

JORY JOHN AND PETE OSWALD are the #1 *New York Times* bestselling creators of the internationally acclaimed Food Group series. Jory writes at home in the Pacific Northwest and Pete illustrates in his California studio. Visit them at joryjohn.com and peteoswald.com.

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harpercollinschildrens.com
US \$19.99 / \$24.99 CAN
ISBN 978-0-06-346973-0
5 1999
9 780063 469730

JOHN • OSWALD

THE HUMBLE PIE

HARPER

THE #1 *NEW YORK TIMES* BESTSELLING FOOD GROUP SERIES

THE HUMBLE PIE



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

I'm a humble pie,
and that's no lie.

"AWWWWW SHUCKS."



I know how to stay out of the way and give others the spotlight. But does staying in the shadows *always* take the cake?

Join one pie in learning that it's okay to speak up for yourself and show the world who you are in this sweet addition to Jory John and Pete Oswald's #1 *New York Times* bestselling series, the Food Group.

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To Lane & Molly
—J.J.

For Ms. Oliver, librarian extraordinaire
—P.O.



HarperCollins Children's Books, a division of HarperCollins Publishers, 195 Broadway, New York, NY 10007

HarperCollins Publishers, Macken House, 39/40 Mayor Street Upper, Dublin 1, D01 C9W8, Ireland

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Library of Congress Control Number: 2025939614

ISBN 978-0-06-346973-0 (trade bdg.) — ISBN 978-0-06-347325-6 (intl. ed.)

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

25 26 27 28 29 RTLO 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1
First Edition

THE HUMBLE PIE



WRITTEN BY JORY JOHN • ILLUSTRATED BY PETE OSWALD

HARPER

An Imprint of HarperCollinsPublishers

I'm a pie.

A humble pie.

And that's no lie.

"AWWWWWW SHUCKS."



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I don't brag.
I won't gloat.
I *never* take credit.



I go with the flow.



I stay low-key, down low.



I'm never showy, oh no.

I really don't mind if you claim all the glory.



I will gladly lift you up so you can fly.



If you want the spotlight, I will happily stand in your shadow.

Sure, every once in a while I yearn for a *little* recognition, a sense that somebody has *some* idea of what I've been up to.



But mostly I'm okay with being overlooked.



It's part of my day-to-day life. That's just how it goes.

Meanwhile, my best friend is a cake named Jake.

We've known each other forever. He makes everything—and I mean *everything*—look easy.



His social skills are top-notch. Here he is at a birthday party. Watch how he mingles.



For instance, he always gets the best grades.

Note how he makes everybody feel comfortable.



He's absolutely amazing at sports.



Look how he lights up the room!

And here I am in the background,

mopping up the spills,



taking out the trash,

refreshing the appetizers,



wrangling the toddlers,

and making sure everything runs smoothly.



It's who I am.
It's what I do.
I'm used to it.

Fact: Nobody notices pie when there's cake nearby!

Yes, Jake is my best bud.
And I'm content to just stand next to him,
lending my support so he can shine.



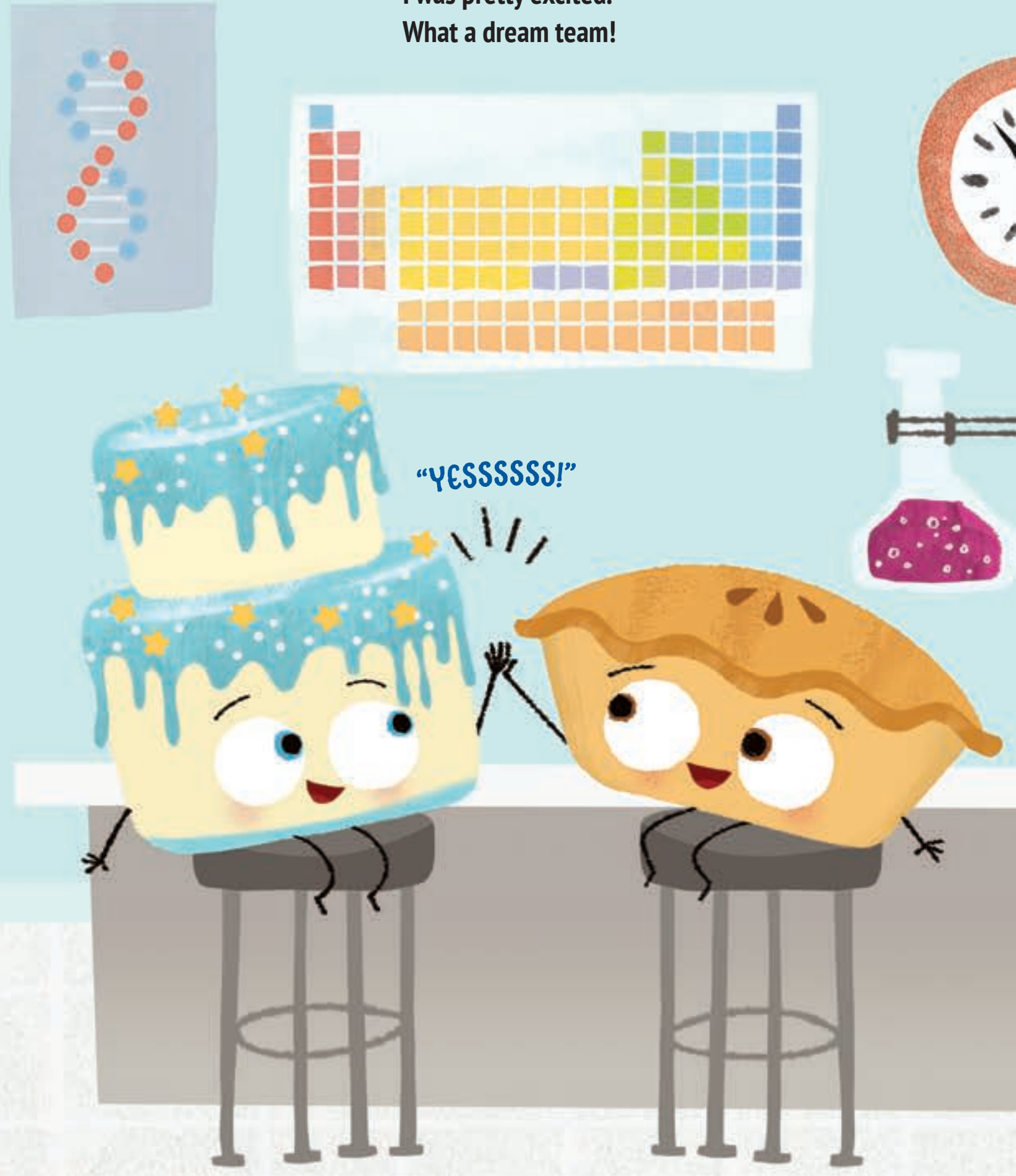
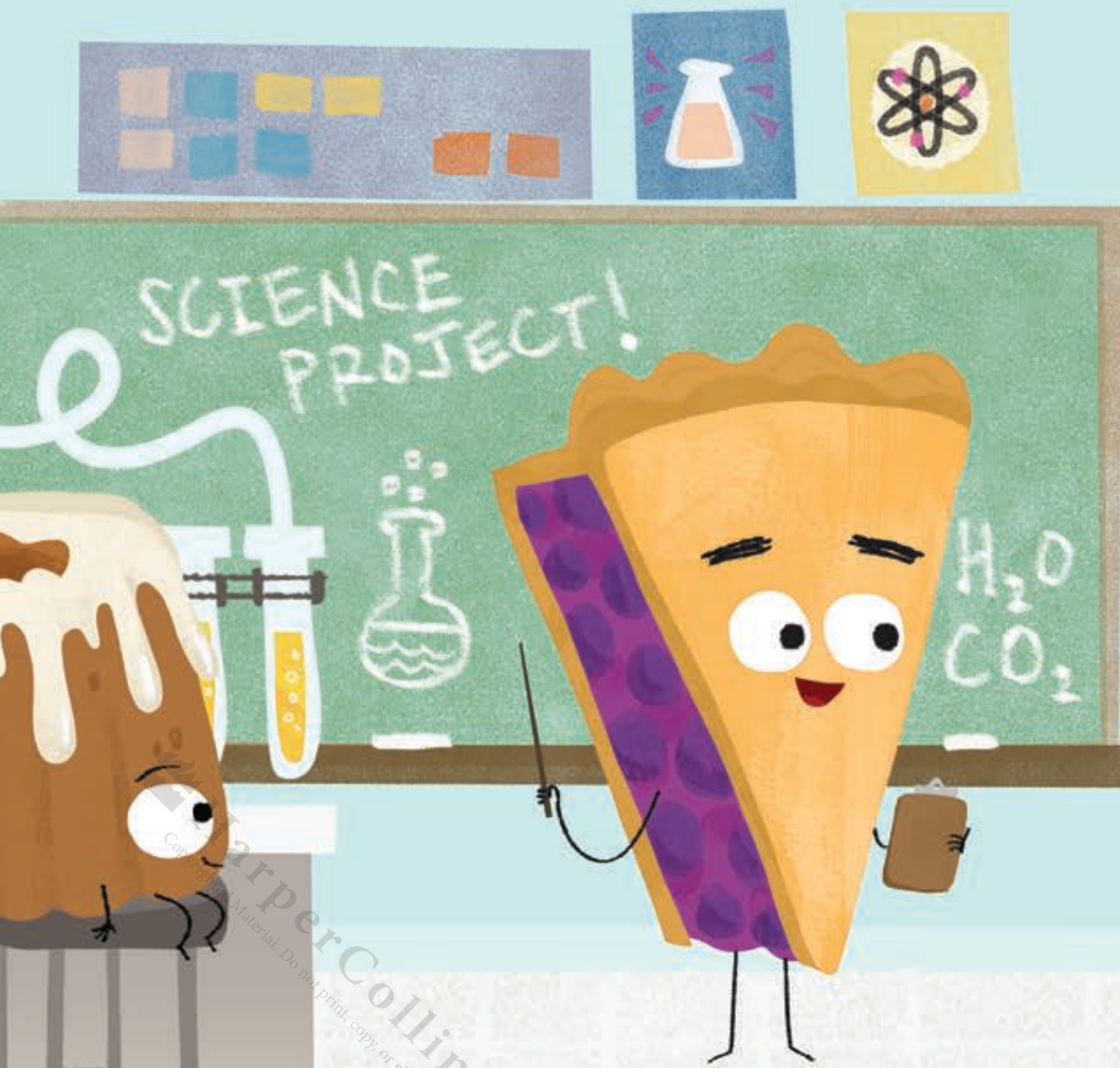
Because I'm a pie.
A humble pie.
And that's no lie.



“AWWWWWW SHUCKS.”

But something happened recently that changed the way I see myself.
Listen to this:

Jake and I paired up, of course.
I was pretty excited.
What a dream team!



One fateful afternoon, our science teacher, Mr. Berryman, announced that we could select our own lab partners for a project. We would have a week to prepare a presentation.

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On Monday, we brainstormed. On Tuesday, we sketched out our plan. Jake got a little offtrack, though.



It turned out that Jake was busy with nearly every extracurricular activity in existence.



On Wednesday, Jake said that he'd be late. Then he never showed up.



On Thursday, it was just me *again*.



On Friday, I started building our project. By myself.



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Finally, the night before the project was due, Jake called to say that he would be late.
He had some half-baked excuse.
This really takes the cake! I thought.



I'd had enough.
I was *beyond* overwhelmed.
There was *no way* I'd be able to finish in time!

Suddenly I was sweating.
And my palms were clammy.
And I felt a little wobbly.



I realized that I needed to say something. *Anything!*
I didn't exactly love the idea of confronting my best friend, but it *had* to be done. And, for once, I wasn't going to sugarcoat it.



When Jake finally arrived, I nervously cleared my throat and said my piece.



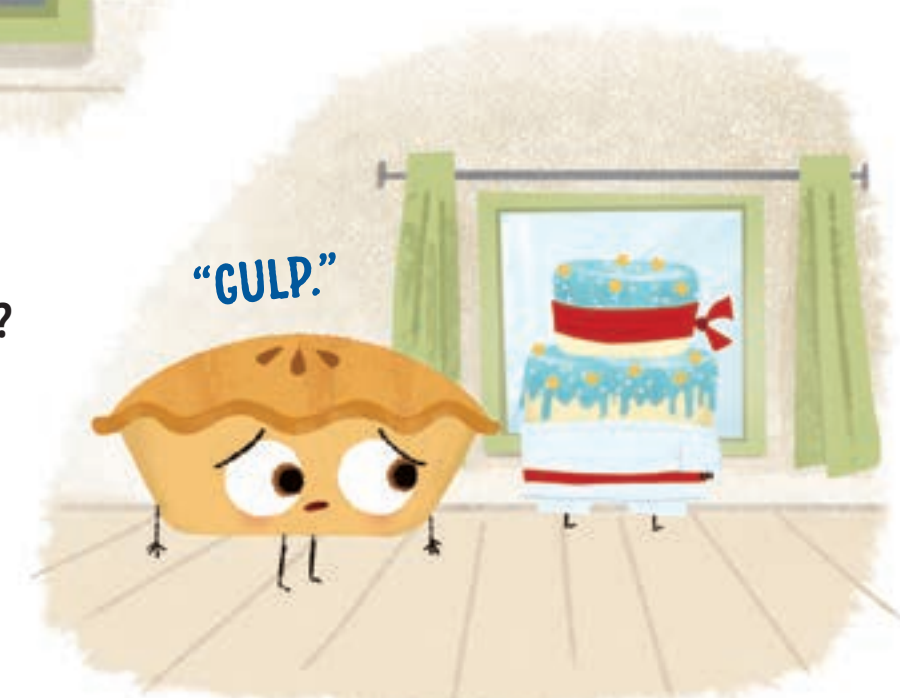
“Look, I know you have a lot on your plate,” I said, “but I’ve been doing a ton of the work on this project, and it’s really stressing me out. I can’t do it all on my own. At this rate, we’re going to be *mincemeat* tomorrow. I need your help!”

Jake stared at me for a long time.



Then he looked out the window. He furrowed his cake-brow.

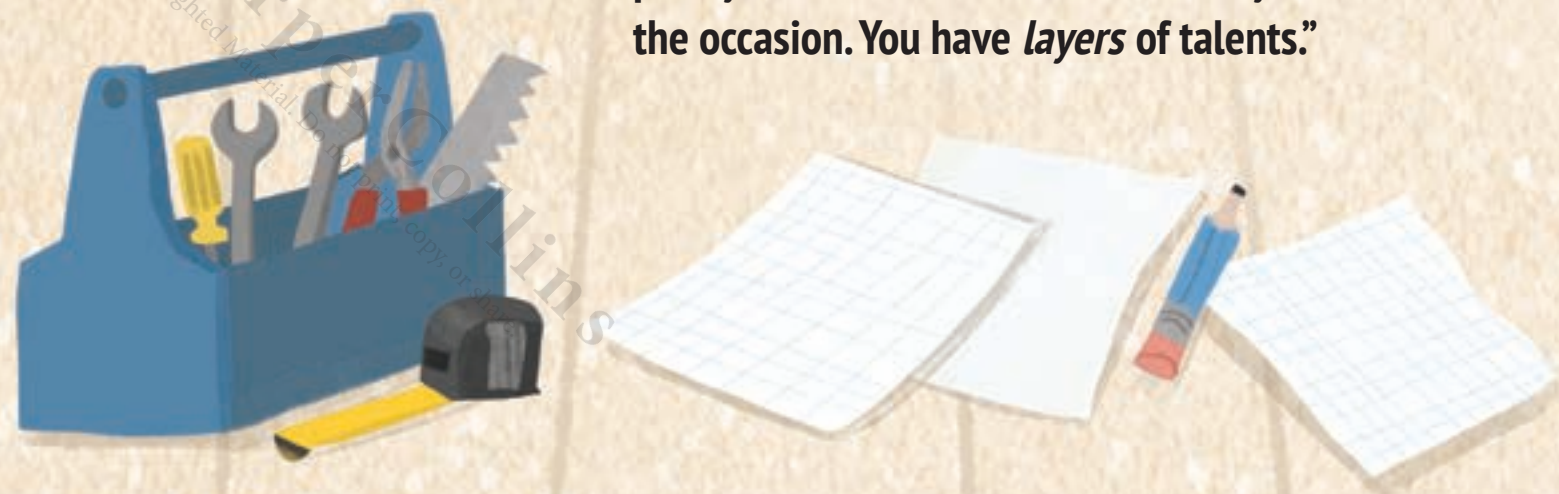
What if I’d made a *huge* mistake? What if Jake didn’t want to be my friend anymore? Maybe I should have just done the work and kept quiet, as usual.



Jake let out a deep breath. Then he nodded. "You're 100 percent right," he said. "I'm really sorry, and I'm glad you said something. I don't deserve any credit on this assignment. I'm such a *flake*."



I shook my head. "You're *not* a flake, Jake," I said. "You've just been busy. And the good news is that there's still plenty for us to do as a team. I know you'll rise to the occasion. You have *layers* of talents."



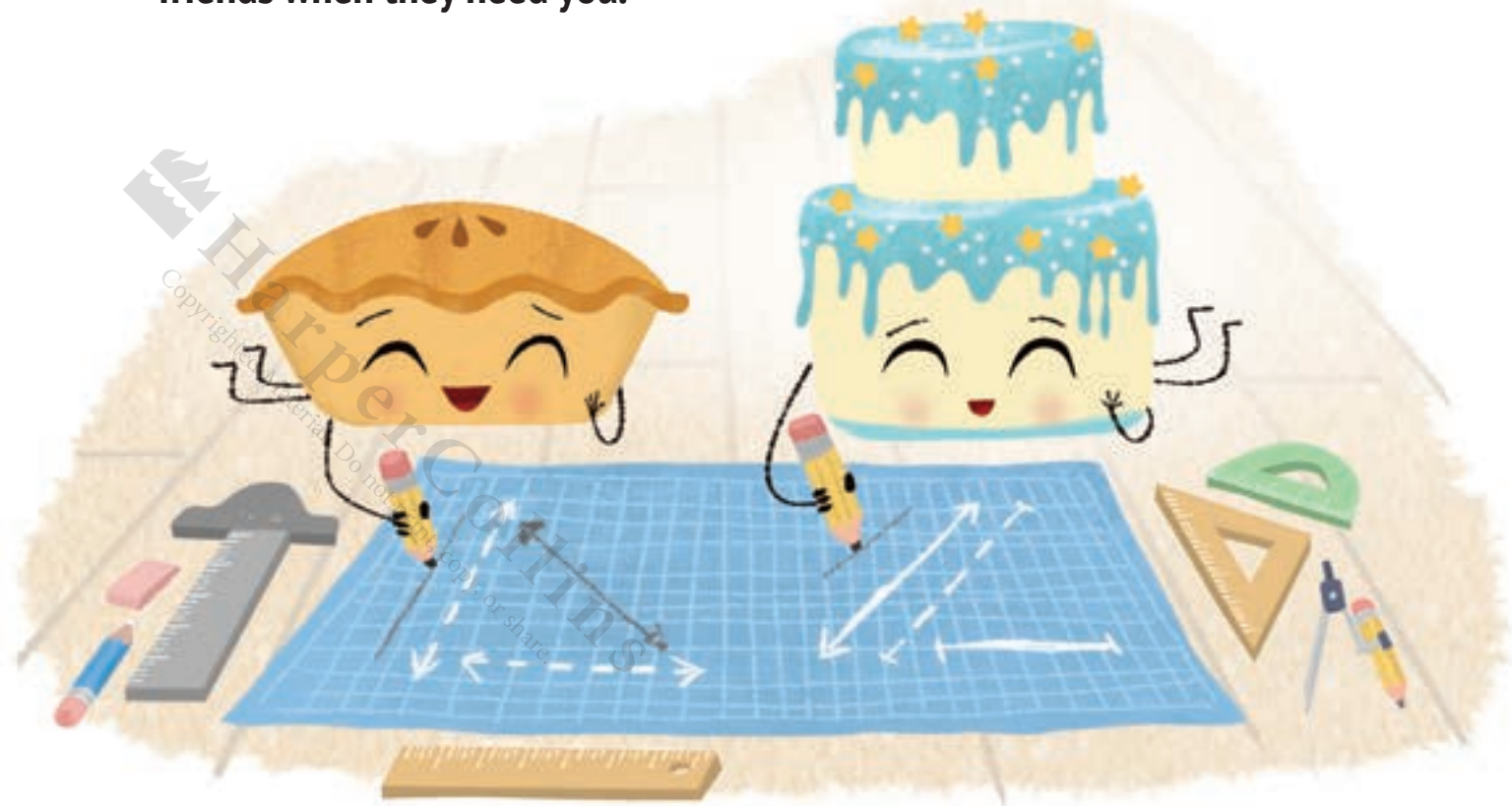
Jake smiled. "Awwwww shucks," he said.



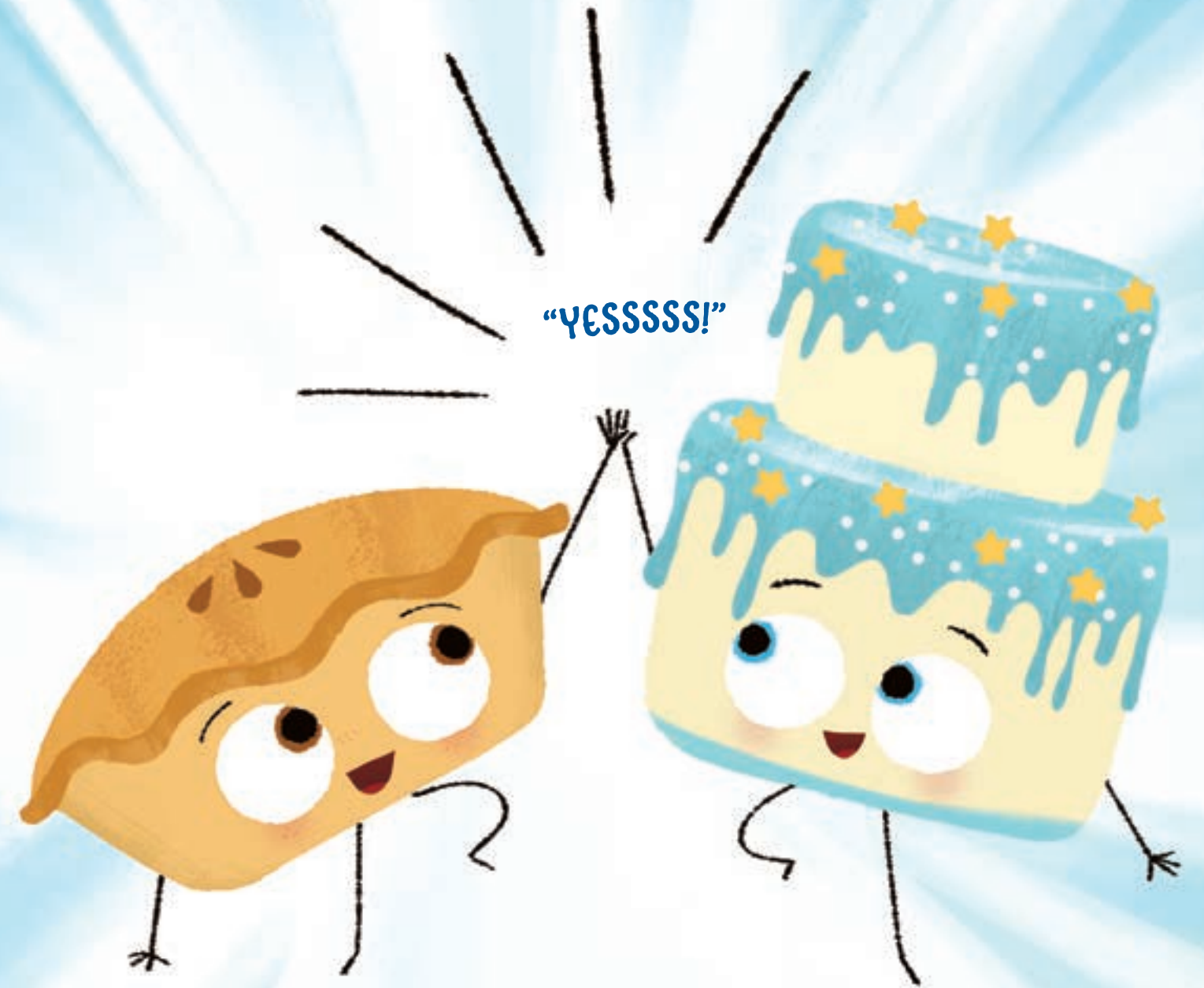
In that moment, I realized something important: For so long, I had convinced myself that being humble meant staying unappreciated and unseen and occasionally getting walked all over. But there's nothing wrong with having a tough conversation, asking for help, or making sure you're being treated fairly.



And Jake realized something, too: True excellence in life is about more than grades and sports and activities. It's about being there for your friends when they need you.



The mood immediately improved after that.



We got to work.
We ate snacks.



We listened to music.
We stayed up most of the night. It was actually... fun.

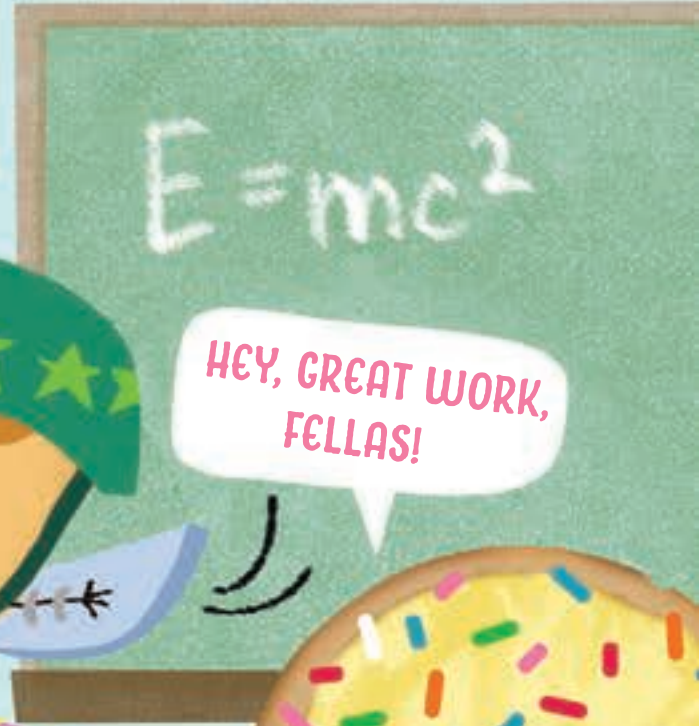


We crossed things out and switched things up and rehearsed our presentation.



And guess what: In the end, everything came together.
Yes, the dream team was back.





PIE IN THE SKY

Our classmates were impressed, too.

The presentation was a rip-roaring success! Mr. Berryman even complimented us on our teamwork.

BRAVO!

HEY, GREAT WORK, FELLAS!

"My buddy here deserves most of the credit," Jake said.

That was the icing on the cake. We'd *both* gotten the chance to shine.



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I blushed from my crust to my toes.



“AWWWWWW SHUCKS.”

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These days, I'm still a humble pie.
But now, I stick up for myself. And I take credit.
And I have tricky conversations when necessary.
And you know what? It's incredibly gratifying.
I'm proud of the pie I've become.



It's possible to stay humble while showing the world who you are and what you can do. You *don't* have to remain in the shadows.

Yes, I'm finally ready to fly . . .

AND THAT'S NO LIE.

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