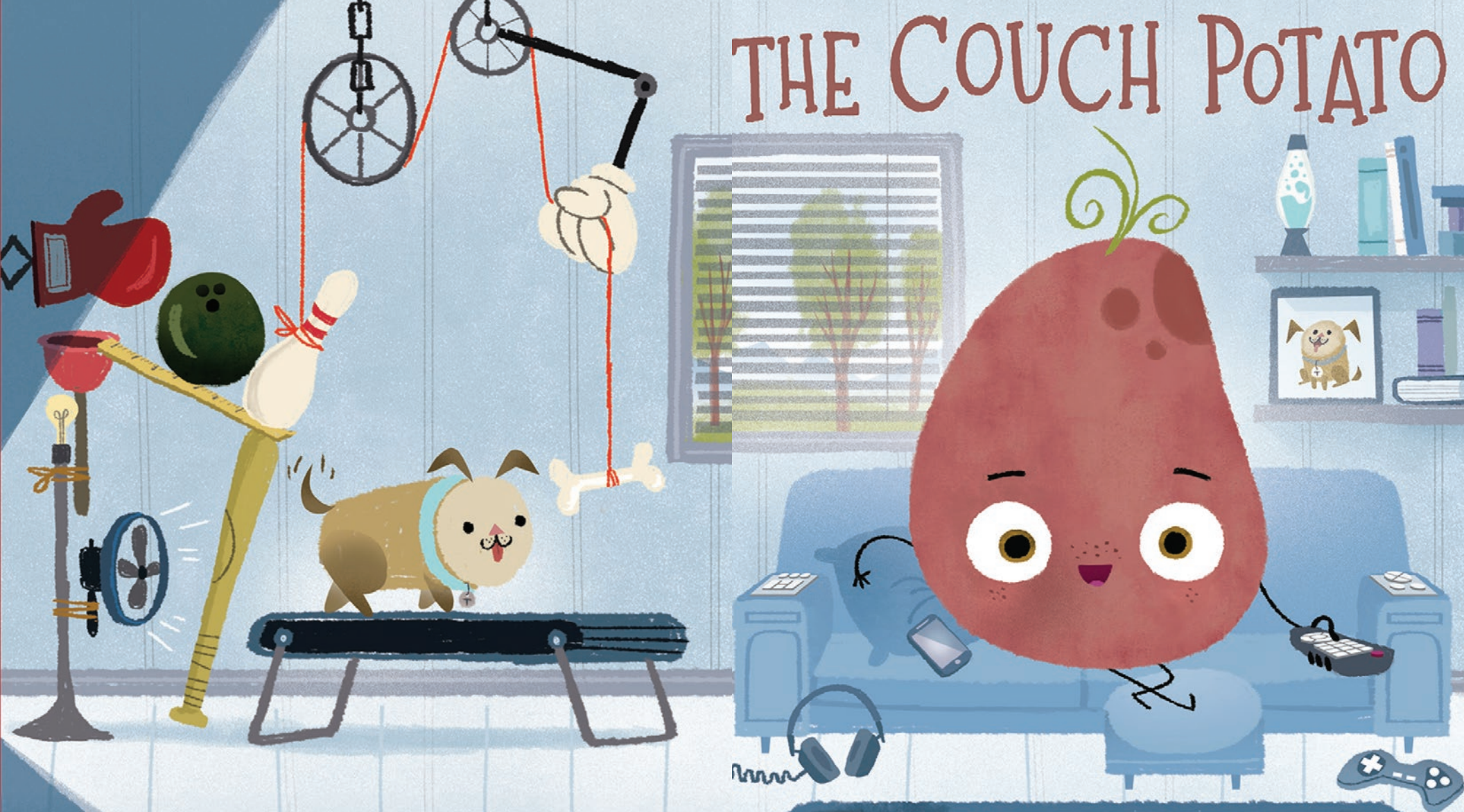


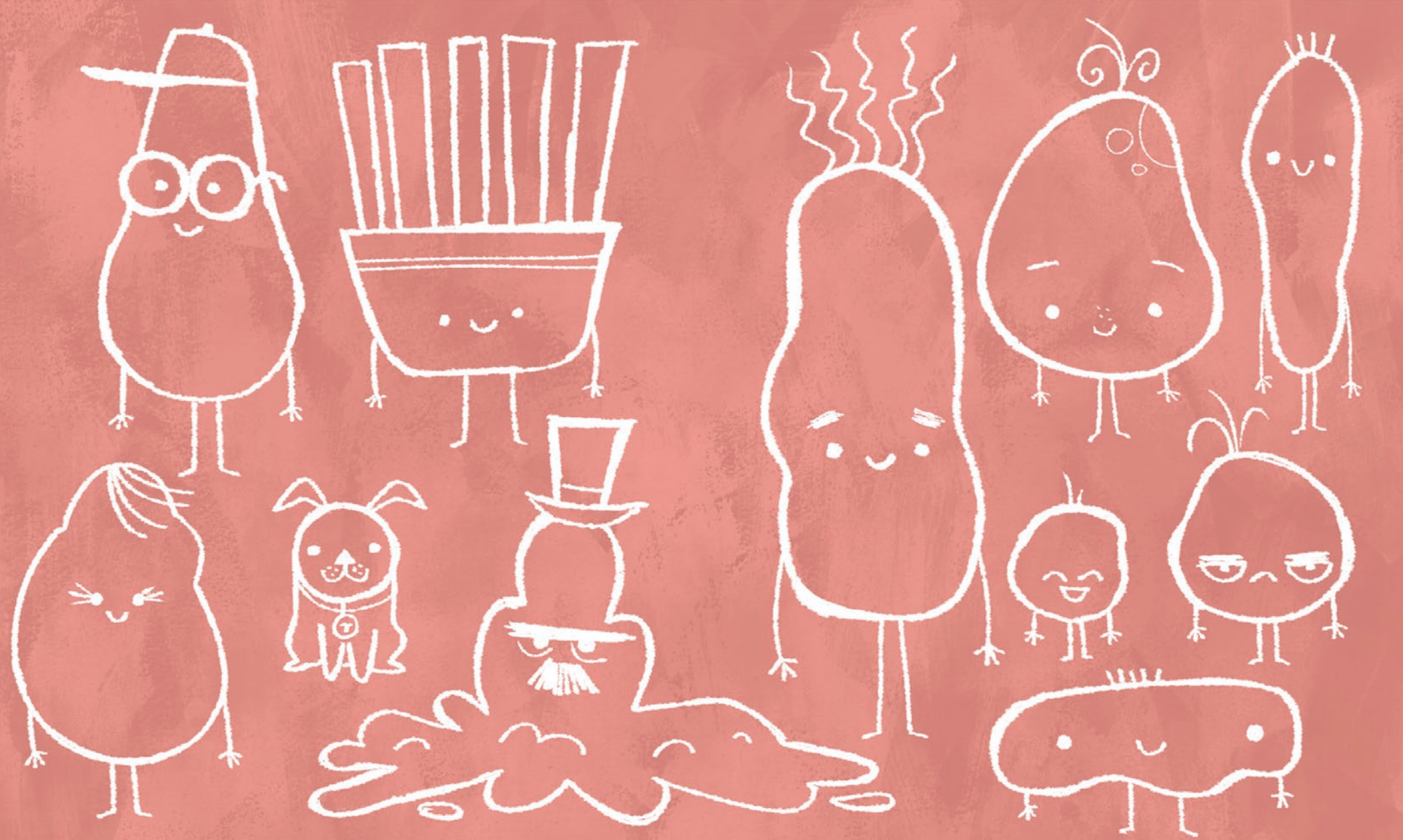
# THE COUCH POTATO



From the #1 *New York Times* Bestselling Team

**JORY JOHN AND PETE OSWALD**







# THE COUCH POTATO

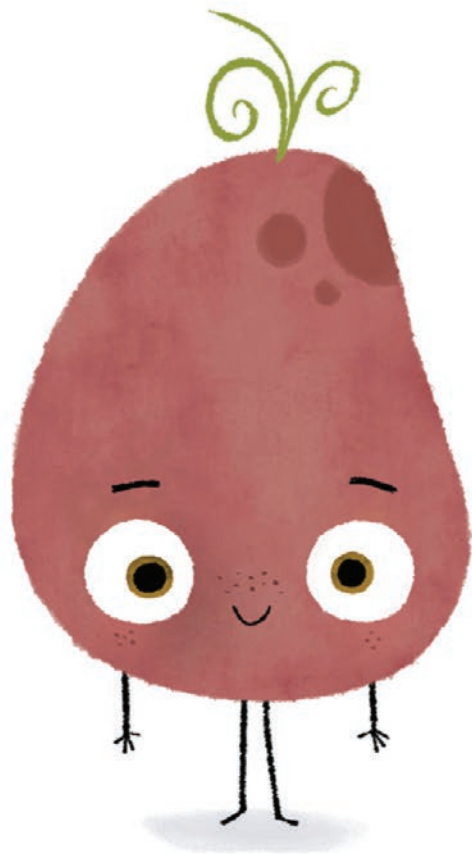
WRITTEN BY **JORY JOHN**  
ILLUSTRATED BY **PETE OSWALD**

**HARPER**

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**I am a potato.**



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



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

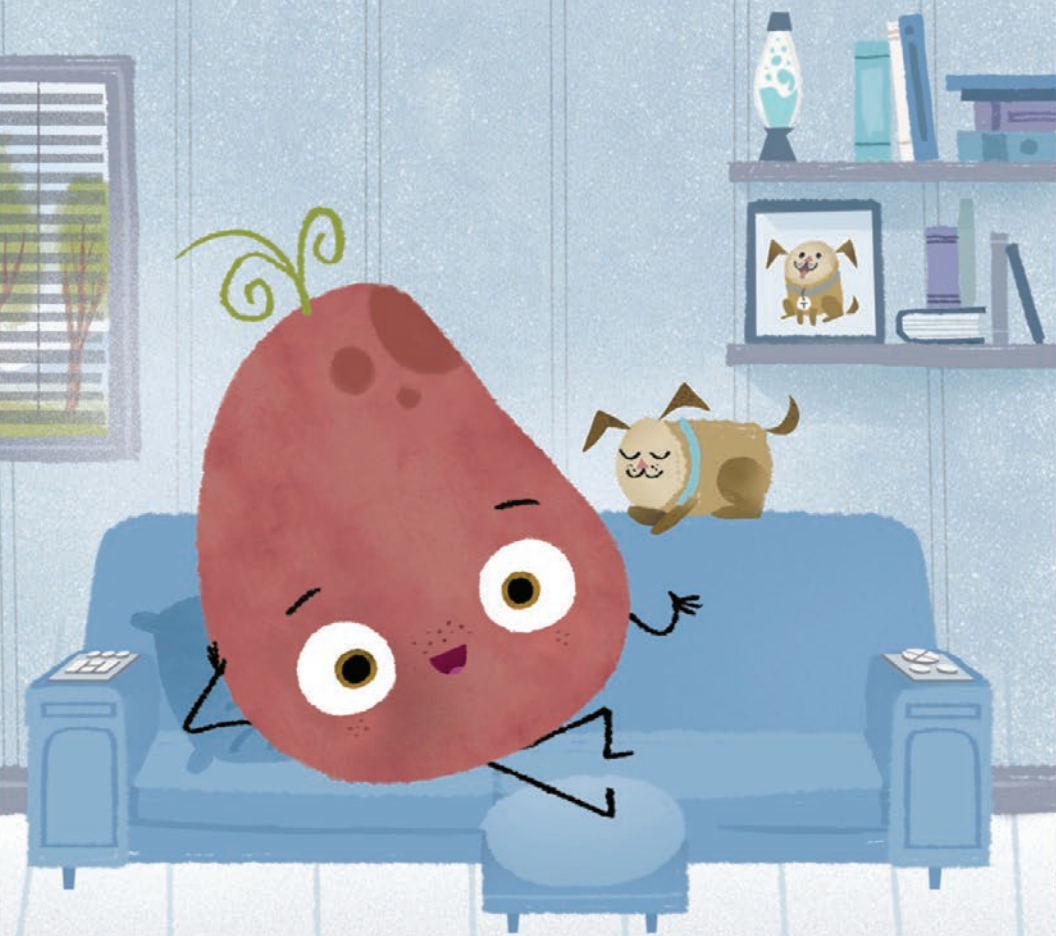


**Not a mashed potato  
like my uncle Stu.**



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.



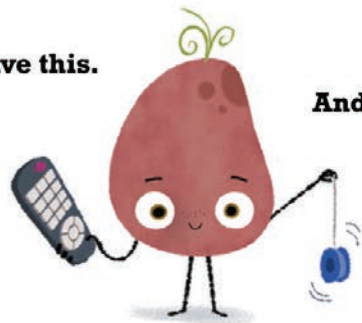
“AHHHHHHHHHHH.”



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



See? I have this.



And this.



And this.

And one of these.



And those.



And this.



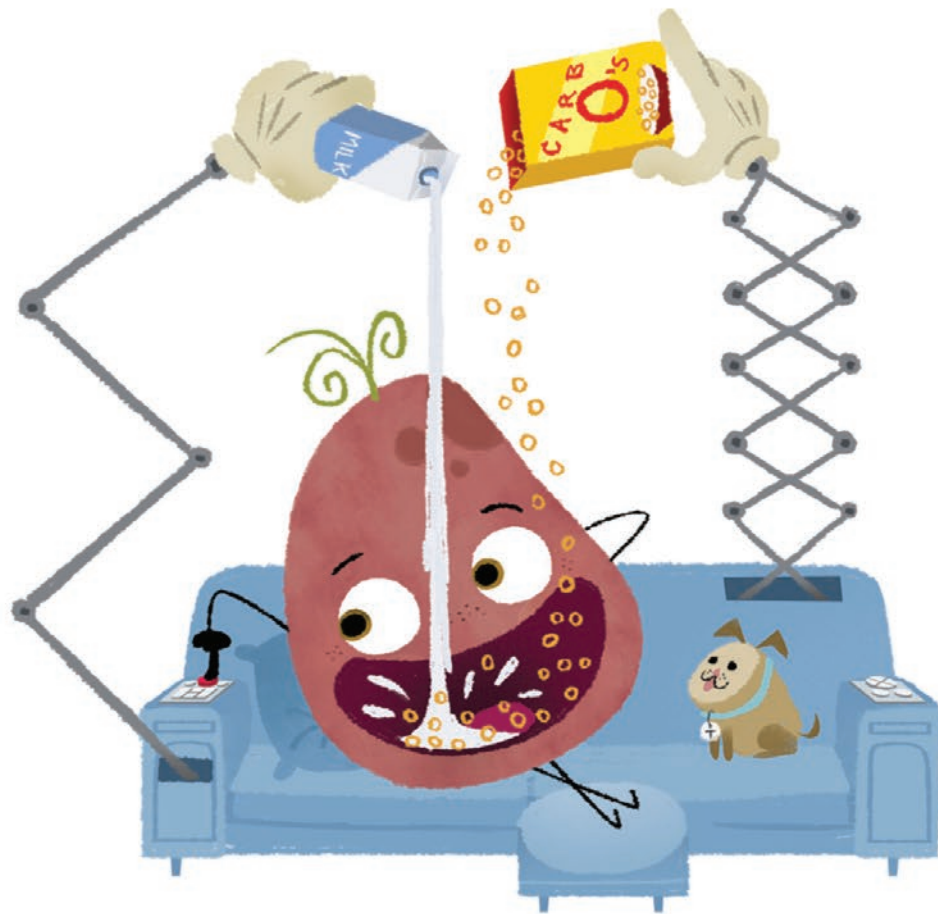
And that.



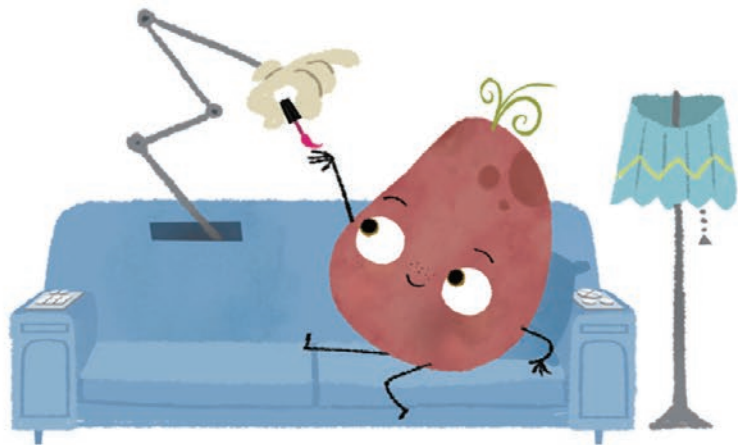
And these.



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

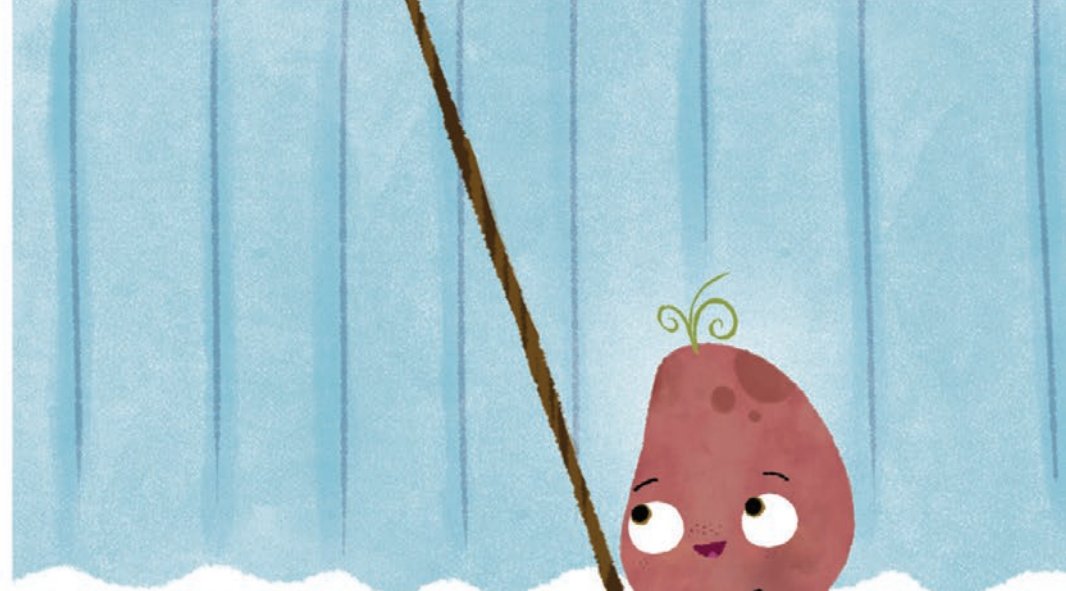
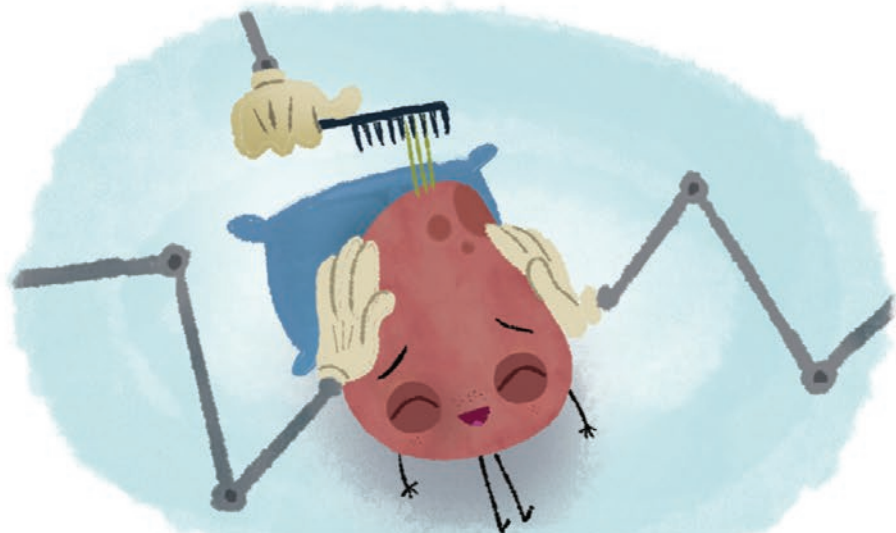


Bam! Impressed? And I don't have to move an *inch*. *Much* easier than going to the kitchen.



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

“AHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH.”



**But wait, there's *more*!**  
I haven't revealed the absolute best part about my whole setup.



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 shining  
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.



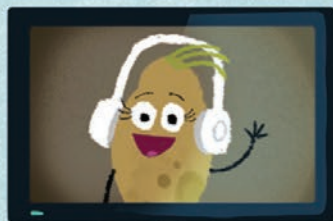
And *this* screen is a  
livestream of my friend, my  
best spud for life!





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,  
spuddy."



"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?

**"AHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH."**

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.

WHOOSH!



"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!**

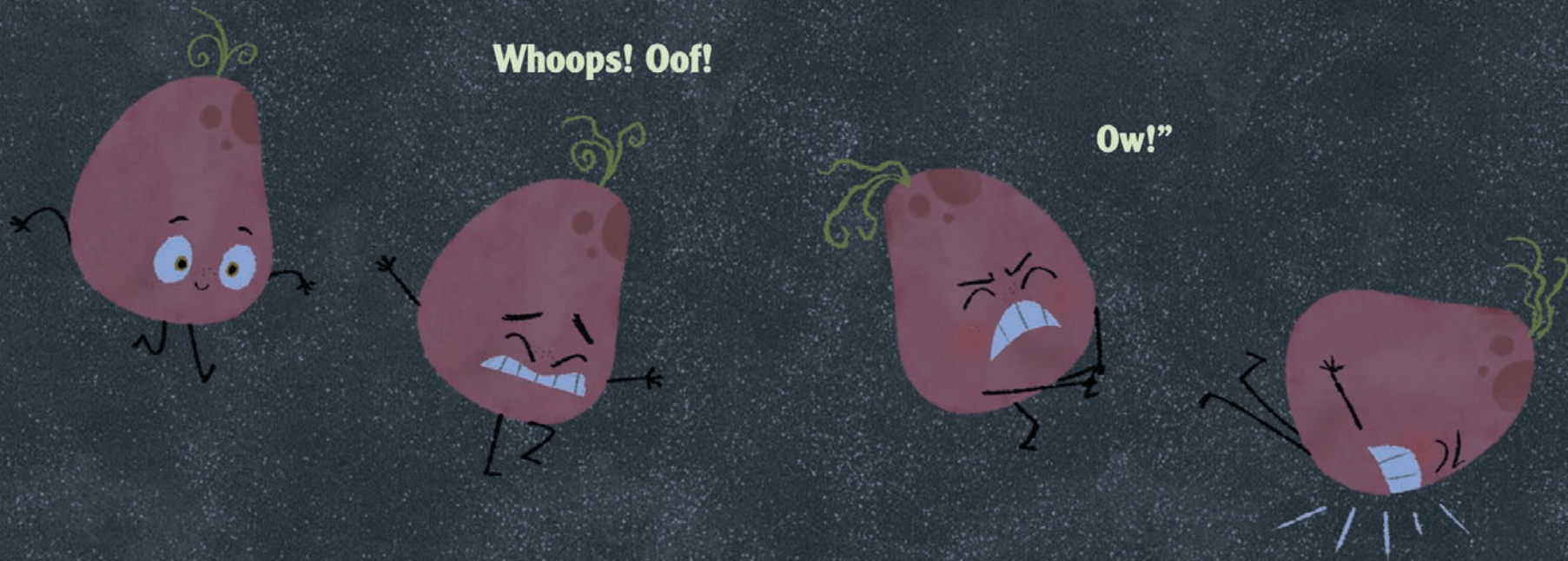
**“Look out!**

**Coming through!**

**Whoops! Oof!**

**Ow!”**

**WHUMP!**





**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 . . .**



***outside.***



**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.

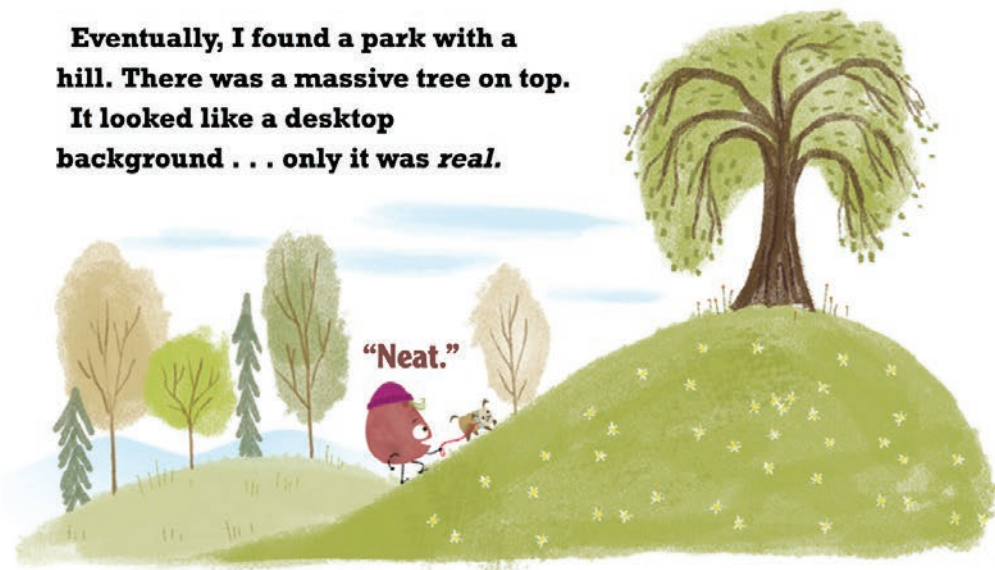


I heard a noise. Some chirps.  
A ringtone, perhaps?  
But no. I looked up to see  
some birds.

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.

**"AHHHHHHH."**





**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.**

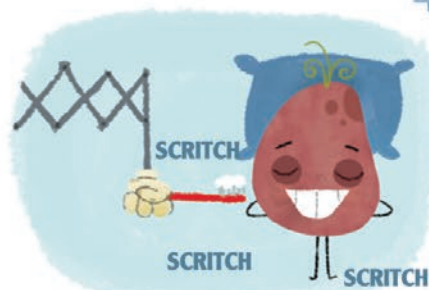
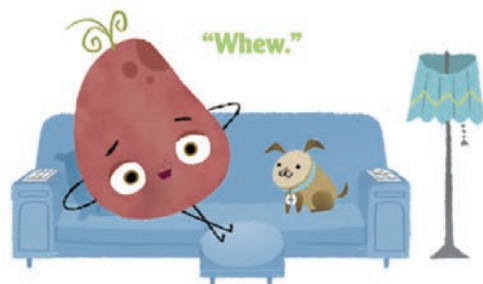
**I noticed the stillness. The view. The sky. The clouds. The sunset. And those colors! My goodness.**

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

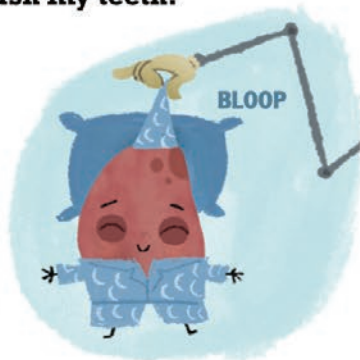




**By the time I got home,  
the power was back on.  
I sat on the couch.**



**I hit the button to  
brush my teeth.**



**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 in  
that very spot.**



**It was then and there that I made the decision to peel myself  
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.**



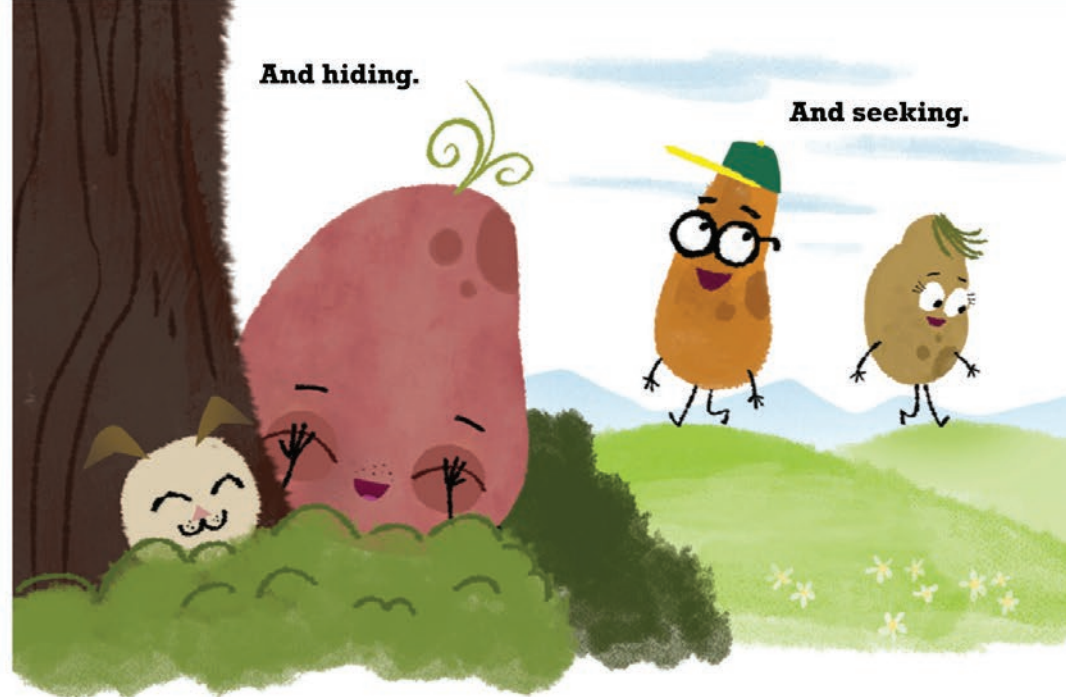
**And hiking.**



**And swimming.**



**And hiding.**



**And seeking.**

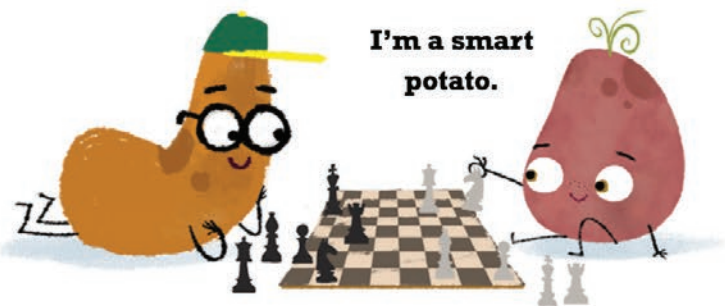
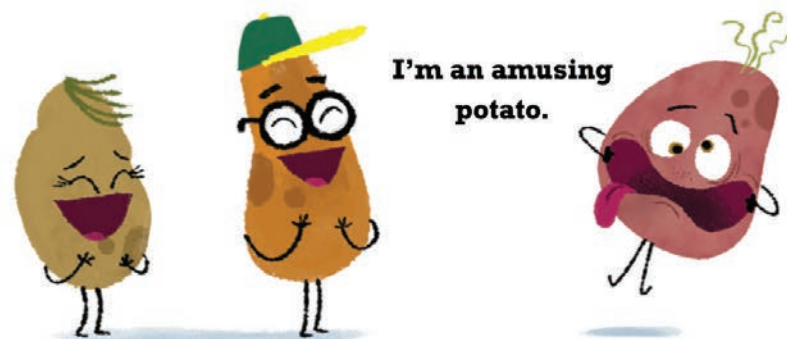
**Sometimes we have snacks and play board games.**  
**Sometimes we talk all day.**

**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 an entertaining potato.



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



**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.

“AHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH.”

