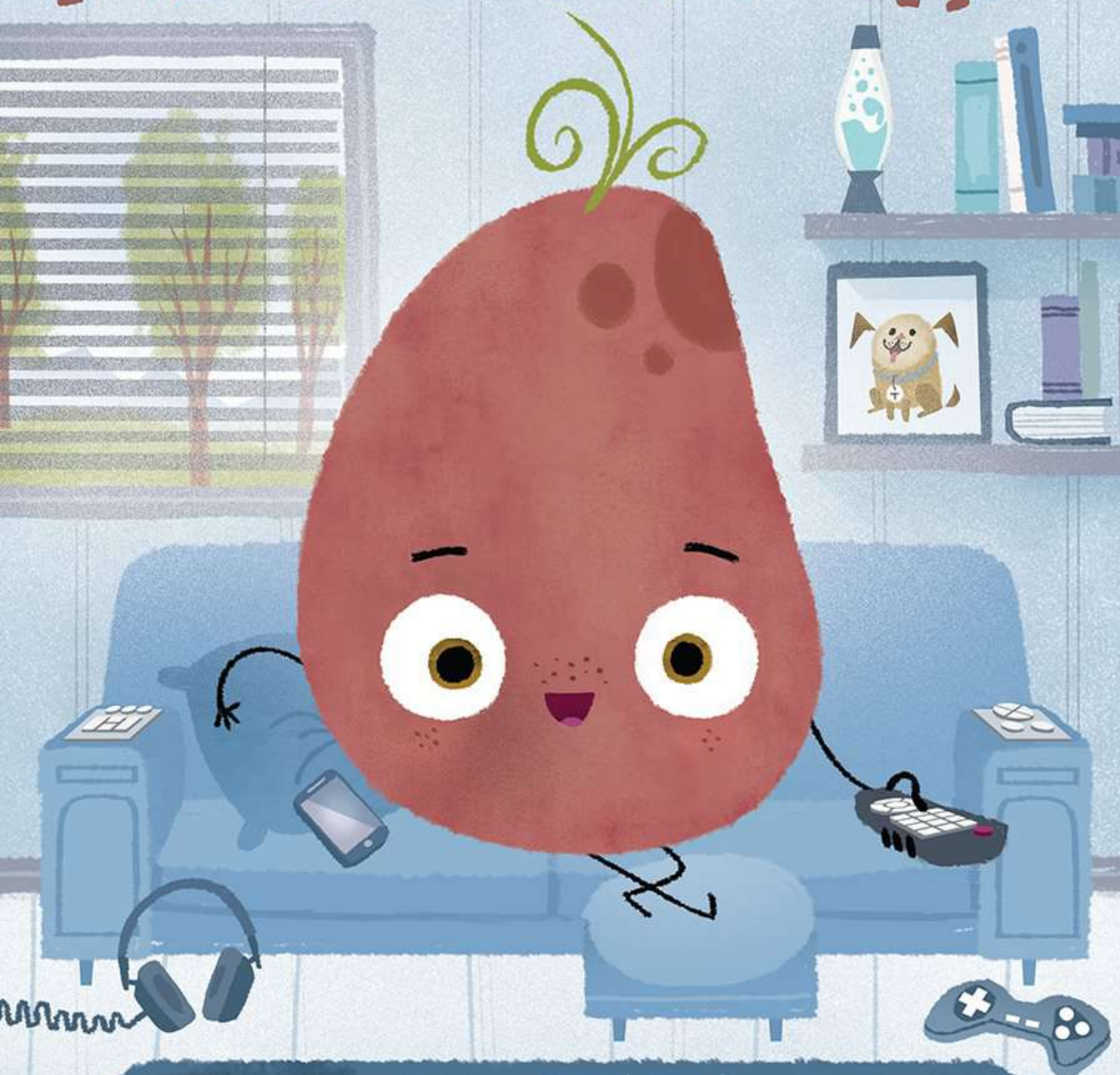
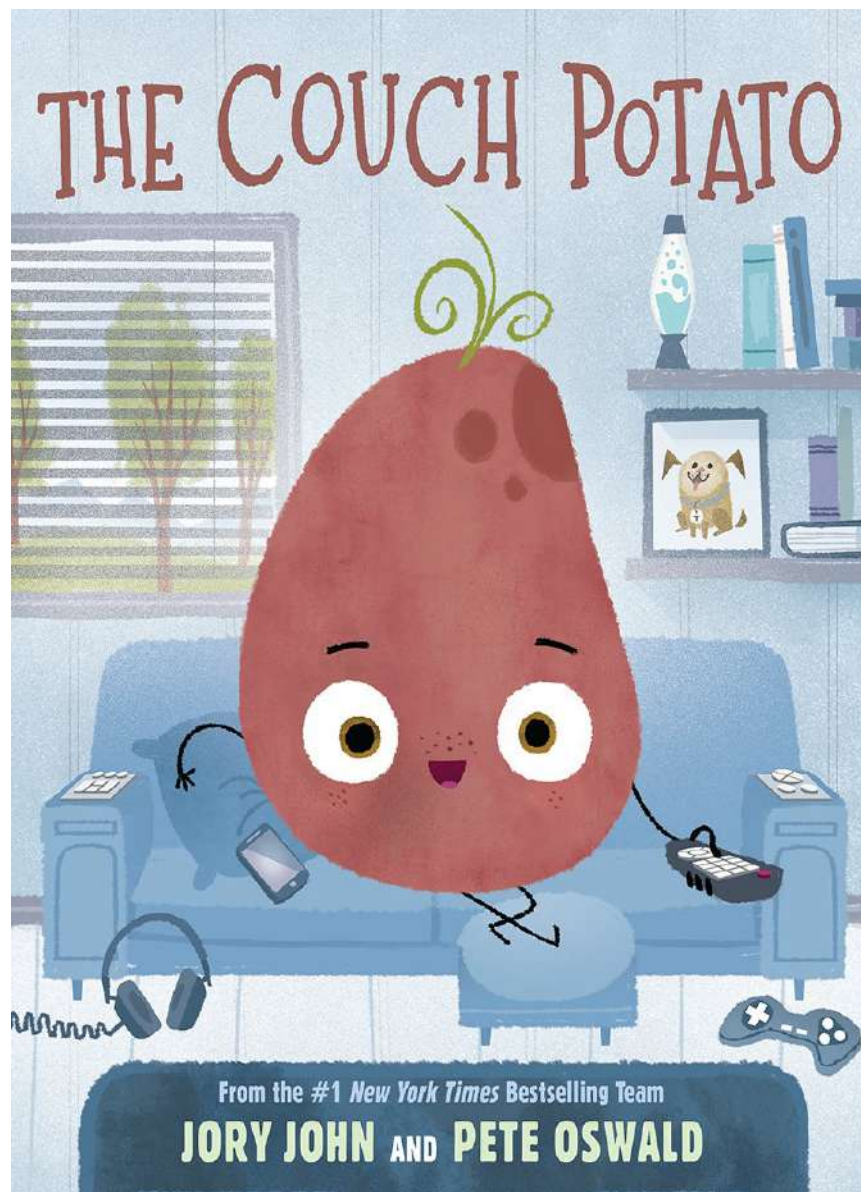


# THE COUCH POTATO



From the #1 *New York Times* Bestselling Team

**JORY JOHN AND PETE OSWALD**



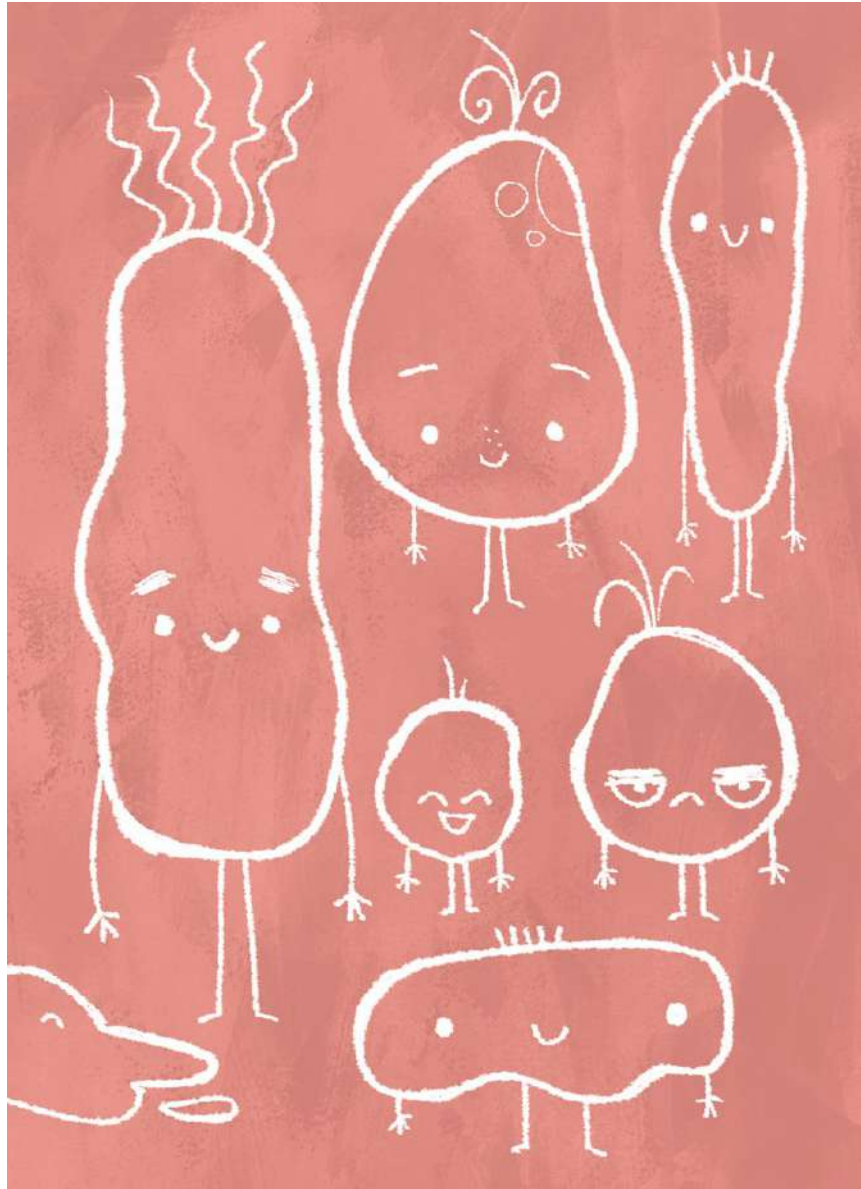
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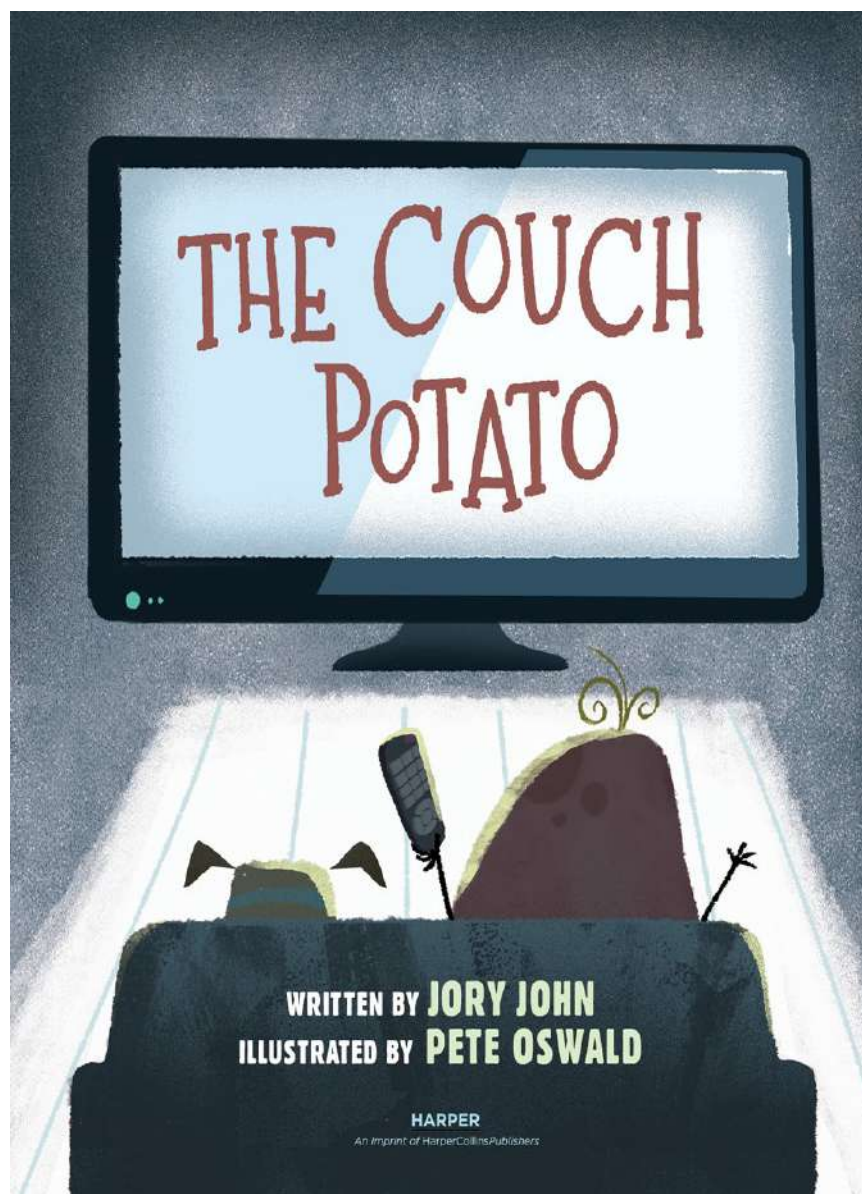






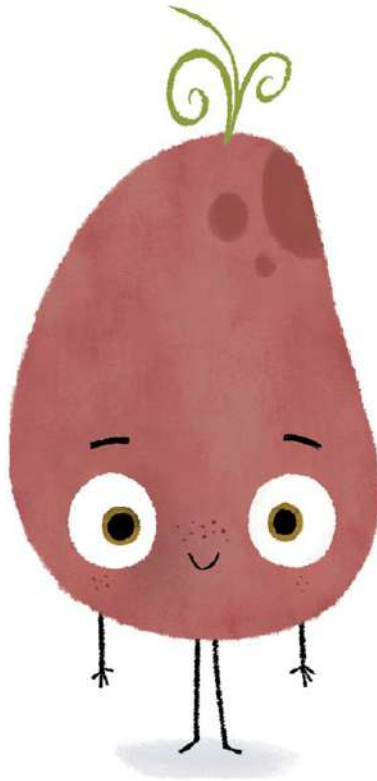








**I am a potato.**



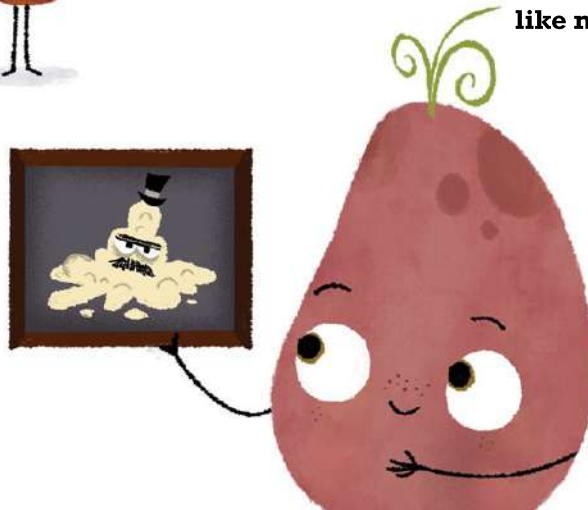




**Not a small potato  
like my brother.**



**Not a sweet potato  
like my mother.**



**Not a mashed potato  
like my uncle Stu.**

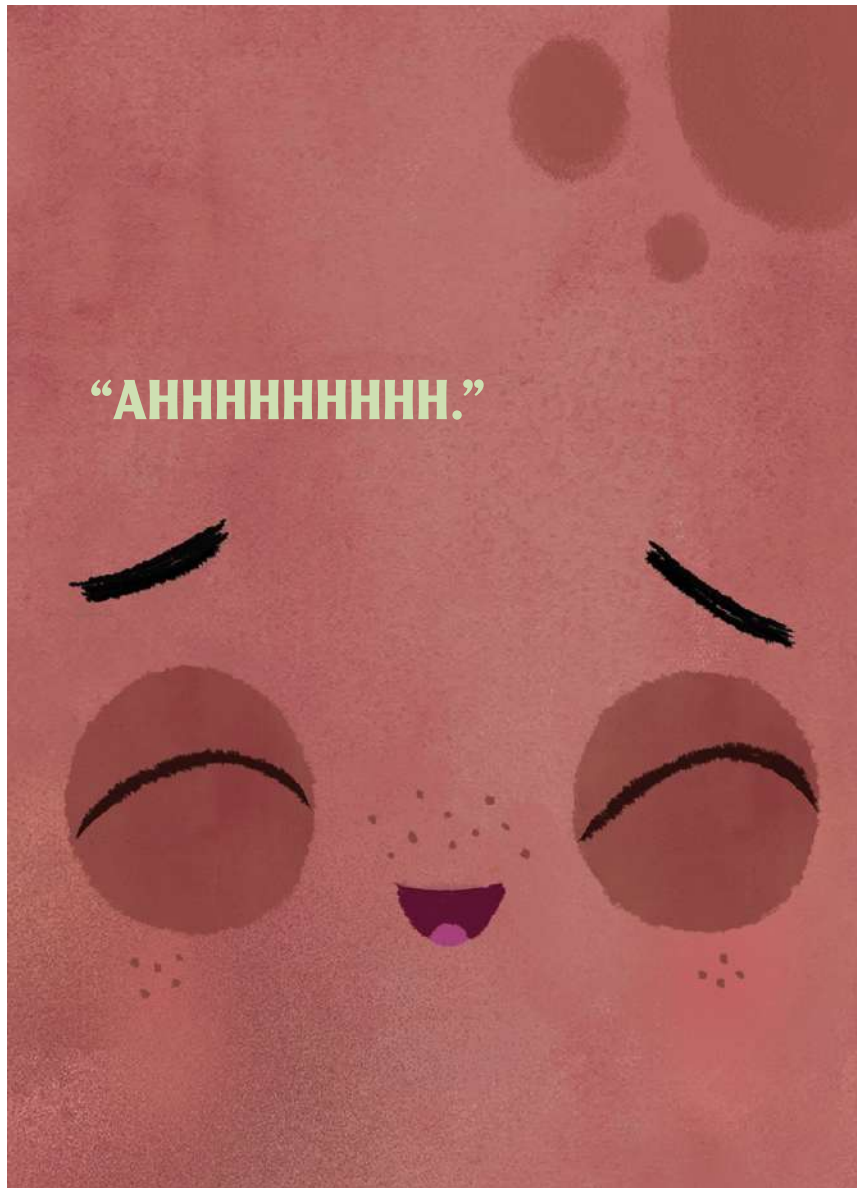


I am a *couch* potato. Oh yeah, it's true! My favorite place to slouch is on the couch.

I spend all my free time sitting in this exact spot.







**Why would I ever leave this comfy, cozy couch?  
It's got everything a potato could need. . . .**

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See? I have this.



And this.



And this.

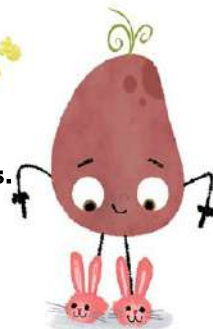
And one of these.



And those.



And this.



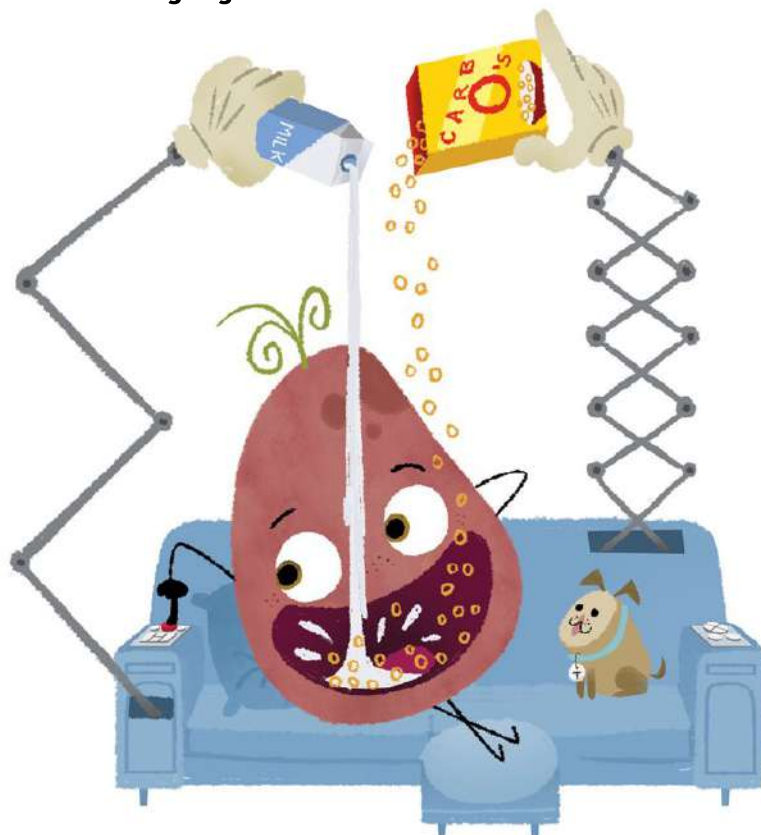
And that.



And these.



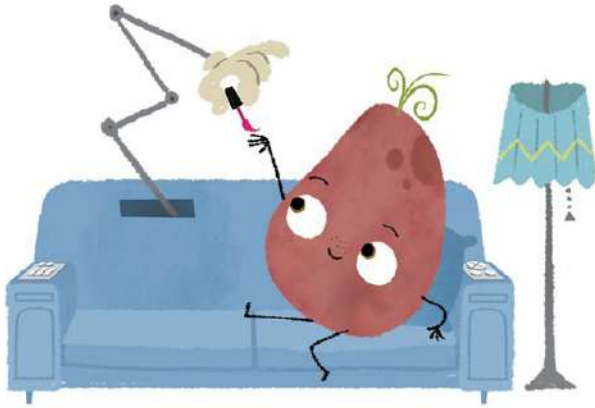
Oh, and *this!* Check it out. This button activates a gadget that fetches me snacks whenever I want.



Bam! Impressed? And I don't have to move an *inch*.  
*Much* easier than going to the kitchen.



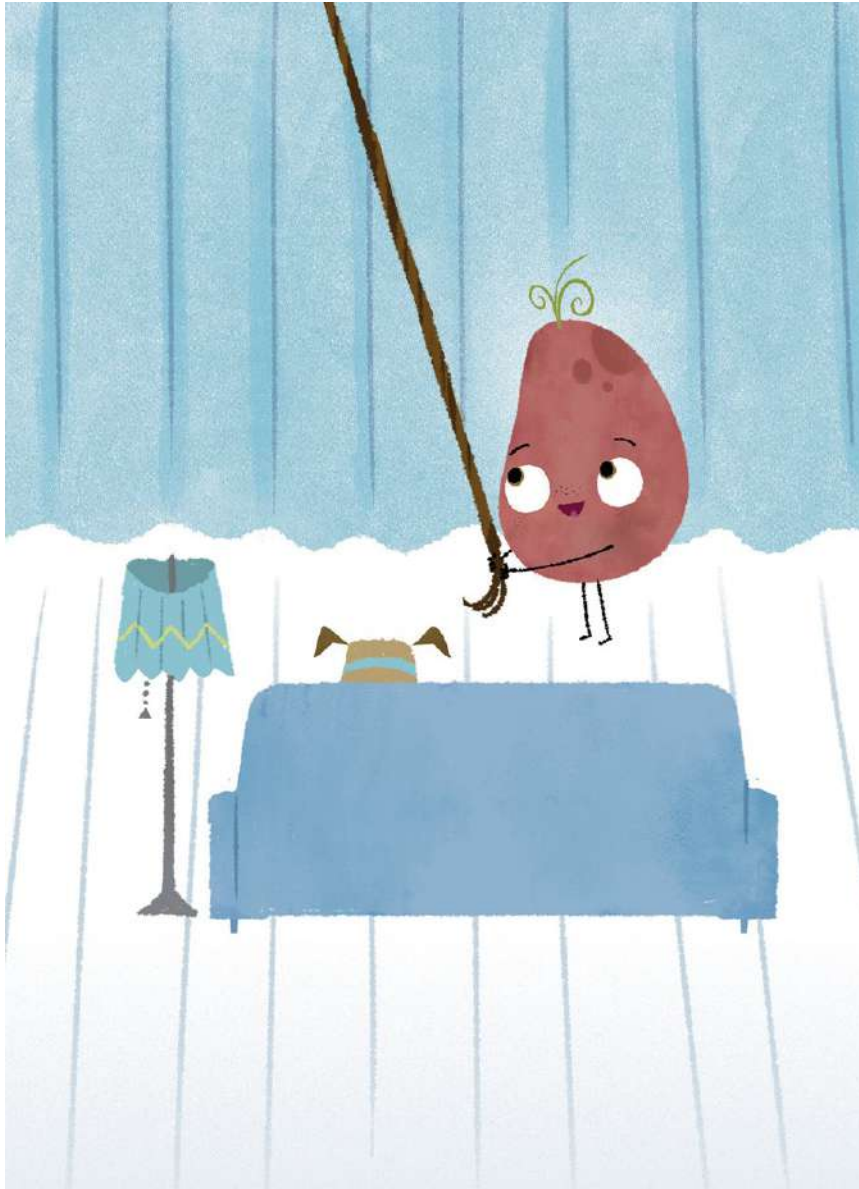




If the most *important* thing in life is to be comfortable at all times, then I think I've got it all figured out.







**But wait, there's *more!***

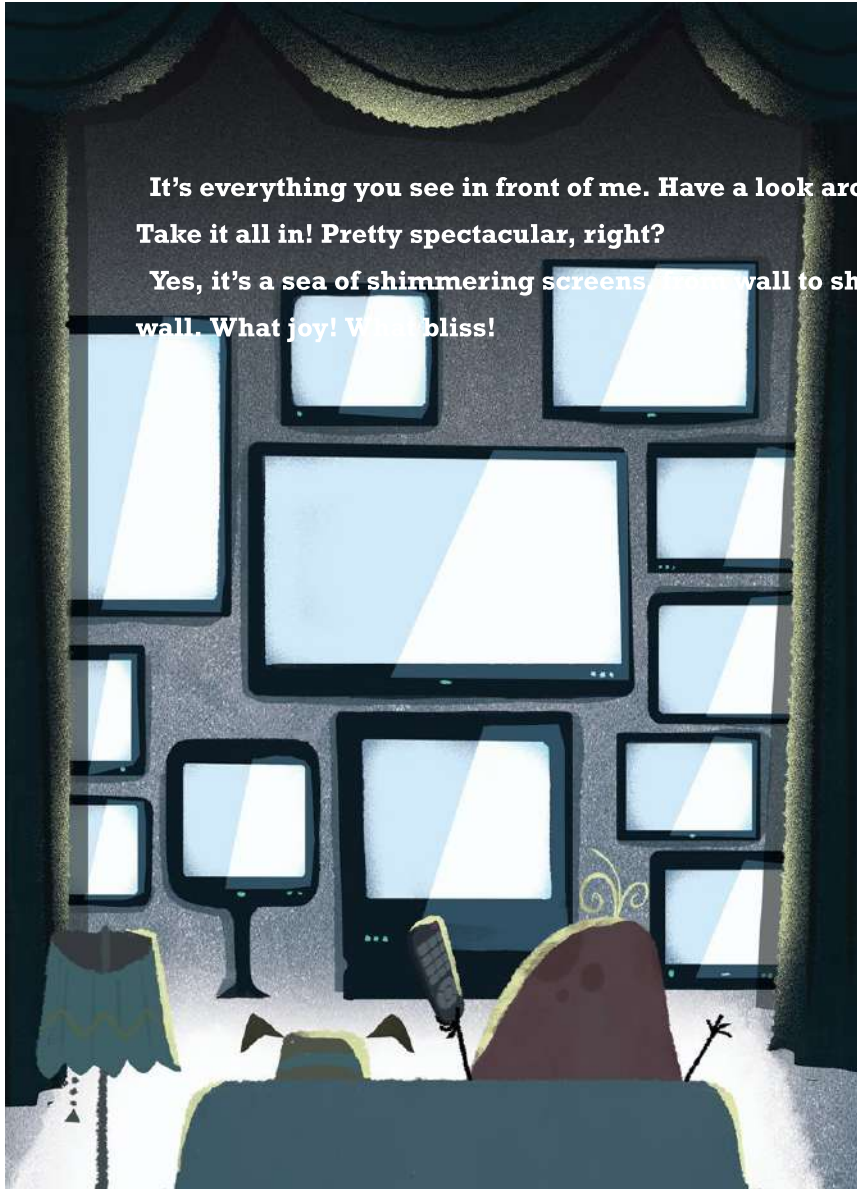
**I haven't revealed the absolute best part about my whole setup.**

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It's everything you see in front of me. Have a look around!  
Take it all in! Pretty spectacular, right?

Yes, it's a sea of shimmering screens, from wall to shimmering  
wall. What joy! What bliss!







These screens feature  
my favorite shows.



This screen has all my  
unanswered messages.



These screens are  
where I play video  
games.

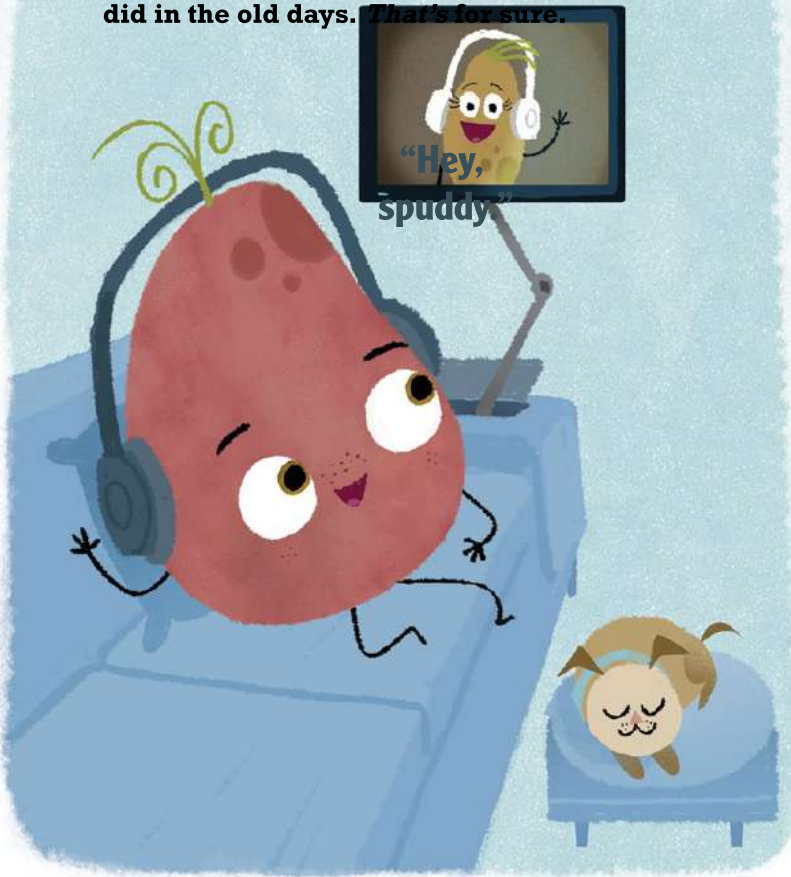


And *this* screen is a  
livestream of my friend, my  
best spud for life!



This is how my pals and I spend quality time together.

It's *much* easier than trying to meet up somewhere, like folks did in the old days. *That's for sure.*

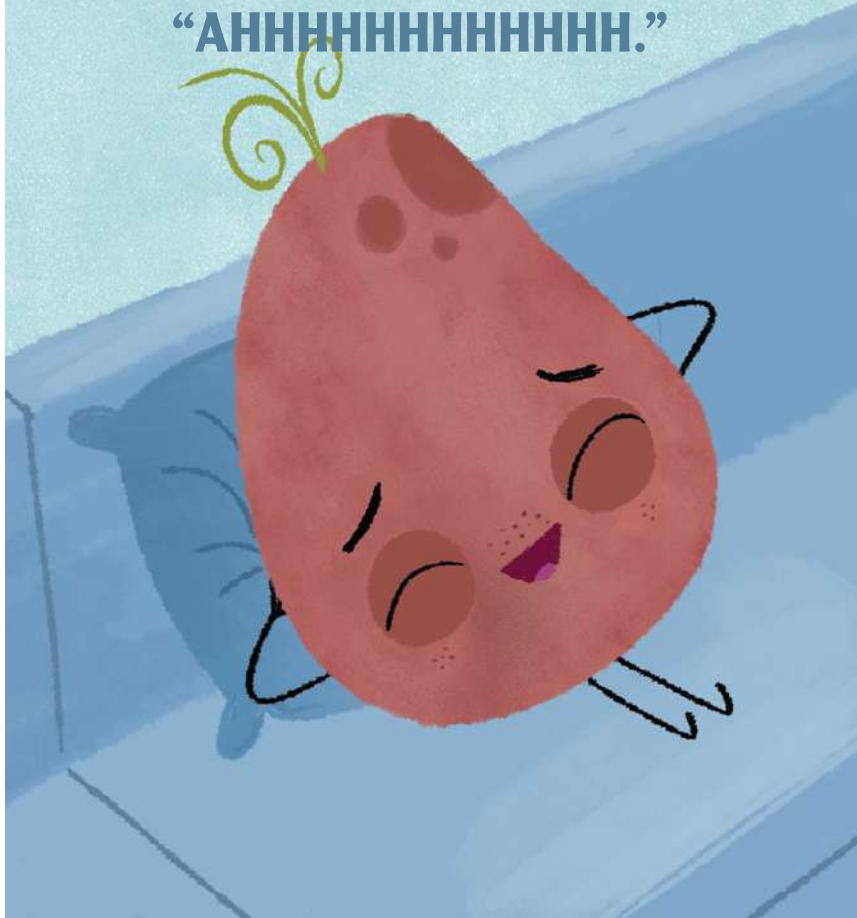


"Hey,  
pal-tato."



**Yes, from this very couch, I can control everything in my  
life, all the time, with just a few taps and a couple clicks.  
Not bad, eh?**

**“AHHHHHHHHHHHHH.”**

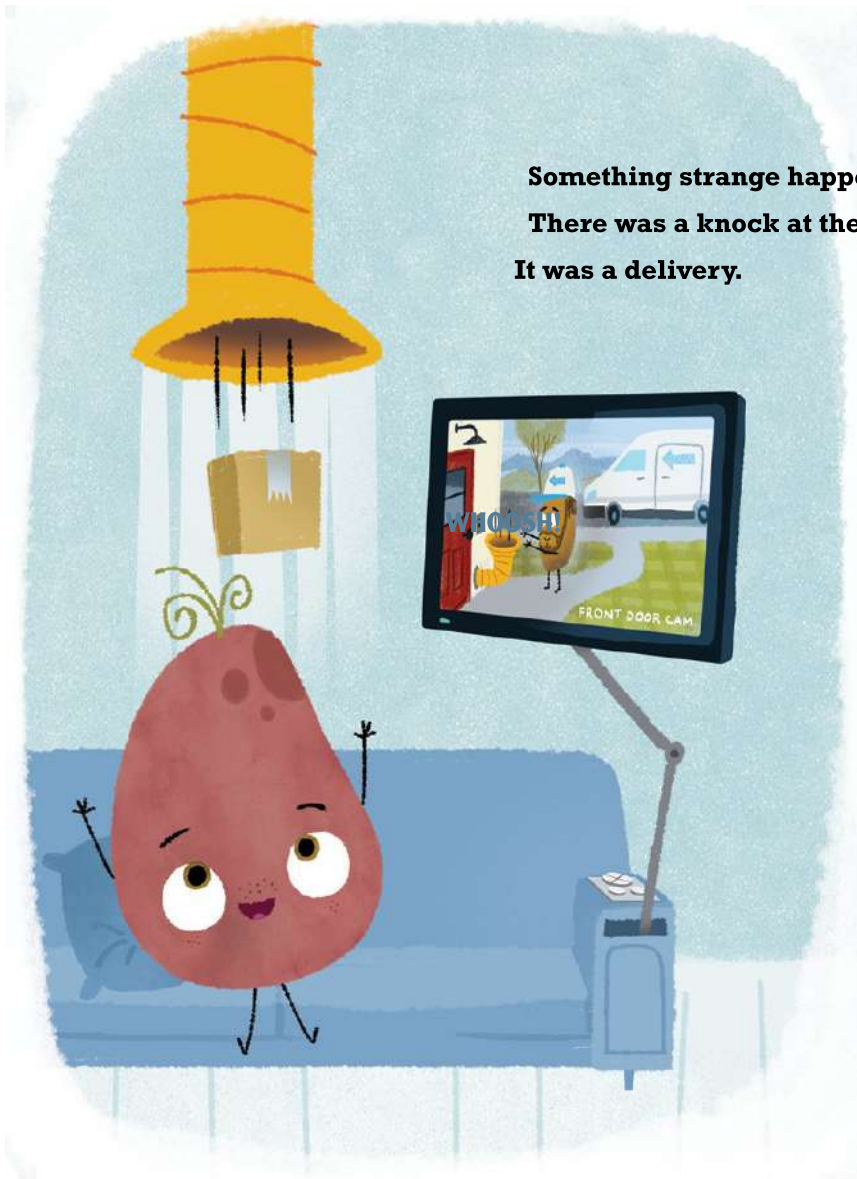


**Yessirree, this  
is the life.**

**At least, that's what I thought . . .  
until the other day.**



**Something strange happened.  
There was a knock at the door.  
It was a delivery.**









**“Woo-hoo!”**

It was my newest device, a video camera that would allow me to watch myself react while I was watching all my favorite shows.



All I had to do was plug it in, and my room—nay, my kingdom!—would be complete.

But suddenly . . .



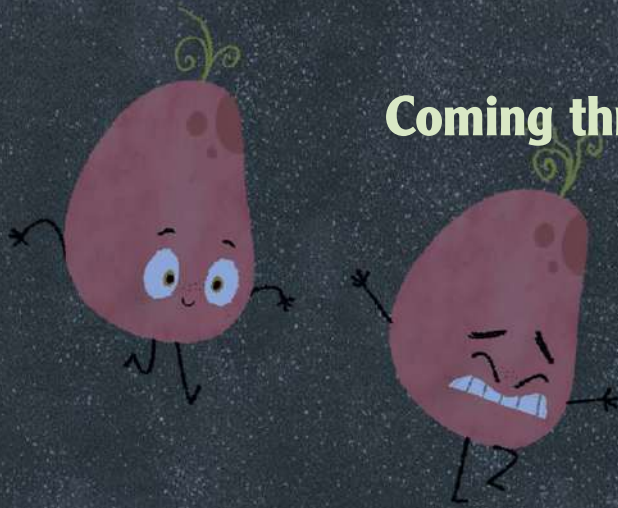


Everything went dark!

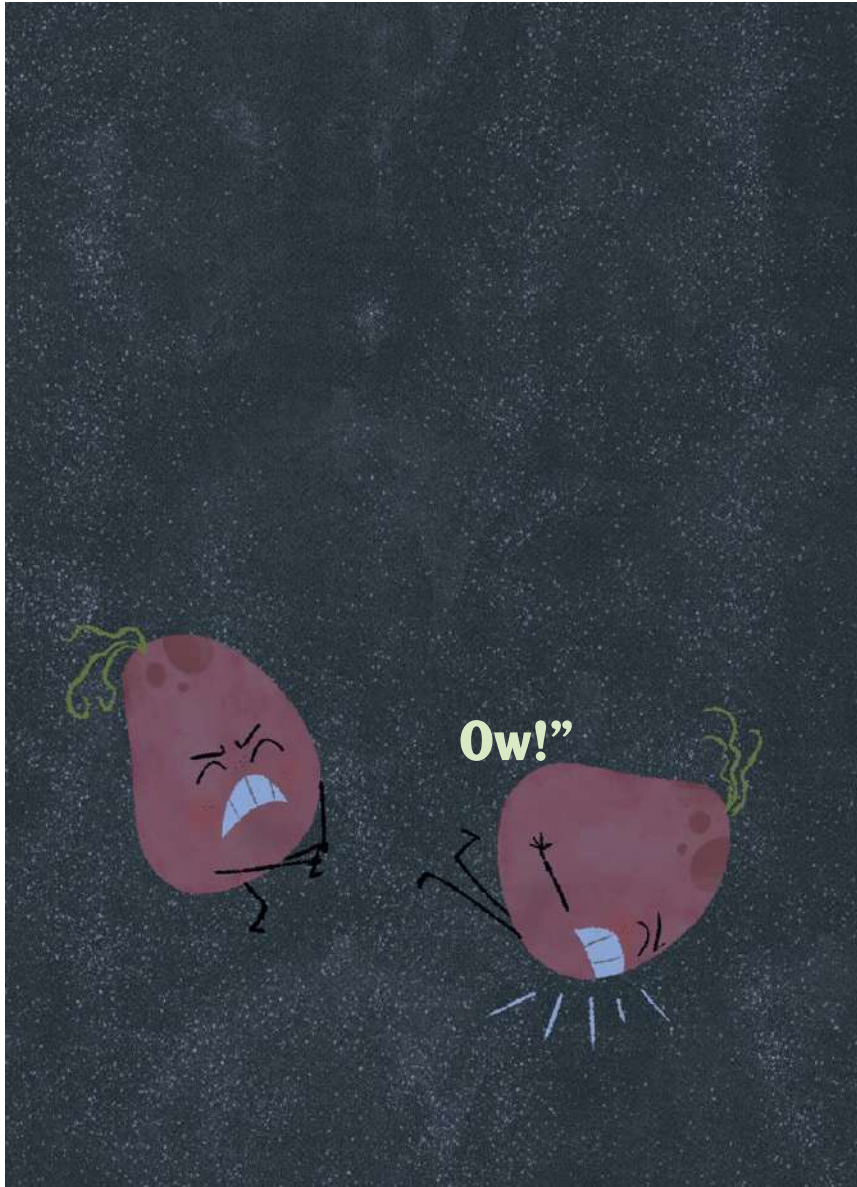
“Look out!

Coming through!

Whoops! Oof!





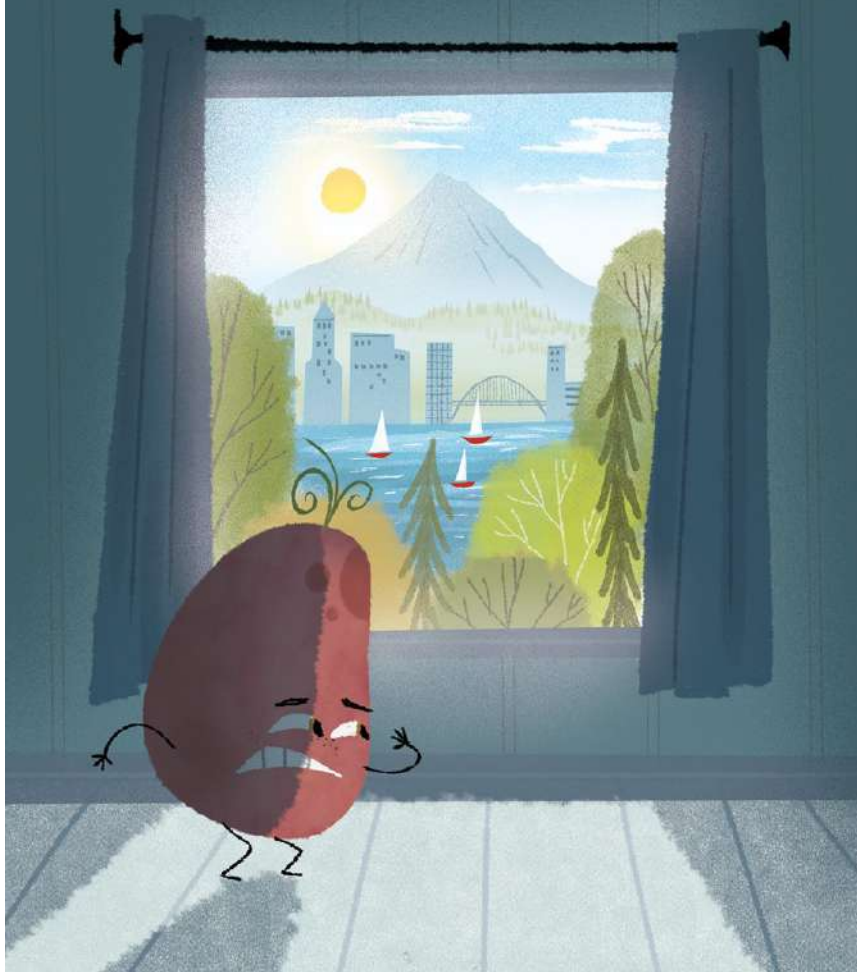


WHUMP!

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**I made it to the window.  
I pulled back the curtains.**

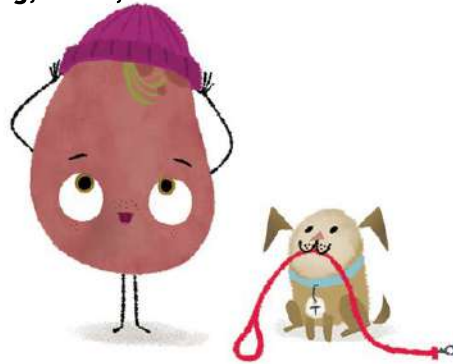


**The sun seemed brighter  
than I remembered.**





There was nothing better to do, so I decided to take  
my dog, Tater, for a walk . . .

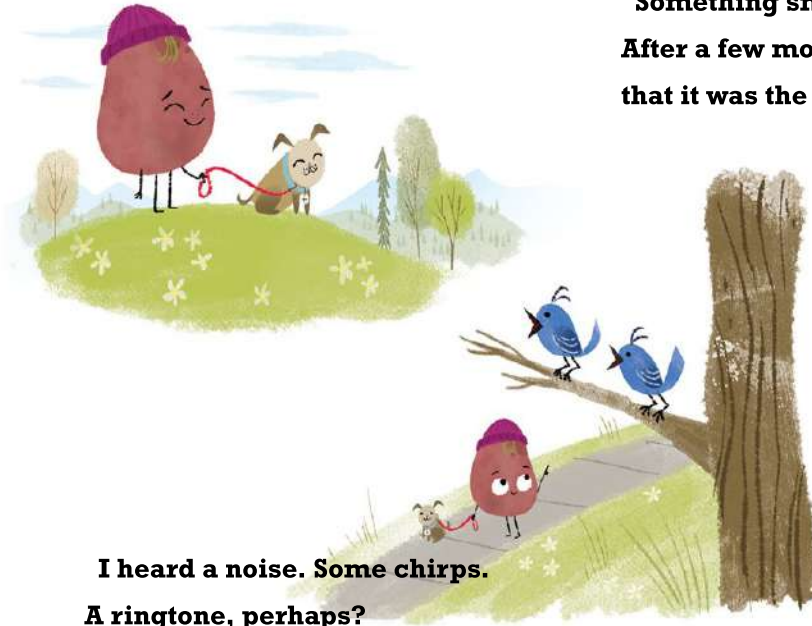


It had been a while.



Everything was so vivid, like a high-resolution 156-inch curved screen, but even *more* realistic.

Something smelled . . . fresh.  
After a few moments, I realized  
that it was the air.



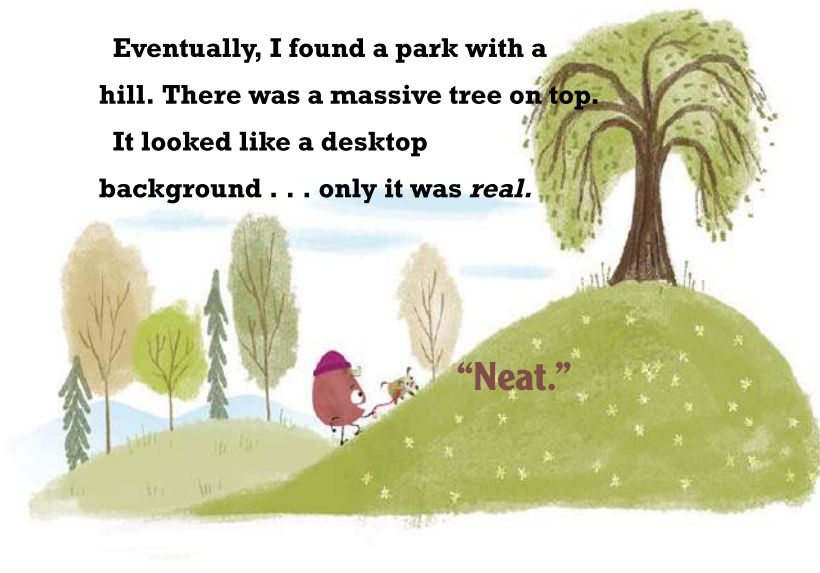
I heard a noise. Some chirps.  
A ringtone, perhaps?  
But no. I looked up to see  
some birds.



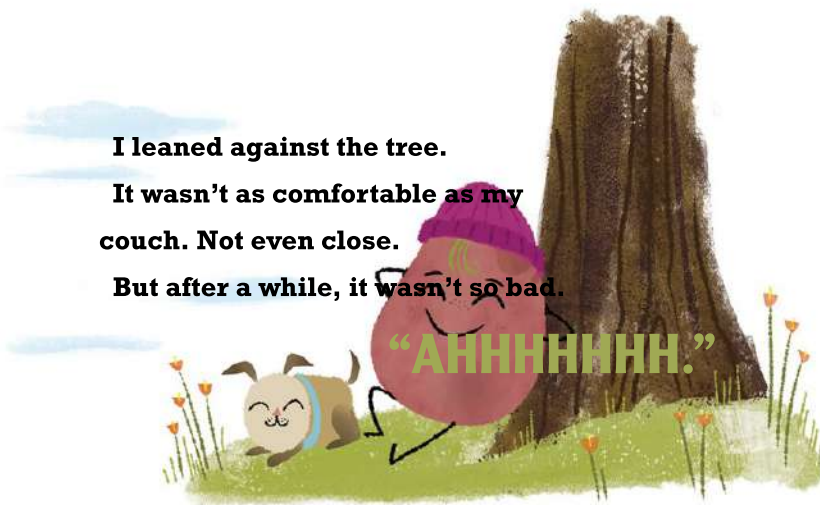
I wandered down the street, from block to block,  
and across the neighborhood.



Eventually, I found a park with a hill. There was a massive tree on top. It looked like a desktop background . . . only it was *real*.

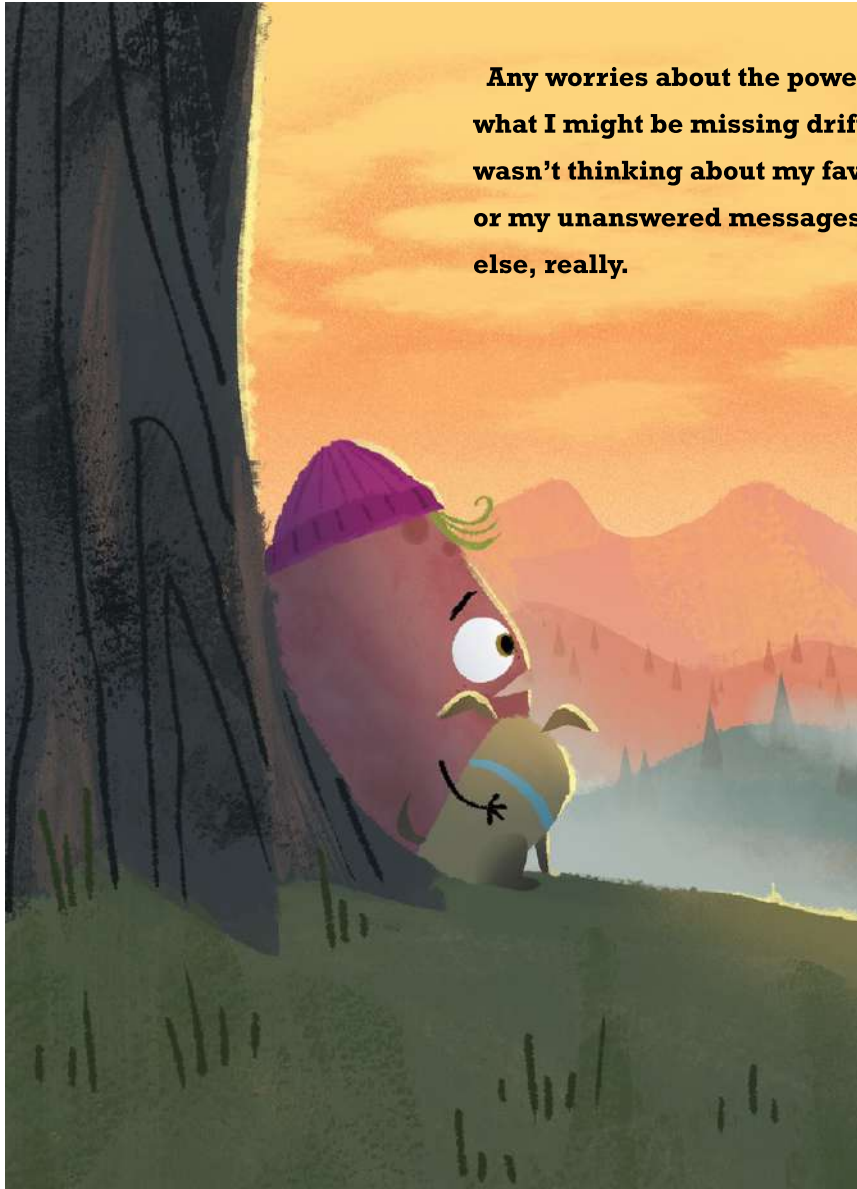


I leaned against the tree. It wasn't as comfortable as my couch. Not even close. But after a while, it wasn't so bad.





Any worries about the power outage and what I might be missing drifted away. I wasn't thinking about my favorite shows, or my unanswered messages, or anything else, really.

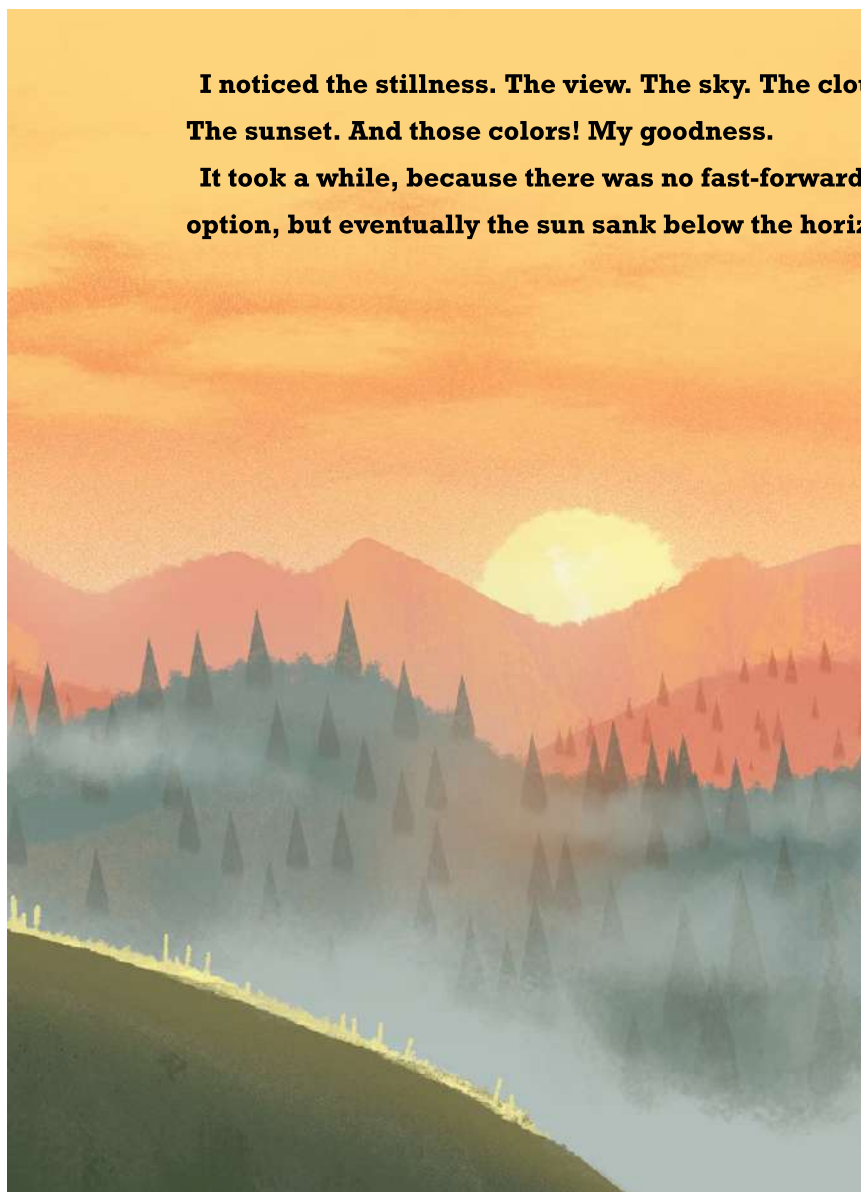






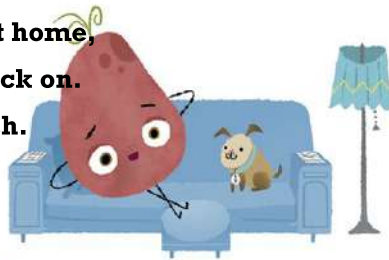
**I noticed the stillness. The view. The sky. The clouds.  
The sunset. And those colors! My goodness.**

**It took a while, because there was no fast-forward  
option, but eventually the sun sank below the horizon.**

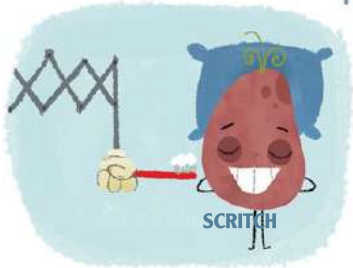




By the time I got home,  
the power was back on.  
I sat on the couch.



“Whew.”

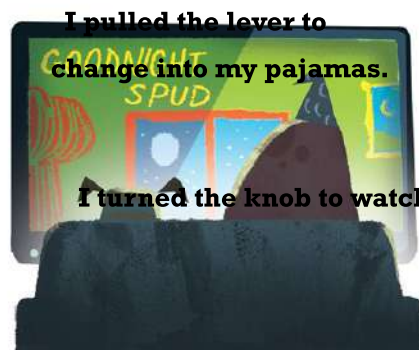


SCRITCH



I hit the button to  
brush my teeth.

BLOOP



I pulled the lever to  
change into my pajamas.

I turned the knob to watch a bedtime story.



Then I noticed my reflection in one of the screens.  
I wondered how much of my life had been spent  
at that very spot.



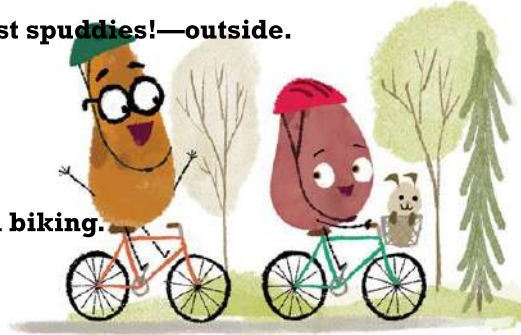
It was then and there that I made the decision to peel  
off the couch a bit more often. Maybe every day, even.



## **And so that's what I've done.**

**I've started hanging out with my friends—my best spuddies!—outside.**

**We've started biking.**



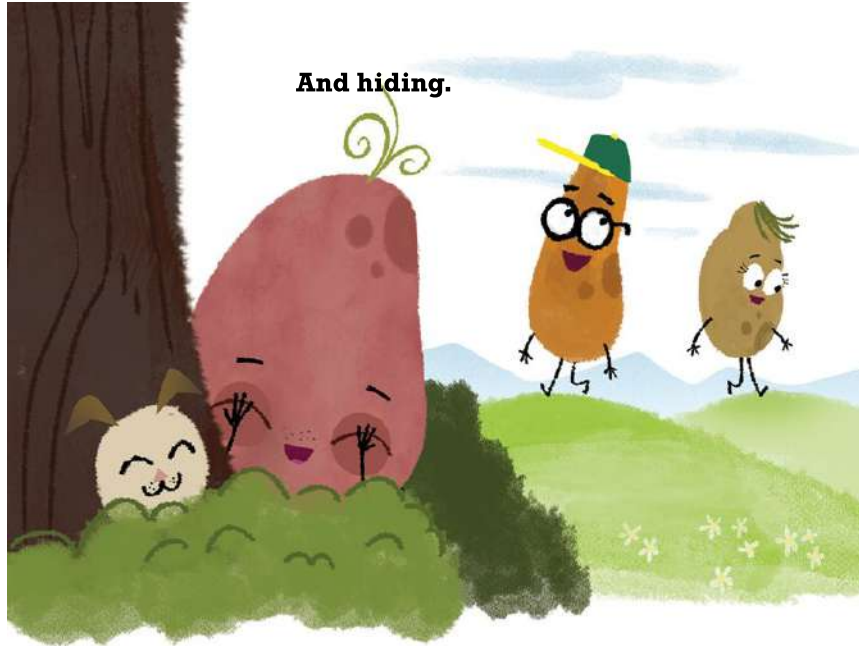
**And hiking.**



**And swimming.**







**And hiding.**

**And seeking.**



**Sometimes we have snacks and play board games.**

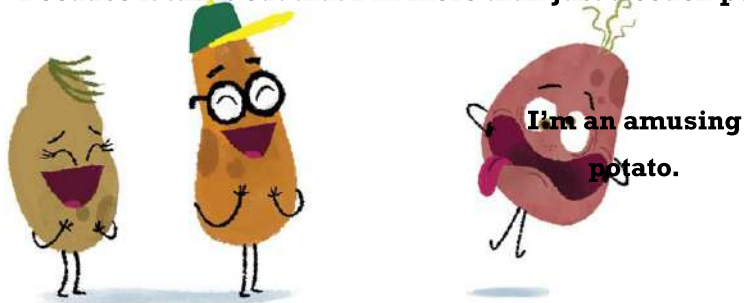
**Sometimes we talk all day.**

**We might watch the clouds. There's no big plan. We  
just see what happens.**



**It makes me wonder . . . what if I don't always need to be totally comfortable? What if I'm happier when I have a better balance between my gadgets and the world outside?**

**Because it turns out that I'm more than just a couch potato.**



**I'm a kind  
potato.**



**I'm an entertaining potato.**



**And I'm a *sit-on-a-hill-and-watch-the-sunset* potato.**







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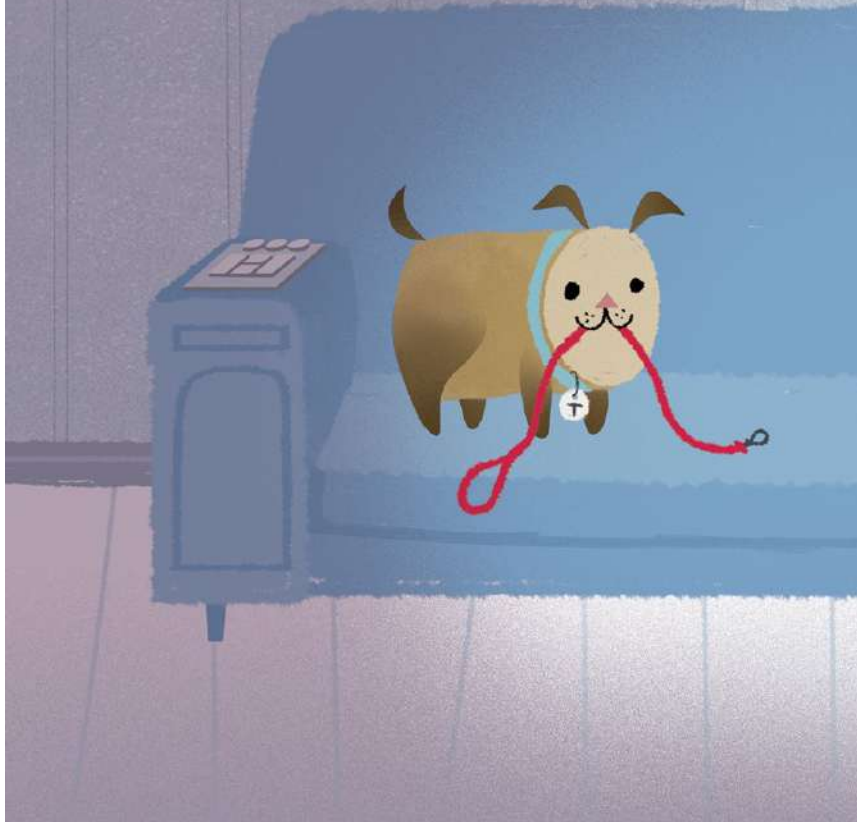
**Yes, there's a great big world out there . . .  
and I want to be a part of it. In person.**





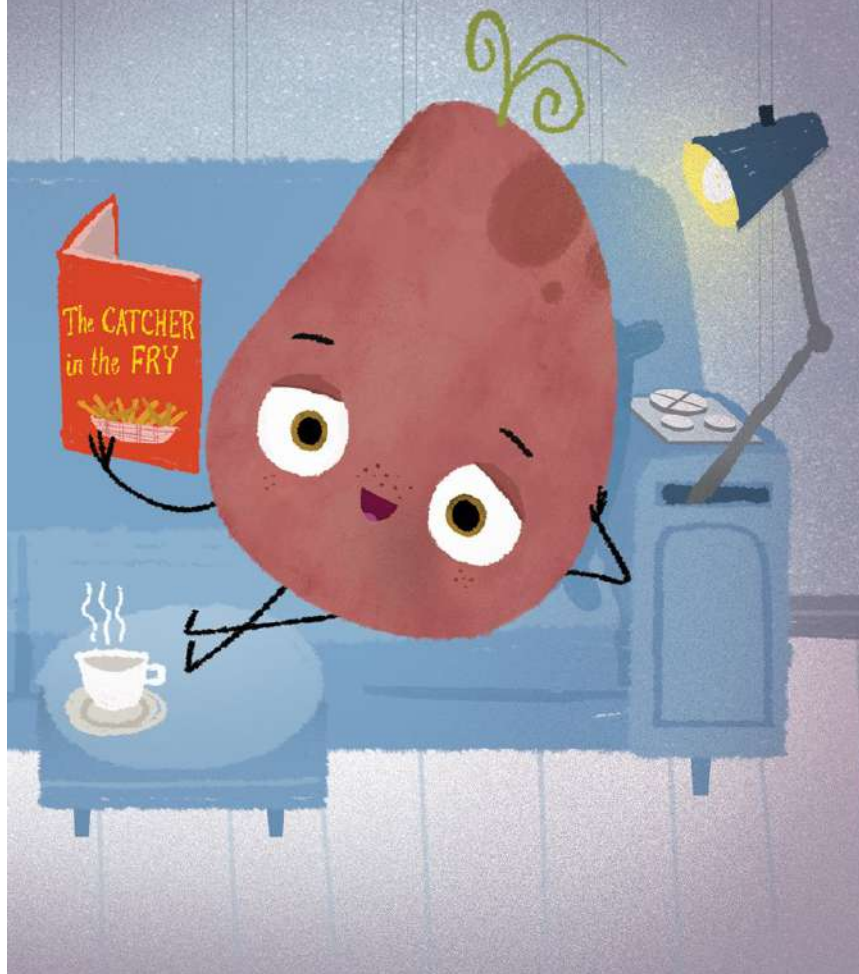
But don't get me wrong. At the end of a long day—after I've run and played and talked and laughed with my friends . . .

I *still* think it's awfully nice to slouch on the couch.





“AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAHHH.”

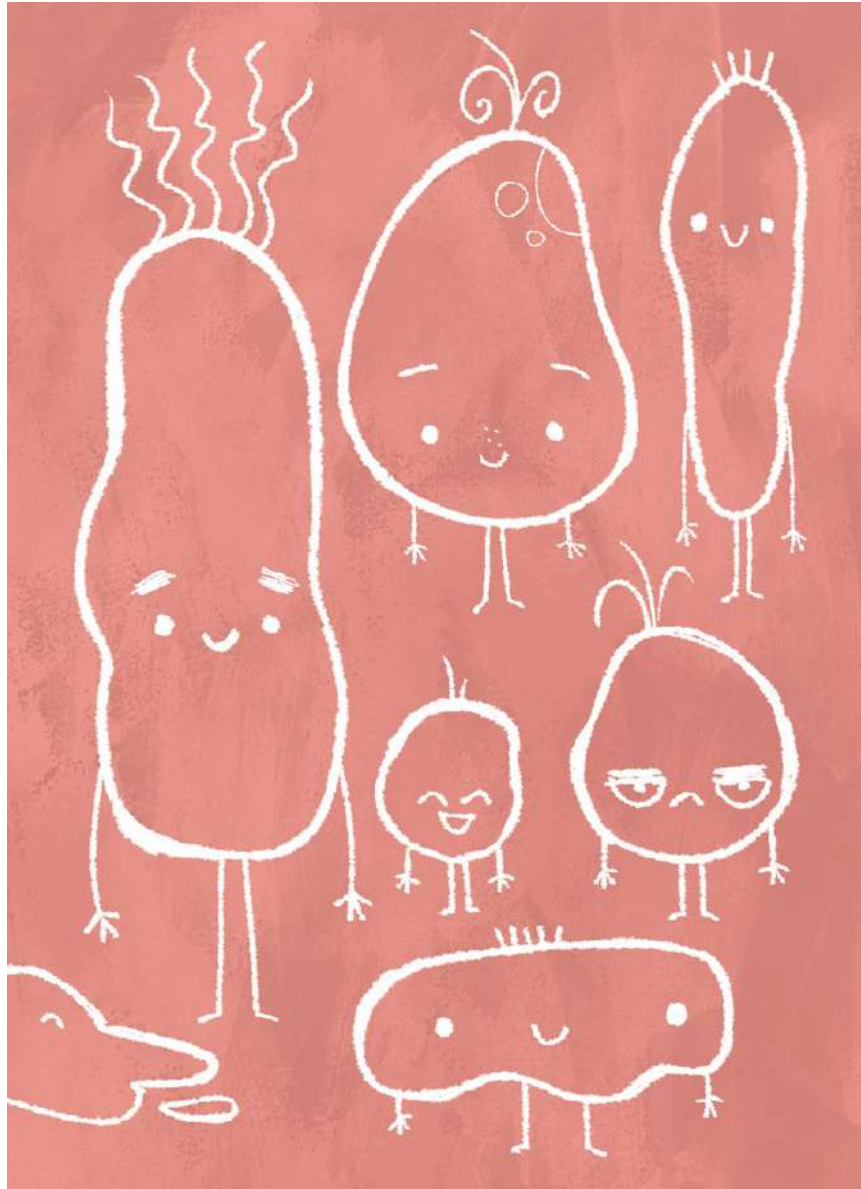


















To Joel, Meiko, and Maia

—J.J.

For Anders

—P.O.

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The artist used scanned watercolor textures and digital paint to create the illustrations for this book.

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