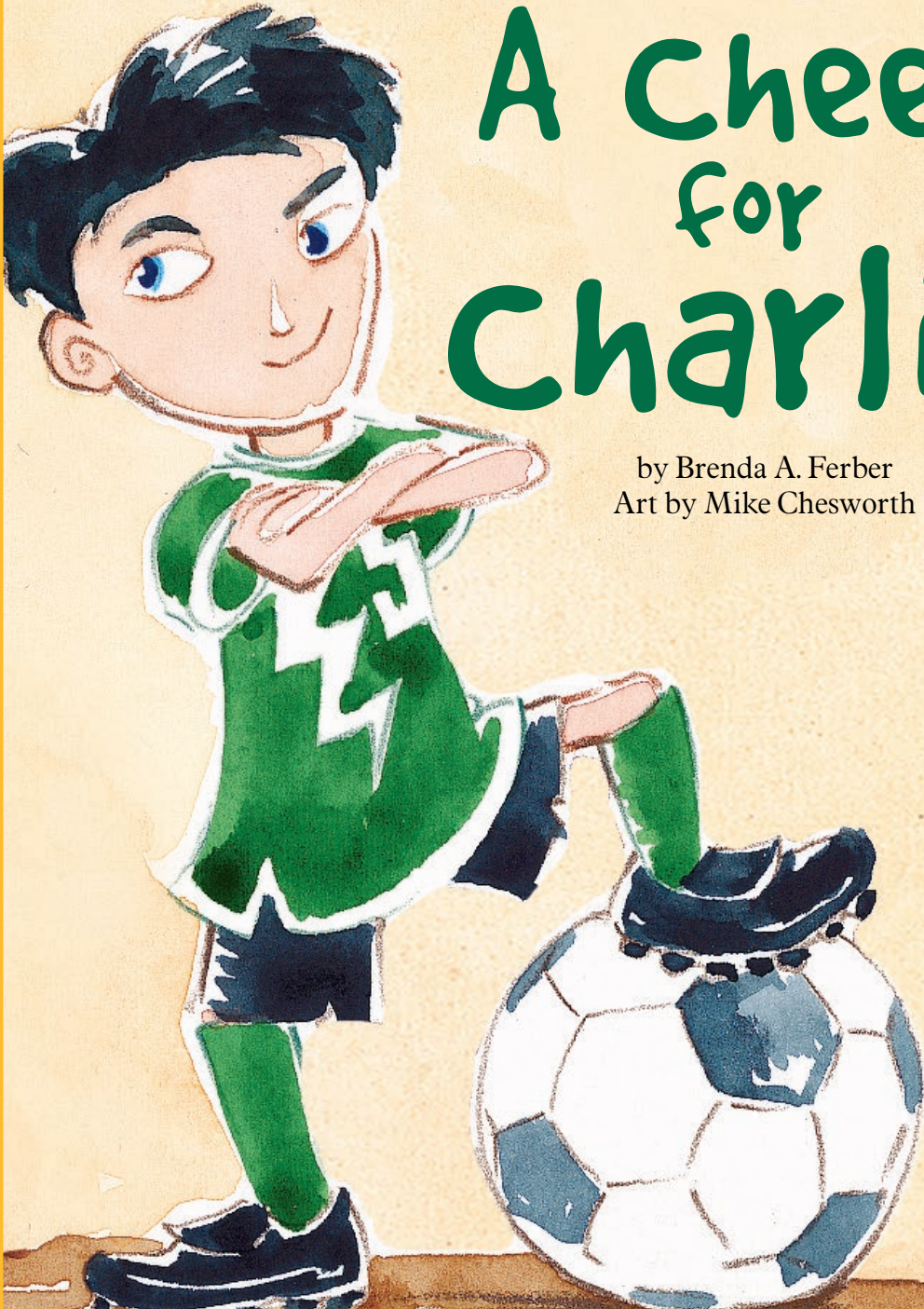


A cheer for Charlie

by Brenda A. Ferber
Art by Mike Chesworth



When Charlie turned five, he joined his first soccer team, the Green Lightning. Charlie tried on his uniform right away. He strapped on his shin guards. He pulled on his long, thick green socks. He stepped into his shiny black shorts and slid his smooth green shirt over his head. He pulled on his soccer cleats and laced them up tight.

Then he admired himself in the mirror.

“I am a real soccer player,” he said to himself. He practiced his serious game face. He practiced his victory smile. Then he waved and said, “Thank you, thank you! No autographs, please.”

“What are you doing?” asked his sister Grace from the doorway.

“I’m practicing soccer,” said Charlie.