



LUCKY ME

LAWRENCE
SCHIMEL

ILLUSTRATED BY
JUAN CAMILO MAYORGA



MAYBE EVERYONE IS LUCKY IN THEIR OWN WAY

Bruno's friend Sanjay is lucky: He doesn't have to share his room (well, except with a pet iguana), and he can leave his toy soldiers all over

the house. And Bruno's brother, Mateo, who is visually impaired, is pretty lucky too: He has a dog named Rocco who helps him get around. Plus, Mateo can keep reading after dark by using just his fingers (while Bruno has to use a flashlight). Still, Bruno has it pretty good. He can leave his bed a total mess. He can play dinosaurs with Sanjay and his iguana. And he can listen to Mateo's made-up adventure stories (Mateo is a great storyteller). Bruno's home is a bit different, but he wouldn't trade it for the world. If he had to compare, he'd say he was the luckiest of all to have such a great friend and fantastic brother.

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LUCKY ME



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ILLUSTRATOR: JUAN CAMILO MAYORGA

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Bruno's friend Sanjay has his own room and a pet iguana. Bruno's brother, Mateo, who is visually impaired, has a dog named Rocco who helps him get around, and Mateo is a fantastic storyteller. Bruno doesn't have a pet, and he has to share his room with Mateo, but he still feels like the luckiest of all to have such a great brother and an amazing friend.

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9 × 9"

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KEY SELLING POINTS

- Bruno thinks his friend Sanjay, who has his own room and owns a pet iguana, and Bruno's brother, Mateo, who can read with his fingertips and tell amazing stories, are pretty lucky—but he feels luckiest of all.
- From the perspective of Bruno, we look at the differences between his friend, his brother and him; this includes the way his brother interacts with the world as someone with a visual impairment. The positive attitude of the narrator shines through as he appreciates everyone's "luck," including his own.
- The book deals with disability (visual impairment) and differences without being heavy-handed. Mateo's visual impairment is never directly mentioned, and the author avoids labels like blind or visually impaired to allow the voice to come across as kidlike, matter-of-fact and non-otering.
- *Lucky Me* includes a brief background on Braille, as well as the Braille alphabet (and an activity), at the back of the book for curious visual readers.
- The original Spanish-language edition of this book, *¡QUÉ SUERTE TENGO!*, was selected as one of the IBBY's Outstanding Books for Young People with Disabilities in 2021.



PHOTO CREDIT: NIEVES GUERRA

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

LAWRENCE SCHIMEL writes in both Spanish and English and has published over 120 books as author or anthologist in a wide range of genres, including fiction, poetry, graphic novels and children's literature. He has twice won a Lambda Literary Award and has also won a Crystal Kite Award from the Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators and a White Raven from the International Youth Library in Munich. Three of his books have been chosen for IBBY's Outstanding Books for Young People with Disabilities. Lawrence is also a prolific literary translator. He lives in Madrid, where he founded the Spanish chapter of the Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators and served as regional advisor for five years.



ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

JUAN CAMILO MAYORGA is a graphic designer who graduated from the Universidad Nacional de Colombia, where he developed a special interest in illustration and art. He currently lives in a small town near Bogotá named Zipaquirá, where he develops his work as an illustrator of various editorial projects, such as picture books and illustrations for magazines, which have been published in Colombia, other countries in Latin America, and Europe.

PROMOTIONAL PLANS INCLUDE

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JUV039060 JUVENILE FICTION / Social Themes / Friendship

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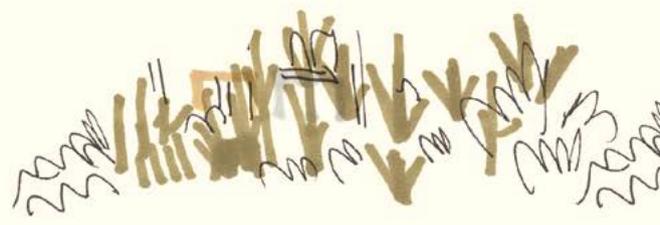


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LUCKY ME

LAWRENCE SCHIMEL

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I love going over to Sanjay's house.

He has hundreds and hundreds of toy soldiers
that he's painted different colors.

We set up battles all over the place—
an ambush under the dining room table,
a skirmish on top of a chair...

We lay siege to a fortress sitting way
up high, on top of the pile of
cushions on the sofa.





When it's time for us to have a snack,
Sanjay and I declare a cease-fire
and leave all the little soldiers
right where they are ...



so we can continue the great battle
after eating the cupcakes his father made.



My house is a little different.

We put everything back where it belongs,
so that my brother, Mateo, knows where it is.









So when Sanjay comes over for a visit, instead of setting up military campaigns across the living room or building forts out of the couch cushions, we usually watch a movie or play video games.



Even though I share a room with Mateo,
my bed is my own space.

I can keep it however I want,
and leave my toys and comics there
without putting them away.

My parents don't even mind
if I don't make my bed all day long.

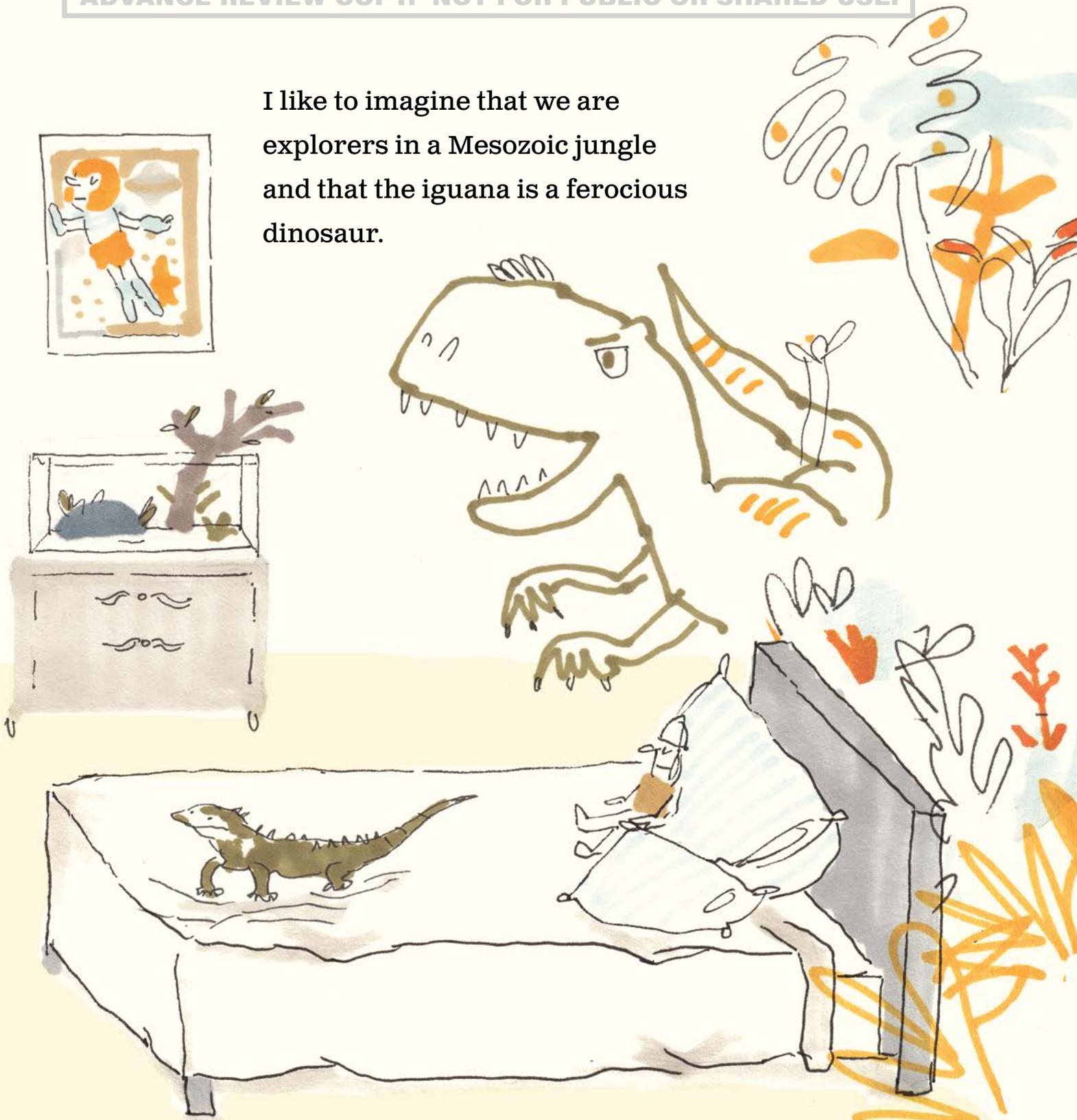


Sanjay has to make his bed every morning when he gets up.

Sanjay is an only child, but he still shares his room—with a pet iguana! It lives in a terrarium on his bedside table. It's bright green, with a crest like a dragon, and is longer than my forearm. Sometimes Sanjay lets it out to wander around.



I like to imagine that we are
explorers in a Mesozoic jungle
and that the iguana is a ferocious
dinosaur.



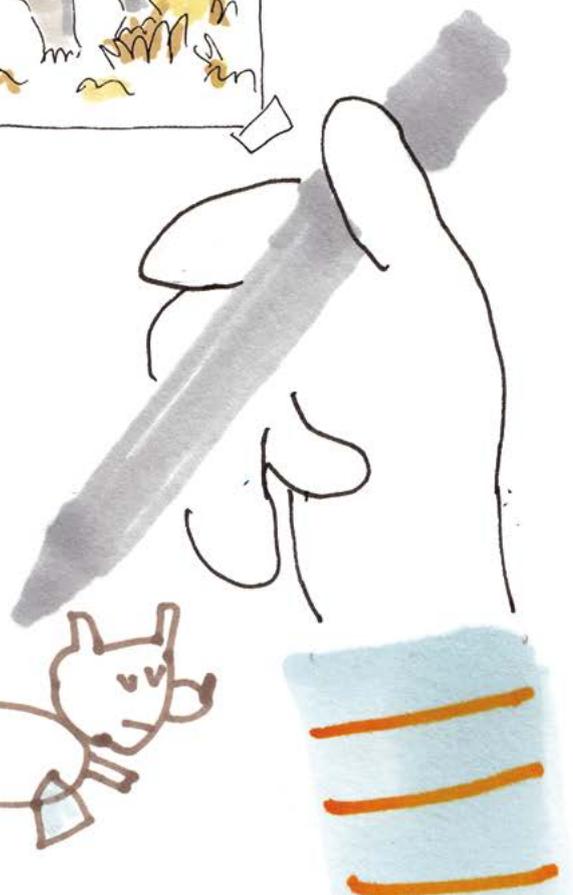
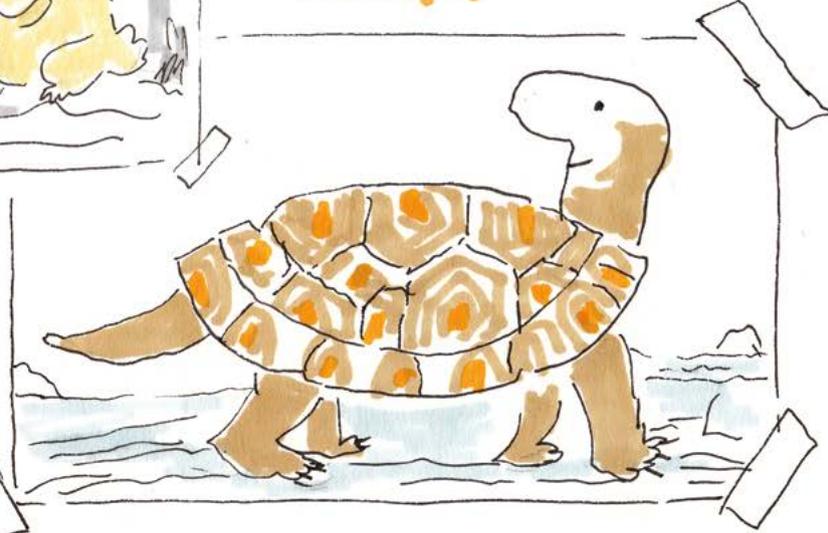
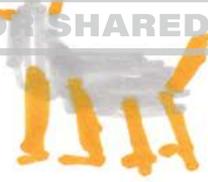


I've always wanted to have a pet.

For years I've begged for a turtle,
a snake, an elephant,
even a guinea pig—
any animal would do.

But my parents always say no.





My brother is really lucky.



Even though he didn't ask for it,
my parents got him a dog,
a very nice Labrador named Rocco.
I know that Mateo's dog is here to help him,
but it's still a pet.

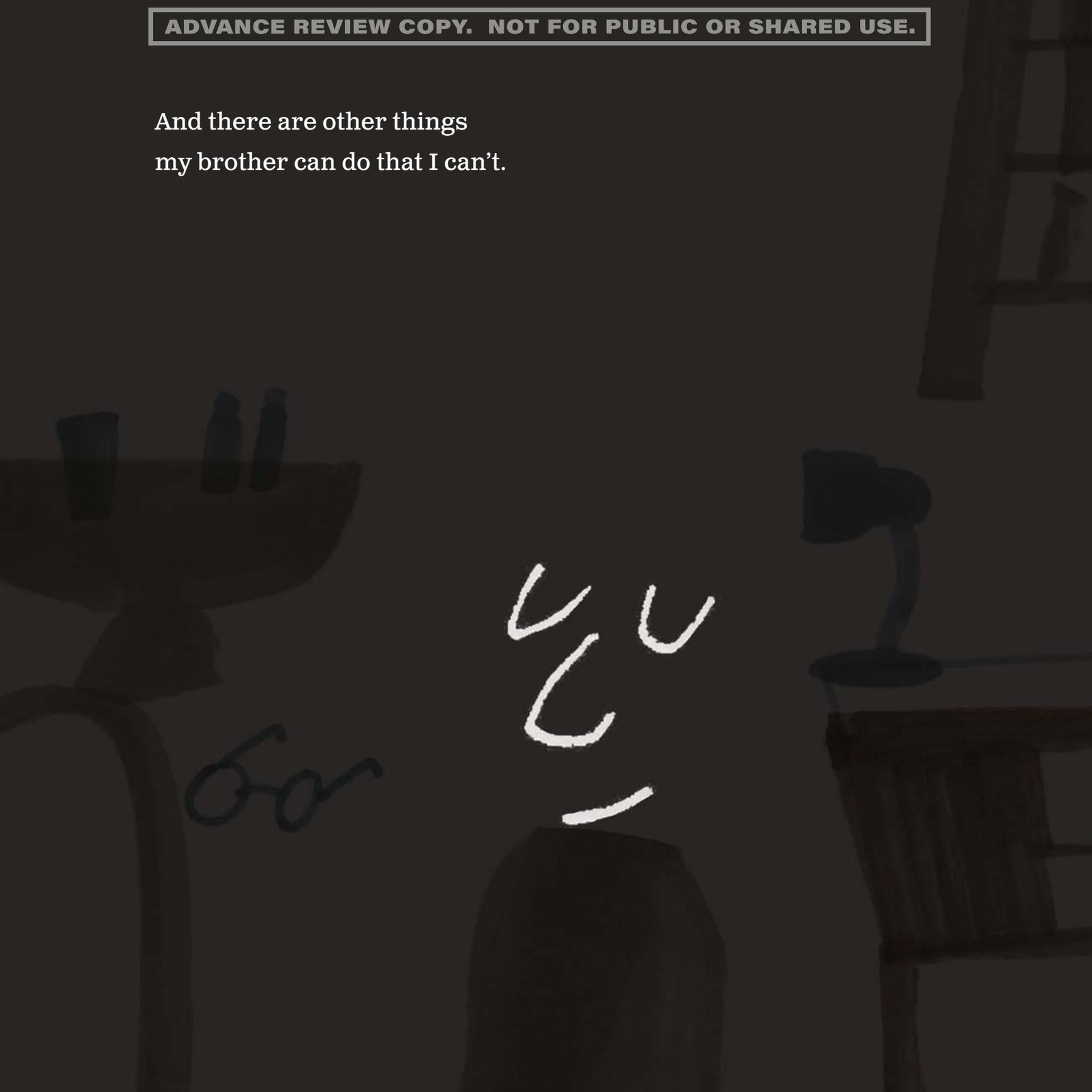
Mateo lets me help him take care of Rocco,
but it's not the same.
I can't play ball with Rocco
or go running with him in the park.

Mateo
needs Rocco,
and they're always
together.

That's just Mateo's luck.



And there are other things
my brother can do that I can't.





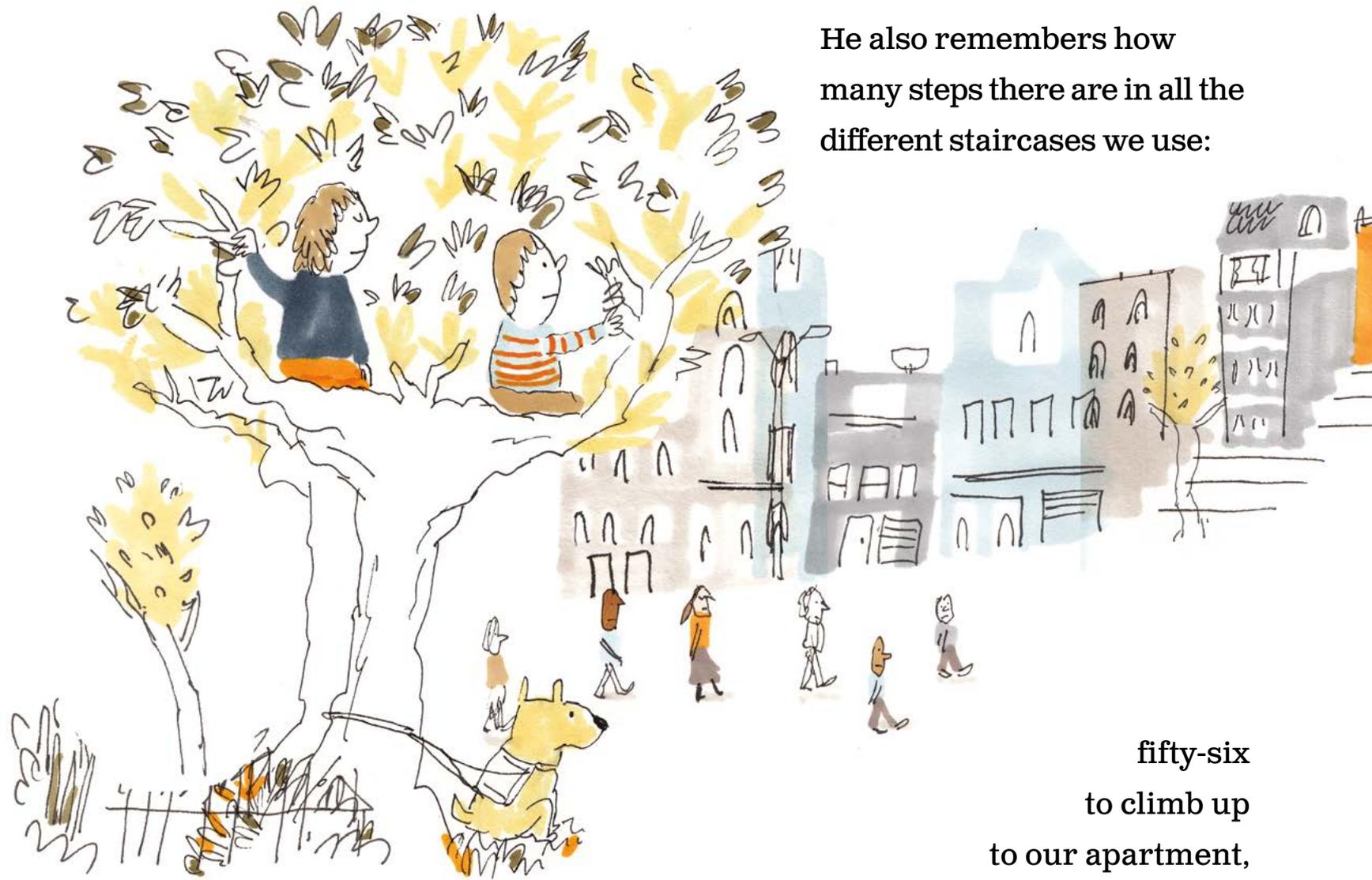


Mateo has a really good memory.
He always knows where he's left things
and sometimes even remembers
for the rest of us!



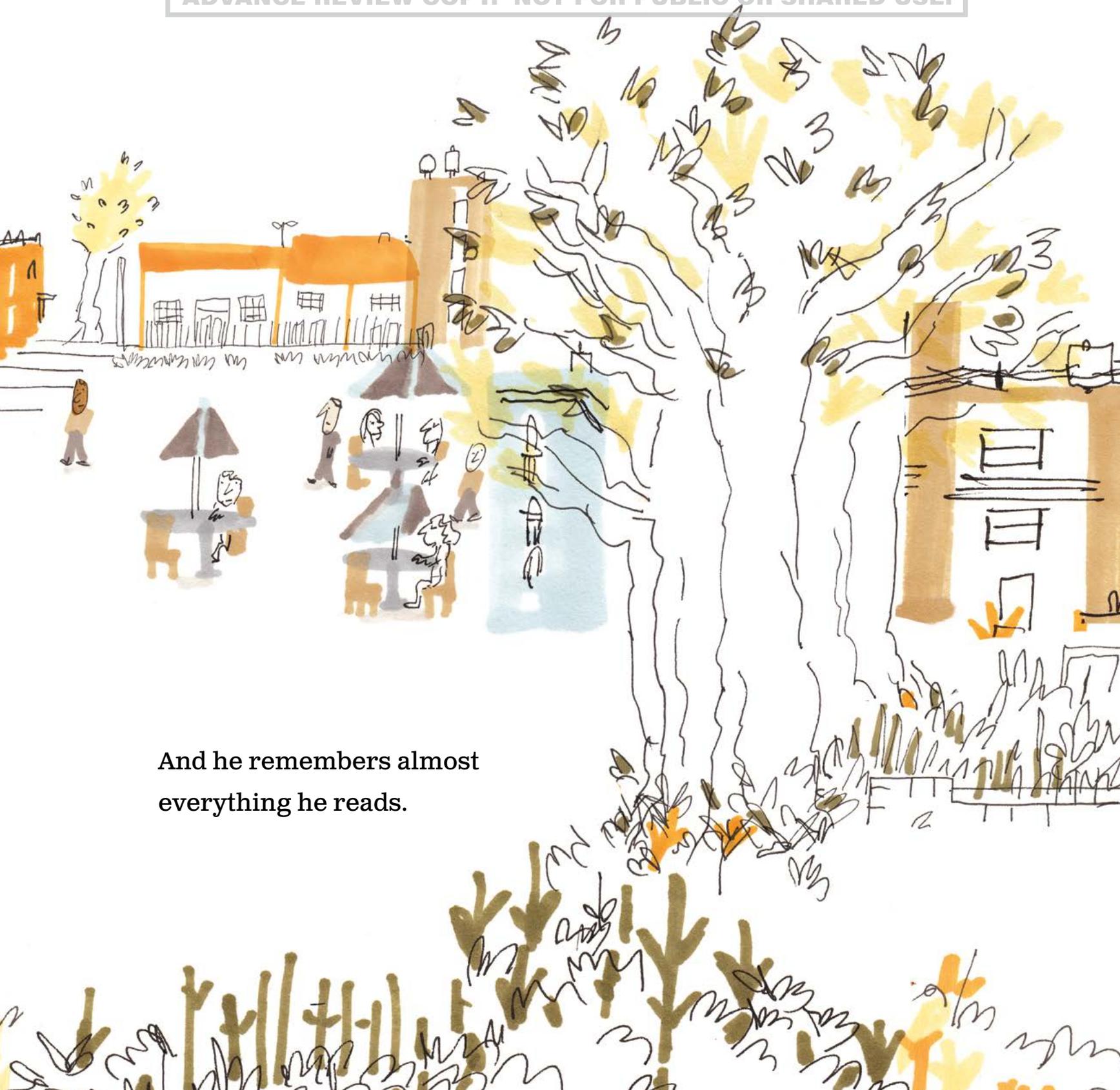
Yesterday Mom was looking all over the living room for her keys when Mateo said, *“I think they’re in the kitchen. I heard you put them down on the counter.”*

And, of course, when Mom went in to check, there they were.



He also remembers how many steps there are in all the different staircases we use:

fifty-six
to climb up
to our apartment,
sixteen to go into the subway
plus another twenty-three to the platform,
and six to go up to the park where we take Rocco.



And he remembers almost
everything he reads.

Mateo loves to read,



and that's another thing that sometimes he can do which I can't: At night, when our parents tell us it's time to turn off the lights, I need to use a flashlight to read under the blankets.

Mateo can keep reading like he always does.



Some nights I can hear
the whisper of his fingers
passing over the raised dots
on the pages of his braille books.



Even if Mom and Dad take away my flashlight—and I'm dying to find out what happens next in my book—I never squeal about Mateo reading at night.



Instead I try to imagine
what he's reading about,
and in the end I fall asleep,
sure that one day he'll tell me.



My brother doesn't just read.
He also tells really good stories.

Some are from his favorite books,
but some he's invented himself.

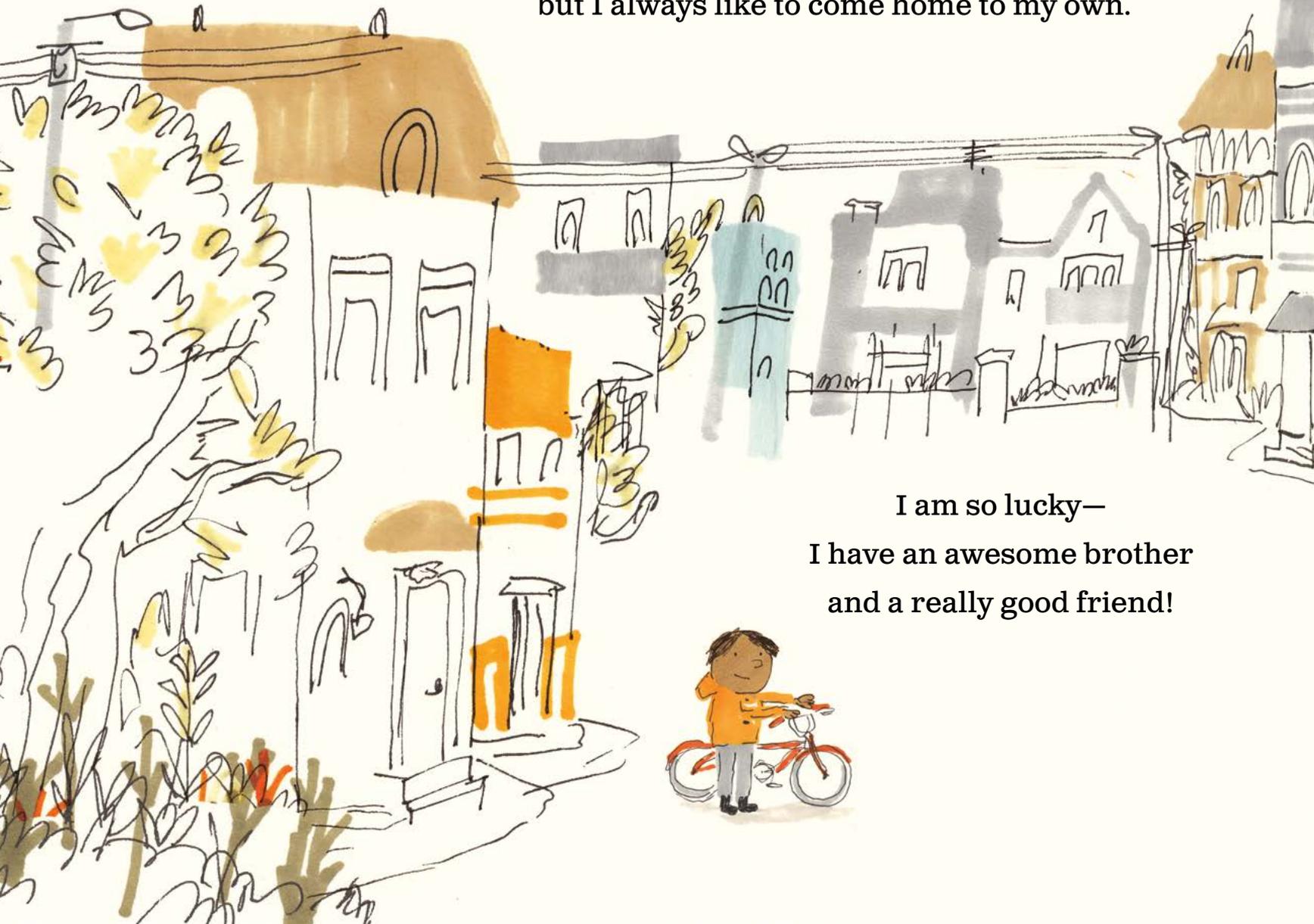
I prefer his own stories, because they always have
lots of action and adventure. I think that if Mateo is a
writer when he grows up, he'll be a huge success...



and his books will definitely be made into movies!

Sanjay may have a pet iguana,
but it's a shame he doesn't have a brother.

I love to visit Sanjay's house,
but I always like to come home to my own.



I am so lucky—
I have an awesome brother
and a really good friend!



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