

THE MIGHTY LEAGUE VOL. 2

THE HORRIBLE HUG



Reader's Guide

THE MIGHTY LEAGUE VOL. 2
THE HORRIBLE HUG



Another day begins, and so does another adventure for the crew on board the U.S.S Mighty League.



CAPTAIN'S LOG

I'm starting at a new school this year, and I'm very anxious about it. I have Asperger Syndrome, which means that I am on the autism spectrum. I call myself an "Aspie."



How do you feel when a new school year begins?

THE MIGHTY LEAGUE VOL. 2
THE HORRIBLE HUG



The Captain leaves behind the safety of home and travels deep into space to discover a new alien colony.



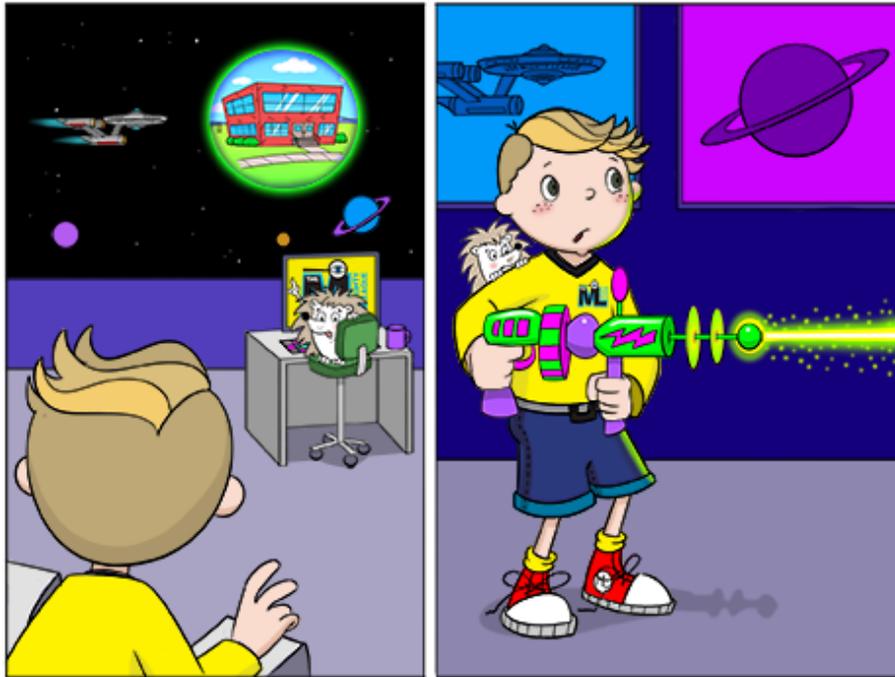
CAPTAIN'S LOG

I don't like change or new situations. It's very overwhelming. I'm also really worried that I won't fit in.



Describe what new situations feel like to you.

THE MIGHTY LEAGUE VOL. 2
THE HORRIBLE HUG



Captain JMan: *Mr. Redge, as my second in command, do you believe it is safe for us to enter this new land?*

Mr. Redge: *It will be risky, Captain, but I believe the aliens here mean us no harm.*



CAPTAIN'S LOG

The real world is like an alien planet to me. My mom says I'm going to like this school and that the teachers are really nice. I'm still nervous, because I don't know what they'll expect from me.



What does he mean when he says the real world is like an alien planet?

THE MIGHTY LEAGUE VOL. 2
THE HORRIBLE HUG



Captain's Log, Stardate 2109.07: We have arrived on a very strange planet. Every minute, I encounter new alien life forms.



CAPTAIN'S LOG

I worry that no one will understand me. Are they going to want to be my friends even though I'm different?



How could you make this new classmate feel welcome?

THE MIGHTY LEAGUE VOL. 2
THE HORRIBLE HUG



I try not to say much in order to avoid drawing attention to my ship and myself. It is a captain's duty to remain unseen and unheard.



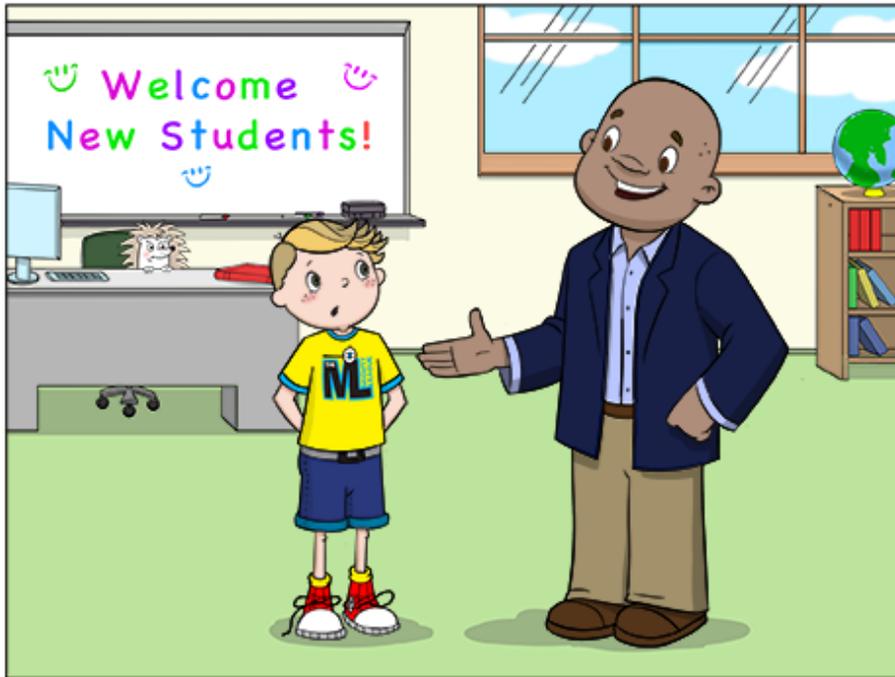
CAPTAIN'S LOG

My way of dealing with new situations is to go within myself so I don't draw their attention to me. If people don't notice me, they won't talk to me, and that way, I can't make a mistake.



What does it mean to "go within myself"?

THE MIGHTY LEAGUE VOL. 2
THE HORRIBLE HUG



Mr. M.: *Hey, Jonathan, my name is Mr. M. I'm going to be your new teacher. Welcome to our school!*

JMan: *Hi.*

Mr. M.: *We're really excited to have you here in our class.*

JMan: *Okay, thanks.*



CAPTAIN'S LOG

Oh no! The teacher is talking to me! I'll say just enough so I don't mess up. I won't give him any eye contact, either. Many autistic people don't like to look other people in the eyes, but it doesn't mean we aren't interested in what they have to say! Looking away makes it easier to hear the words.



Why do you think it's easier for JMan to listen if he isn't looking into his teacher's eyes?

THE MIGHTY LEAGUE VOL. 2
THE HORRIBLE HUG



JMan: *Who are these aliens and what do they want from me? It's best if I sit as far away as possible. Who knows what could happen if I sit too close! They might want me to—gulp—talk or something!*

Mr. M.: *Hmm. I wonder how we can help Jonathan open up to the class...*



CAPTAIN'S LOG

At my other school, the kids made fun of me, so I'm afraid of this happening again. I'll just sit in the back and try to stay invisible.



Have you ever been made fun of? How did that make you feel?

THE MIGHTY LEAGUE VOL. 2
THE HORRIBLE HUG



Captain's Log 2109.14: After spending a week on this planet, I have discovered what the beings here call "hugs." Horrible hugs! It seems that, when greeting, they like to wrap their arms around each other and squeeze and squeeze! Each time they see me, they do it all over again!

Mr. Redge: *Captain! I'm picking up strange activity on the scanner!*

Captain JMan: *Any readings on who or what it is, Mr. Redge?*

Mr. Redge: *No, sir, but it's coming directly toward us! And fast!*



CAPTAIN'S LOG

I do not like people to get too close to me or to touch me. I do want to have friends, but I'm not sure they understand that I act in ways that are different than them. Still, I hope they give me a chance!



What does it mean to give someone a chance?

THE MIGHTY LEAGUE VOL. 2
THE HORRIBLE HUG



Mr. M: Jonathan!

JMan: Oh no...

Mr. M: How have you been, buddy?

JMan: Oh no, this isn't happening...



CAPTAIN'S LOG

Hmmm, I've learned that a smile usually means something good but I have a feeling that something awful is going to happen to me. I just want to run away inside myself to get away from this situation... and pace back and forth to walk off all the worries. This calms me down and makes me feel better.



What makes you afraid? How do you calm down?

THE MIGHTY LEAGUE VOL. 2
THE HORRIBLE HUG



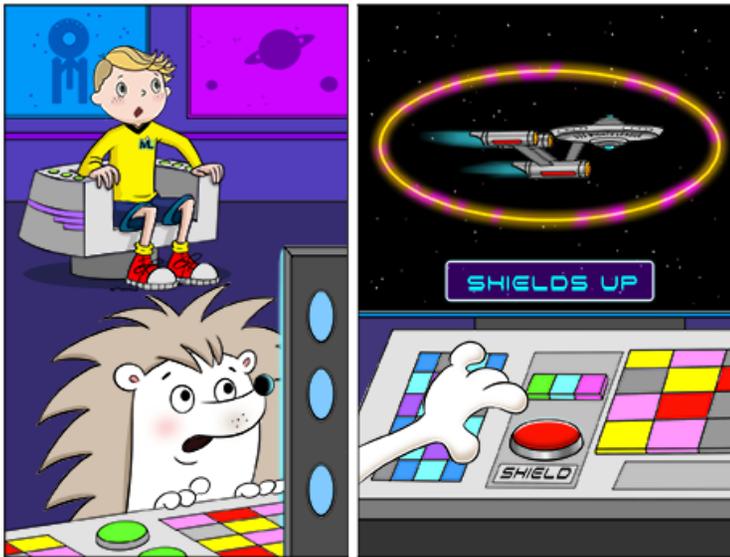
Captain JMan: *Mr. Redge, activate all shields! He's coming in for a hug!*

Mr. Redge: *Yes sir! All shields are activated, sir!*

Captain JMan: *Why is Mr. M. still approaching our ship?!*

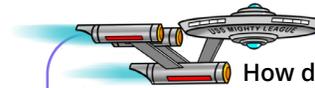
Mr. Redge: *Captain, I believe our defenses are no match for Mr. M. and his "hug."*

Captain JMan: *Prepare for impact!*



CAPTAIN'S LOG

My attempts at being incognito have been thwarted! Disaster incoming! I think Mr. M. is going to...HUG ME???



How do you communicate when you do not want someone to do something to you?

THE MIGHTY LEAGUE VOL. 2
THE HORRIBLE HUG



Mr. M: *Come on Jonathan! Tell me about your day!*

JMan: *No... no no no!*

Mr. Redge: *Captain, he's inches away!*

Captain JMan: *Our defenses are too weak, Mr. Redge! We have no choice but to let him in!*

Mr. Redge: *Ay, ay, Captain!*



CAPTAIN'S LOG

I don't know how to communicate my emotions, so people think I don't feel anything. On the outside I look awkward and uncomfortable. I try so hard to express myself, but so often kids just end up making fun of me.



Do you ever feel like JMan? How do you ask for help?

THE MIGHTY LEAGUE VOL. 2
THE HORRIBLE HUG



Captain JMan: *Damage report, Mr. Redge.*

Mr. Redge: *The scanner is detecting no damage from the hug, Captain.*

Captain JMan: *No damage?*

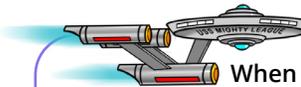
Mr. Redge: *No, sir! It seems their hugs are meant for good and not evil!*

Captain JMan: *How interesting...*



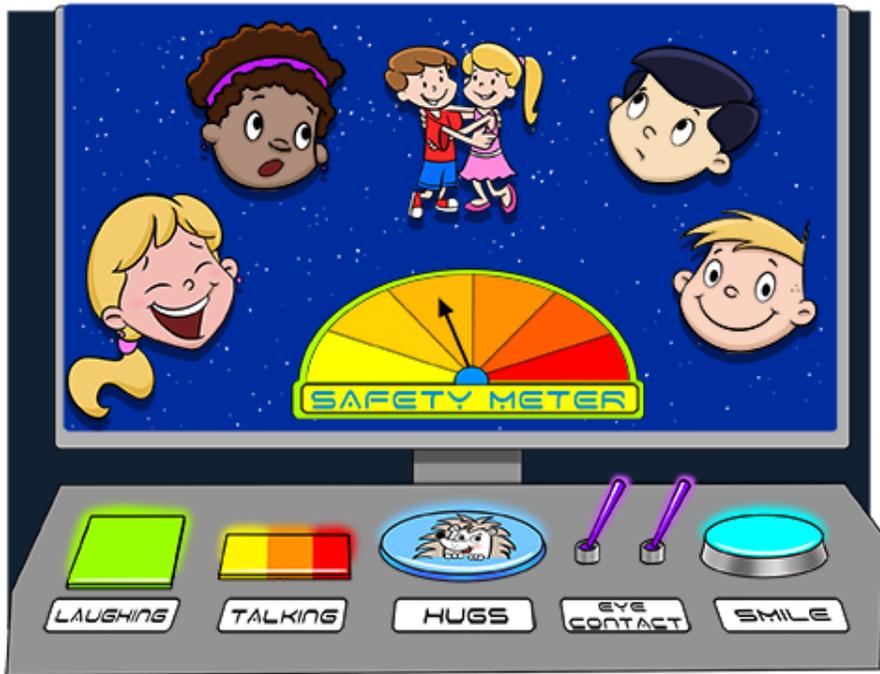
CAPTAIN'S LOG

Hmm, inside that hug felt...well, good. I'm starting to let down my guard. Let's see what happens.



When do you feel safe to be yourself?

THE MIGHTY LEAGUE VOL. 2
THE HORRIBLE HUG



Mr. Redge: *Captain, I think the hug only makes us stronger!*

Captain JMan: *I think you're right, Redge. Maybe it's time to rethink how we interact with these aliens.*

Mr. Redge: *Agreed, Captain!*



CAPTAIN'S LOG

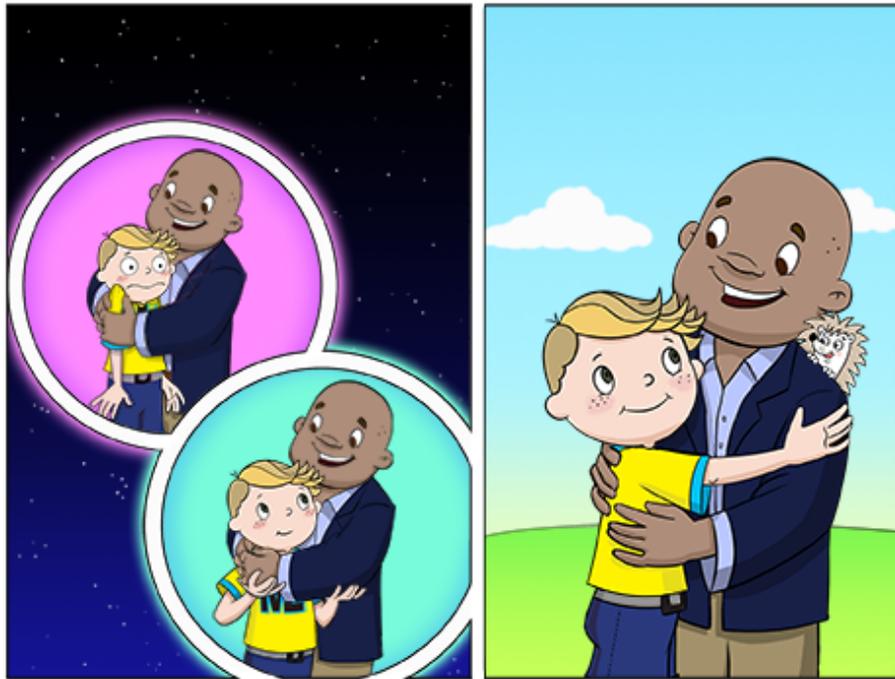
I think Mr. M. offers his hug as sign of friendship and respect. The more I learn, the more I'm becoming comfortable here at this new school.

It's important to know that you get to decide if you want to be hugged, give a hand shake, or be touched. In this true story, the real JMan gave his permission.



What ways can you show friendship and respect?

THE MIGHTY LEAGUE VOL. 2
THE HORRIBLE HUG



Captain's Log, Stardate 2109.75: I have grown to like the beings on this planet. Their greetings are very different than any I've experienced on other missions. But they have made me feel welcome and accepted with their "hugs." I have learned that sometimes it's best for a captain to be seen and heard.



CAPTAIN'S LOG

It's strange how a hug makes me feel more accepted. Maybe I'll participate more in the classroom and on the playground.



How can you make someone feel accepted?

THE MIGHTY LEAGUE VOL. 2
THE HORRIBLE HUG



Mr. Redge: *Captain, another ship is approaching,*

Captain JMan: *Lower all shields, Mr. Redge!*

Mr. Redge: *Yes, Captain!*

Captain JMan: *Engage!*



CAPTAIN'S LOG

Mr. M. had this plan all along to help me relax and learn that it's okay to be seen and heard. It worked! I'm so happy that he cared.



How has someone helped you feel better?

THE MIGHTY LEAGUE VOL. 2
THE HORRIBLE HUG



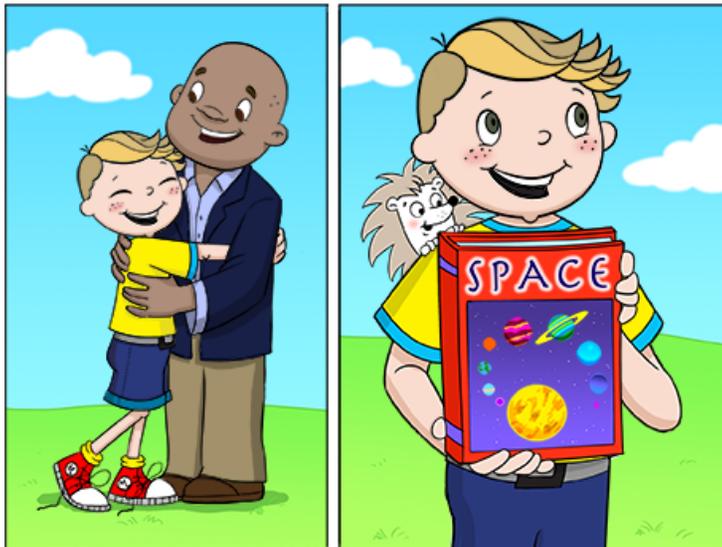
Mr. M: *It's good to see you, Jonathan!*

JMan: *And you too, Mr. M.*

Mr. M: *How are you doing buddy?*

JMan: *Well, I read this new book about space last night. Did you know that the solar system was formed 4.6 BILLION years ago?! I even know how it happened...*

Mr. M: *Can't wait to hear all about it!*



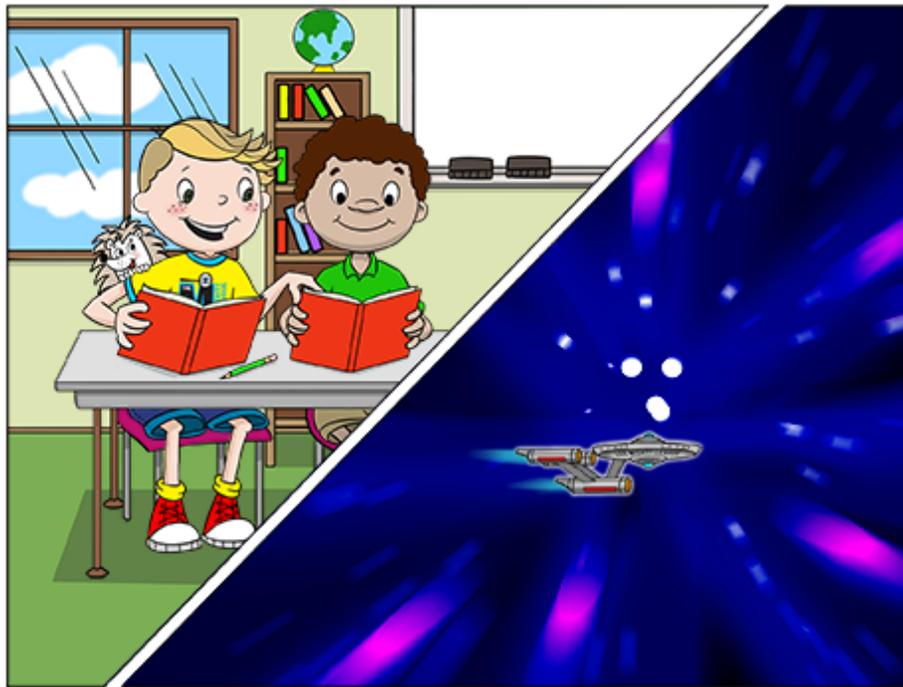
CAPTAIN'S LOG

Mr. M. is kind and patient and took the time to help me adjust. I have a good memory for lots of facts about many subjects, like space exploration. I'm so eager to share what I know and excited he will listen and even learn with me!



What are you excited about sharing?

THE MIGHTY LEAGUE VOL. 2
THE HORRIBLE HUG



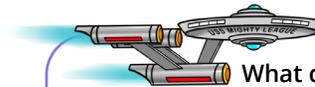
And so the Captain and the crew aboard the U.S.S. Mighty League choose to remain on the new planet. A foreign land with horrible hugs has become a new home. The Captain begins to open up and share tales of space adventures. Still, the U.S.S. Mighty League will fly again one day, maybe with some Huggers on the flight deck.

Mr. Redge: *After all, a starship Captain is never done exploring.*



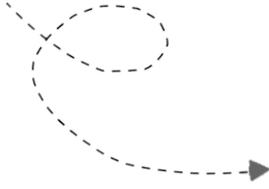
CAPTAIN'S LOG

Look at me shine! Now I'm sitting in front of the class and raising my hand to answer questions. And I have friends to play with during recess. We aren't so alien to each other anymore. They like me for me!



What do you like most about yourself?

Jonathan, the real
Captain JMan



← And there's a real
Mr. M too!



Did You Know?

Did you know that this is a true story? Well, not the aliens in outer space part! But this is the story of Jonathan (who is on the autism spectrum) when he attended a new school.

He was afraid he'd be bullied again so he tried to stay invisible. His teachers wanted to help him so they came up with "Project Hug." Every time they saw him he got a big old bear hug! He said he hated it at first but it changed his life. It made him feel safe and more confident. From that point on he wasn't afraid to try new things. Today, he is a voice actor whose character voices are in video games, apps, audio stories, and even a major theme park. In fact, he did the narration for this book! You can meet him at jonincharacter.com and hear many of his character voices on his **Dorktales Storytime Podcast**.



**GEEK
CLUB
BOOKS**

© 2021 Geek Club Books