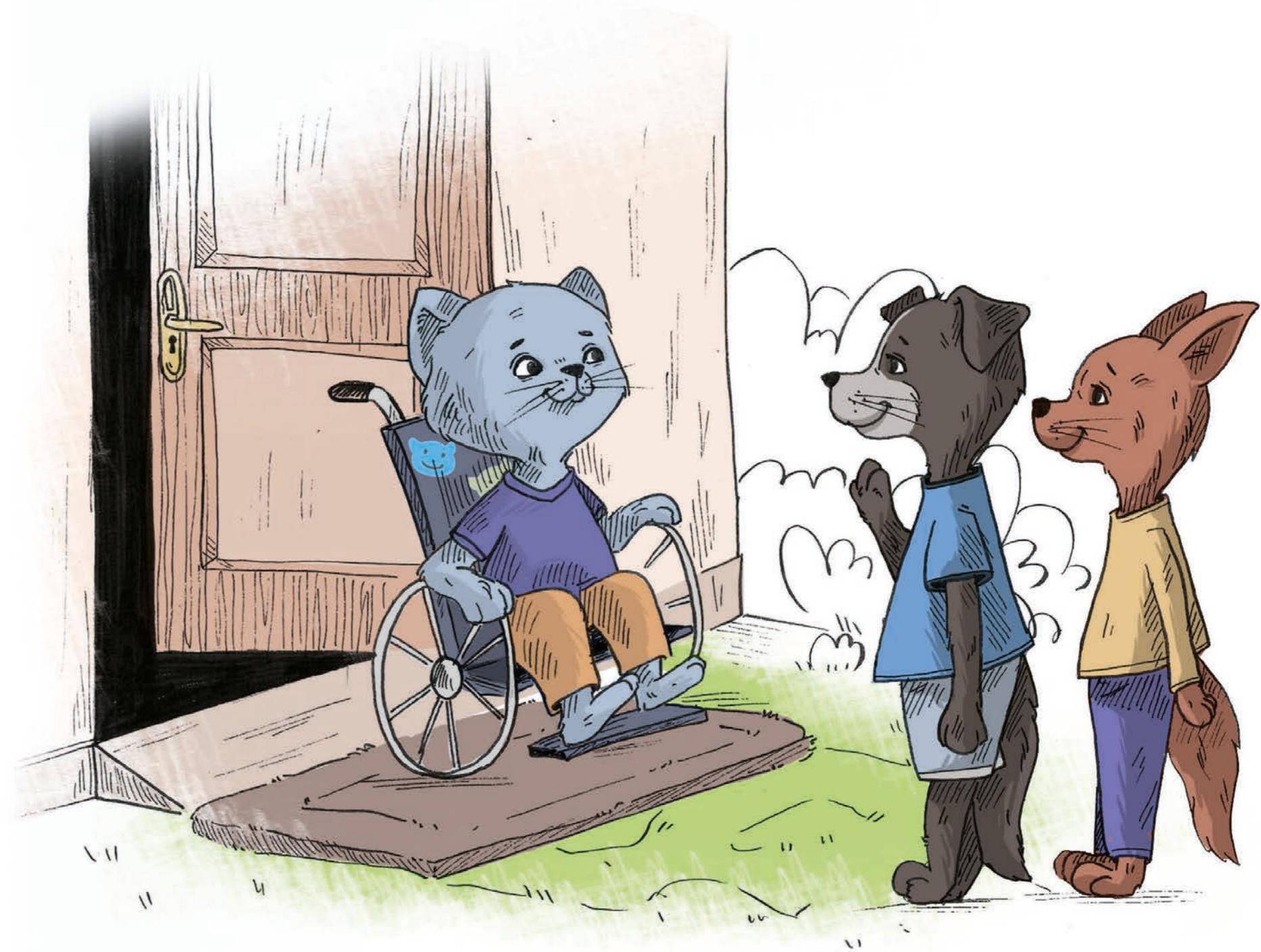
For the first time in a long while, Sacha smiles.





A few days later, Mother cat calls:
"Sacha, where are you?!"
"Boo!" yells Sacha from his
hiding place. Then he bursts out
laughing.
"You scared me you little joker!"
cries Mother Cat, kissing him
tenderly on the cheek.

Then, Sacha climbs into his wheelchair and joins his friends at the park in front of his house ... which he manages to reach without falling down!



About Neuromuscular Diseases

There are over a hundred different neuromuscular diseases that exist. These diseases can affect our nerves, muscles, the neuromuscular junction, and more rarely, the heart. They can begin as early as the antenatal period, at birth, in childhood, or during adulthood. Some forms of neuromuscular disease can cause loss of the ability to walk, requiring the use of a wheelchair. These diseases are triggered by a variety of causes. In some cases, the cause is genetic. More specifically, there is either one or more mutations of a gene that can appear either spontaneously, transmitted by one parent, or by both parents. There may also be immunological, infectious, or toxic causes leading to a neuromuscular disease.

About the Author

Medical secretary, Sonia Goerger, has been welcoming and meeting numerous patients dealing with genetics for many years. This interaction inspired her to create this series of books on *Children of Genetics*.

The books within this collection address challenges these patients may face daily, in simple terms and with endearing characters.

About the Illustrator

A graphic designer for several years, Elodie Garcia is an author and illustrator of children's books and comics. The delicacy of her line allows her to approach, in a gentle way, difficult subjects. By illustrating the *Children of Genetics* book series, she hopes to help families facing rare diseases.

About the ARGAD Association

The Association for Research in Genetics and Support for Families and Professionals of Dijon-Bourgogne (ARGAD) is a non-profit association under the 1901 law, created in September 2010.

ARGAD engages in numerous activities:

- Improving reception and care conditions for patients with rare diseases in Burgundy, within the Genetics Centre of Dijon CHU;
- Raising awareness among health professionals in the Burgundy region, and among the general public regarding rare diseases;
- Contributing to a better and improved training of health professionals involved in rare diseases;
- And, supporting clinical and biological research activities in the field of genetic mutations associated with abnormalities in development and intellectual disabilities in Burgundy.

To support the ARGAD Association and its mission, visit: <http://www.translad.org/>



About Fondation Ipsen BookLab

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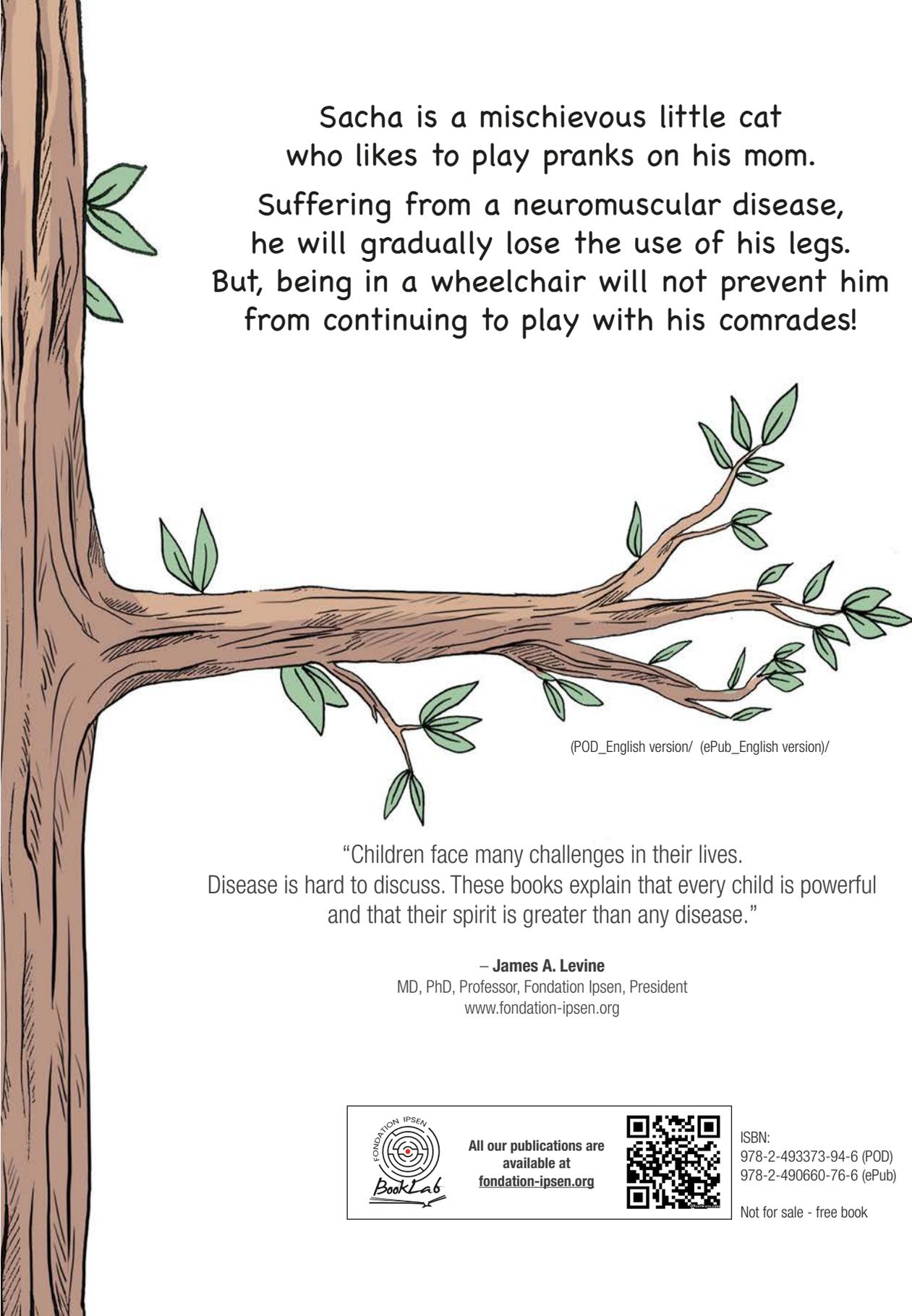
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Sacha is a mischievous little cat
who likes to play pranks on his mom.

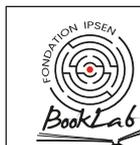
Suffering from a neuromuscular disease,
he will gradually lose the use of his legs.
But, being in a wheelchair will not prevent him
from continuing to play with his comrades!

(POD_English version/ (ePub_English version)/

“Children face many challenges in their lives.
Disease is hard to discuss. These books explain that every child is powerful
and that their spirit is greater than any disease.”

– **James A. Levine**

MD, PhD, Professor, Fondation Ipsen, President
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