



AS THE STOCK THICKENS



BY DAN WRIGHT



CHARACTERS

ABBY THE FARMER'S DAUGHTER IN CHARGE OF GATHERING POTATOES FOR THE STEW

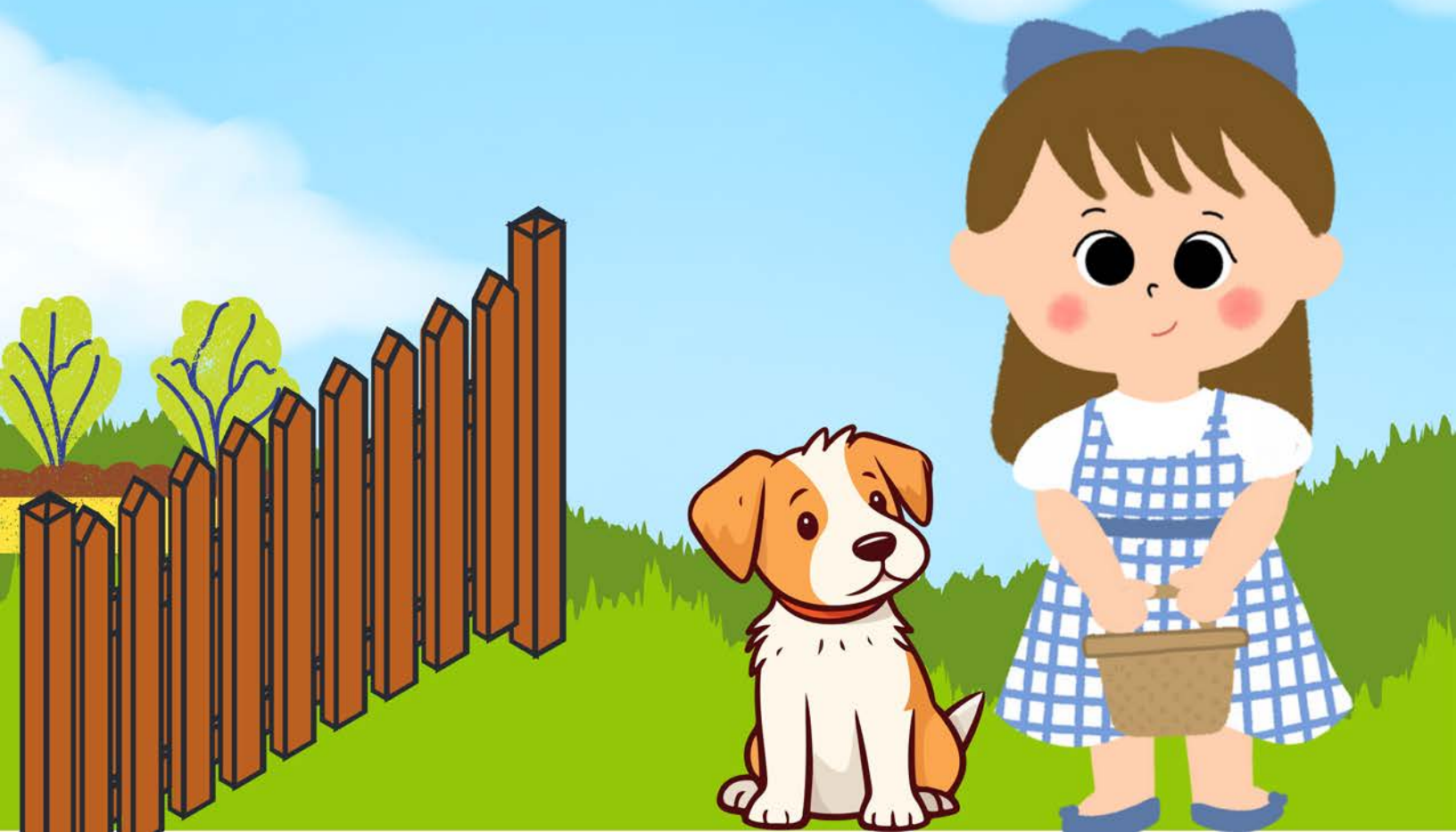
MOMMA ABBY'S MOTHER AND THE FARMER'S WIFE

PAUL LEADER OF THE POTATOES

TEAM POTATOES: PATRICIA, PAM, AND PETER SEASONED JUNIOR MEMBERS OF THE TEAM



One cool morning Abby grabs her large basket and skips to the garden out in their backyard. She whistles and hums a tune. All the while smiling at her puppy, Persimmon. She is headed to gather fresh potatoes for her family's stew. Abby arrives at the gate to the garden and pulls the string to unlatch the lock.



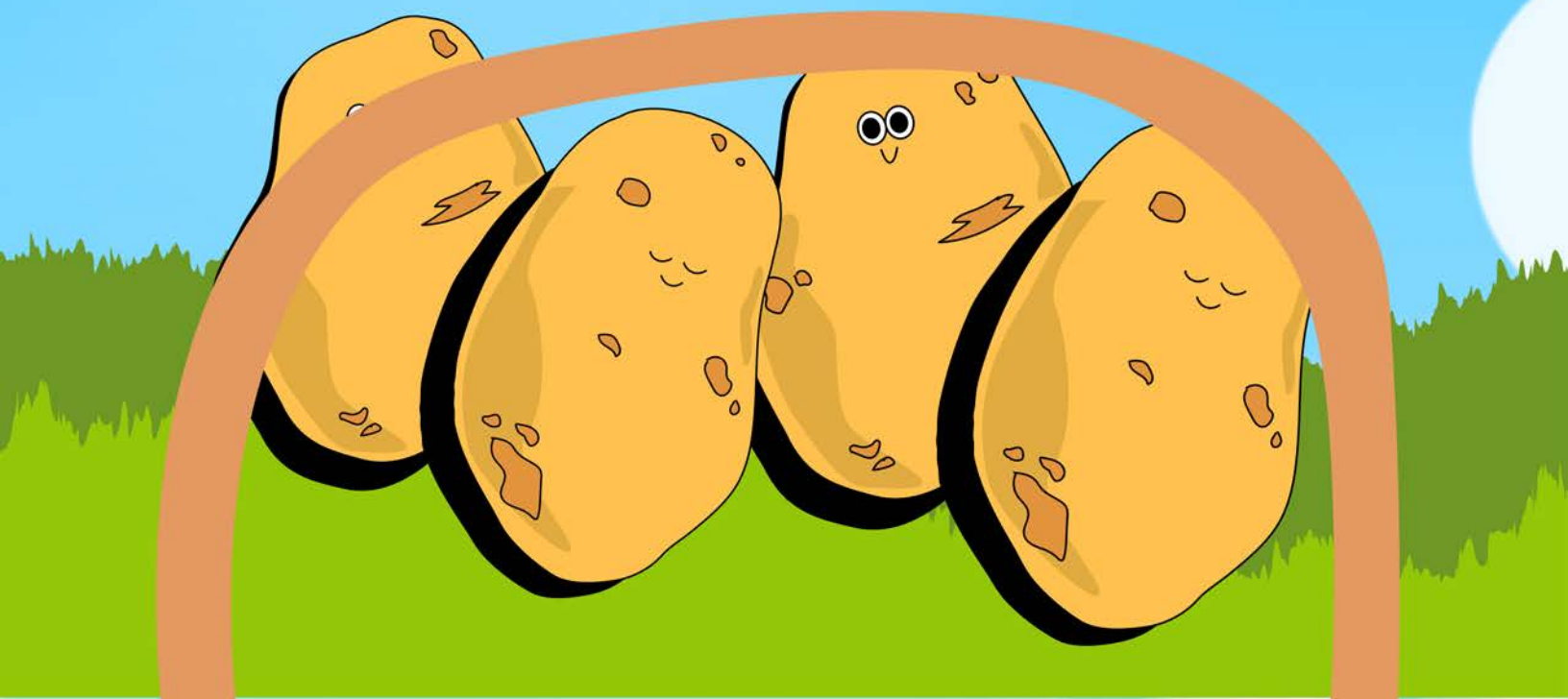
PAUL:

LISTEN UP EVERYONE, LITTLE ABBY IS HERE TO PICK SOME OF US POTATOES FOR HER FAMILY'S STEW. WE WILL BE CAPTURED, BUT IF WE WORK TOGETHER, WE WILL ONLY HAVE ONE CHANCE TO ESCAPE THE BASKET. WE CAN'T GO INTO THE KITCHEN UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES. SHE WILL HAVE TO SET THE BASKET DOWN ON THE TABLE AT THEIR BACK DOOR. SHE WILL WASH US OFF AND PUT US BACK IN THE BASKET TO AIR DRY. THIS IS OUR ONLY CHANCE TO ESCAPE.



ABBY:

WOW, WHAT BIG POTATOES WE HAVE GROWN THIS YEAR. I THINK I WILL ONLY TAKE FOUR FOR THIS BATCH OF STEW. NOW, LET'S FIND SOME BIG OL' POTATOES. HERE IS ONE. OH! I AM DEFINITELY TAKING THIS ONE TOO. HERE ARE TWO MORE RIGHT NEXT TO EACH OTHER. YUP, THAT MAKES FOUR.

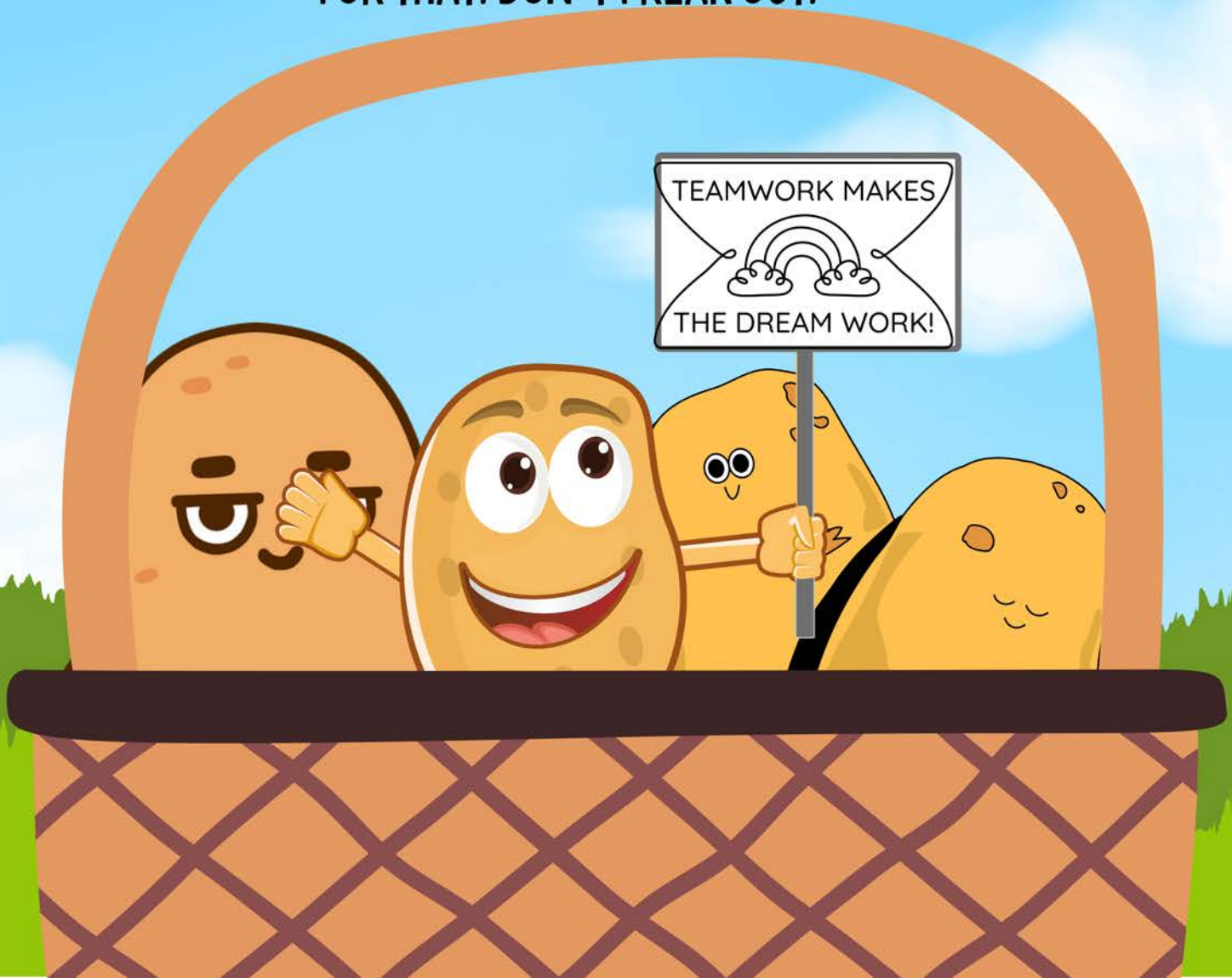


PAM:

PAUL, WHAT DO WE DO NOW? WE ARE SCARED AND NOT SURE IF WE CAN ALL
MAKE IT OUT OF THE BASKET AFTER OUR BATH.

PAUL

CALM DOWN TEAM. THIS IS ACTUALLY MY SECOND TIME ESCAPING THE BASKET,
SO I WILL HELP EVERYONE WHEN THE TIME IS RIGHT. I MUST WARN YOU THOUGH,
ABBY LIKES TO MAKE THE WATER COLD WHEN SHE WASHES US OFF, SO BE READY
FOR THAT. DON'T FREAK OUT.



The background is a stylized illustration of a kitchen. At the top, there are dark brown wooden cabinets with light blue bone-shaped handles. One cabinet door is open, revealing a red bag with a tomato, a green bottle, and a blue bowl. Below the cabinets is a light blue horizontal band. In the center, a white wall features the text. To the left, a red and white plaid curtain hangs. Below the text, a dark brown countertop holds a grey pot on the left and a red and white plaid basket on the right. At the bottom, there are more dark brown wooden cabinets with light blue bone-shaped handles. On the right side, a young girl with brown hair and a blue bow, wearing a blue and white checkered dress over a white shirt, is holding a brown basket. Next to her is a small dog with orange and white fur.

ABBY:

I AM GOING TO WASH THESE FAT POTATOES REALLY GOOD
FOR MOMMA TO CUT UP. LAST TIME I LEFT A CLUMP OF DIRT
ON ONE, AND SHE GOT REALLY MAD.



PAUL:

OKAY! LISTEN UP, TEAM POTATOES, NOW IS OUR CHANCE TO ROLL OFF THE TABLE. PAM, YOU ARE CLOSEST TO THE SIDE WITH THE PILE OF HAY ON THE GROUND. EVERYONE, AIM FOR THE HAY, IT WILL MAKE FOR A SOFTER LANDING. PETER, YOU GO AFTER PAM, AND THEN PATRICIA GOES. I WILL GO AFTER EVERYONE IS SAFE ON THE GROUND.





Everyone in Team Potatoes begins the roll towards the edge of the table. Peter is concerned about bruising and maybe breaking open. Paul reassures him that the hay will save them, and the roll off the table is actually fun. The Team makes it safely down to the ground and looks up waiting for Paul. Just then Abby and Persimmon come out to check on the potatoes. Paul rolls behind the basket just in time. Abby doesn't see the others, but Persimmon does. She begins to bark, but Abby goes back inside to play and takes Persimmon.





PAUL:

WATCH OUT TEAM! HERE I COME.

He rolls off the table and laughs all the way down.

PAUL:

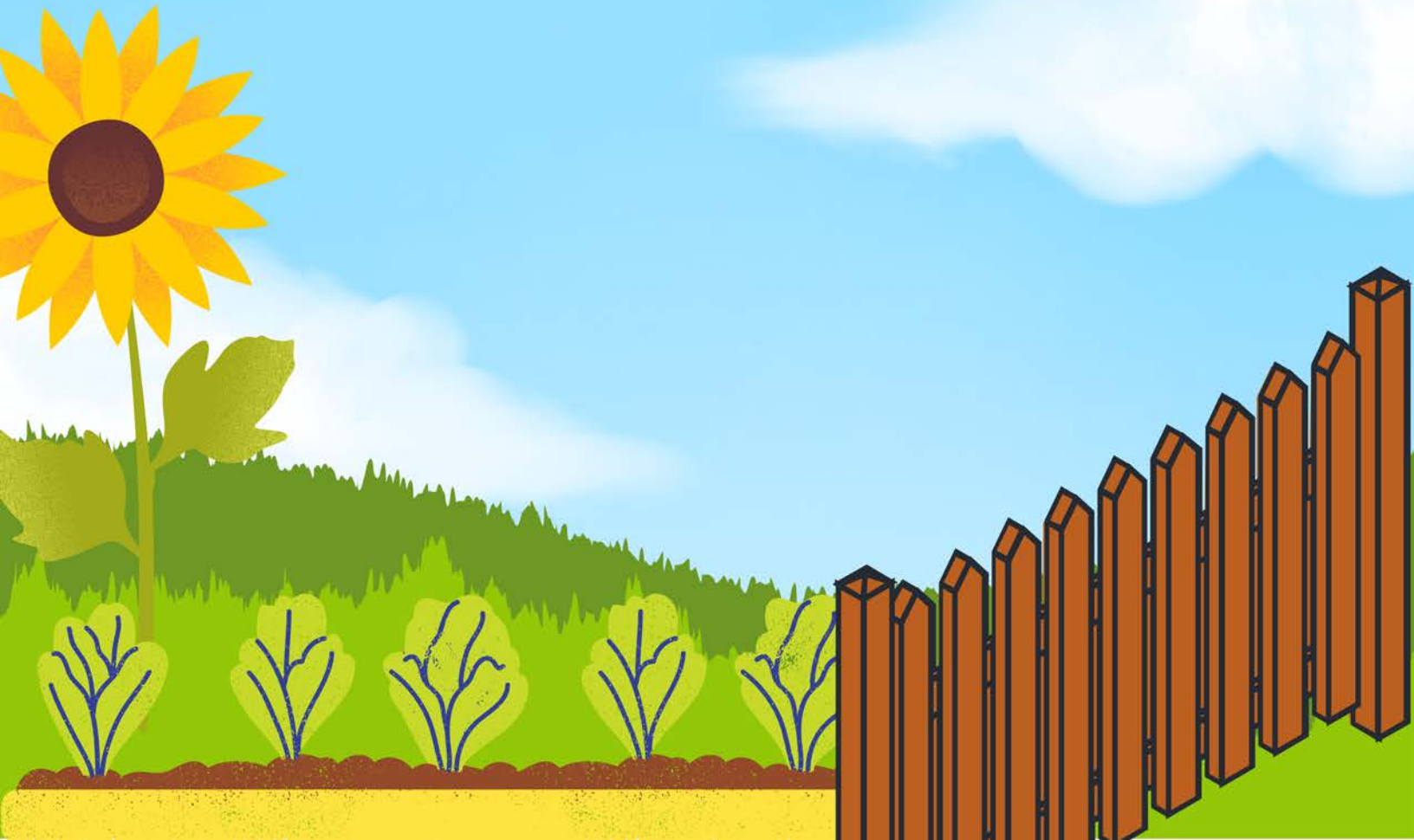
**SEE EVERYONE, I TOLD YOU IT WAS SAFE. NOW LET'S HURRY AND
ROLL BACK TO THE GARDEN BEFORE THE DOG FINDS US.**



PETER:

HE'S RIGHT, LET'S ROLL QUICKLY.

Everyone makes it back to the garden and squirms back into the dirt.



PAM:

THANK YOU FOR SAVING US, PAUL. WE REALLY APPRECIATE YOU REASSURING US THAT EVERYTHING WAS GOING TO BE SAFE AND TELLING US THAT THIS WAS NOT YOUR FIRST TIME DOING THIS. IT MADE US CONFIDENT IN YOUR LEADERSHIP.

PAUL:

THAT IS GOOD TO HEAR. NOW YOU CAN TEACH OTHERS IF I AM NOT WITH YOU AND YOU GET PICKED AGAIN.



ABBY:

COME ON PERSIMMON, MOMMA IS CALLING US. YES,
MOMMA?

MOMMA:

ABBY, I THOUGHT YOU SAID YOU PICKED AND
WASHED FOUR BIG POTATOES?

ABBY:

MOMMA, I DID!

