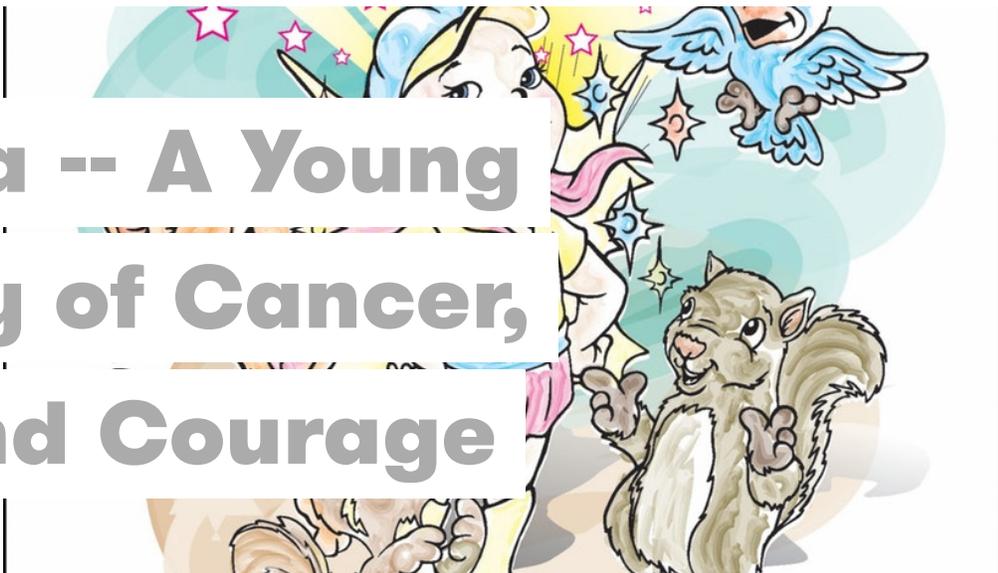


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SuperClara -- A Young Girl's Story of Cancer, Bravery and Courage



Robert Martin, Bridge to a Cure · Children's advocate and author
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Did you know September is National Childhood Cancer Awareness Month? Every day, 42 families in the United States learn that their child has cancer. And every week, 38 children will lose the fight.



All terminally ill victims need support from family and friends, as well as their own courage to remain positive and diligent. For children, it's even harder. The fear they have from not understanding anything that is happening to them only adds to their anxiety. They ask questions such as:

“What is cancer? Why me? Did I do something wrong?”

What they need is courage, hope, and the knowledge that they are not alone in their fight.

We wrote our new children’s book, “SuperClara – a Young Girl’s Story of Cancer, Bravery and Courage,” to present answers in a way that gives comfort to the child battling a terminal disease, and to provide a much-needed injection of courage.

In March 2016, my then 5-year-old 6-year-old granddaughter Clara was diagnosed with terminal brain cancer. Since then my family and I have been doing all we can to help her in her fight against this terrible disease, and to make a difference in the lives of terminally ill kids everywhere.

For several years, Clara’s sister Keira Ely and I have been writing international whodunits together. These are stories that are fun to read and solve, and that capture the special bond between a grandparent and grandchild as they encounter life’s mysteries.

When Clara was diagnosed, Keira and I set out together to aim our creative writing toward a new purpose – to provide hope and courage for kids battling terminal illness. Our new book is inspired by Clara and her joyful, positive spirit.

SuperClara is a 5-year-old girl who is super-positive and super-happy. If something disappoints, she smiles it away. If something is wrong, she does her best to fix it.

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cancer. Her treatment requires surgery, radiation, and chemotherapy. Like any child, she first resists the need for radiation treatment and years of having to take medicine. She asks questions, which are her way of making sure that this is the best way to fix it. She reluctantly agrees, and although she is afraid, she maintains her positive attitude.

Following radiation treatment, Clara discovers that she has special powers that allow her to connect with animals in extraordinary ways—she can tell what they are feeling inside, she can understand what they are saying, and they can understand her.

Clara's journey takes her to the dog park, where her dog Maggie is frightened by Fang the bully; the zoo, where the sea lion Fuzzy is embarrassed to be seen; and the Cheetahs' den, where Dash seems very angry about something. Clara quickly recognizes that fear, embarrassment, and anger are the same feelings she experienced with cancer and the cancer treatments. She responds to the animals' plight with her winning attitude and special powers, helping them to overcome their negative feelings and making them happy once again.

While the subject is battling cancer, SuperClara's story can be an inspiration to anyone who is discouraged for any reason. It puts life's challenges and disappointments into perspective. It's a story that will help people of all ages be more appreciative, no matter whatever circumstances they face.

One of the things we have learned in real-life Clara's battle with cancer is that most cancer research dollars are being spent toward finding the cure that has so far eluded medical science. Although encouraging progress continues in gene sequencing, immunotherapy, and vaccine technology, a cure remains years away. For terminally ill patients, time is not on their side. There is a gap between now and the future — one that is not being addressed.

That's why we created the Bridge to a Cure Foundation, and why we are devoting the funds generated from "SuperClara" to the foundation.

The mission of Bridge to a Cure is to provide funds to research life-sustaining treatments for terminally ill victims. The expectation is that the research will not only consider current and prior clinical trials, but also drugs that are off-patent, and many alternative treatments. In a short time we have gotten commitments from major research institutions including Tisch Brain Tumor Center at Duke University, Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center, the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute and The Rockefeller University.

SuperClara and Bridge to a Cure are both about giving hope and courage for the fight to help kids battling terminal illness. Together, we can all make a difference for kids who are waiting on a cure that remains too distant.

About Robert Martin and Bridge to a Cure: Children's advocate and author Robert Martin writes books with his granddaughter Keira Ely, including the bestsellers "The Case of the Missing Crown Jewels," and "SuperClara – a Young Girl's Story of Cancer, Bravery and Courage." Robert founded the nonprofit Bridge to a Cure Foundation

to fund life-sustaining treatments for children suffering from terminal illness. For more information, visit www.RobertMartinAuthor.com.

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Children's advocate and author

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