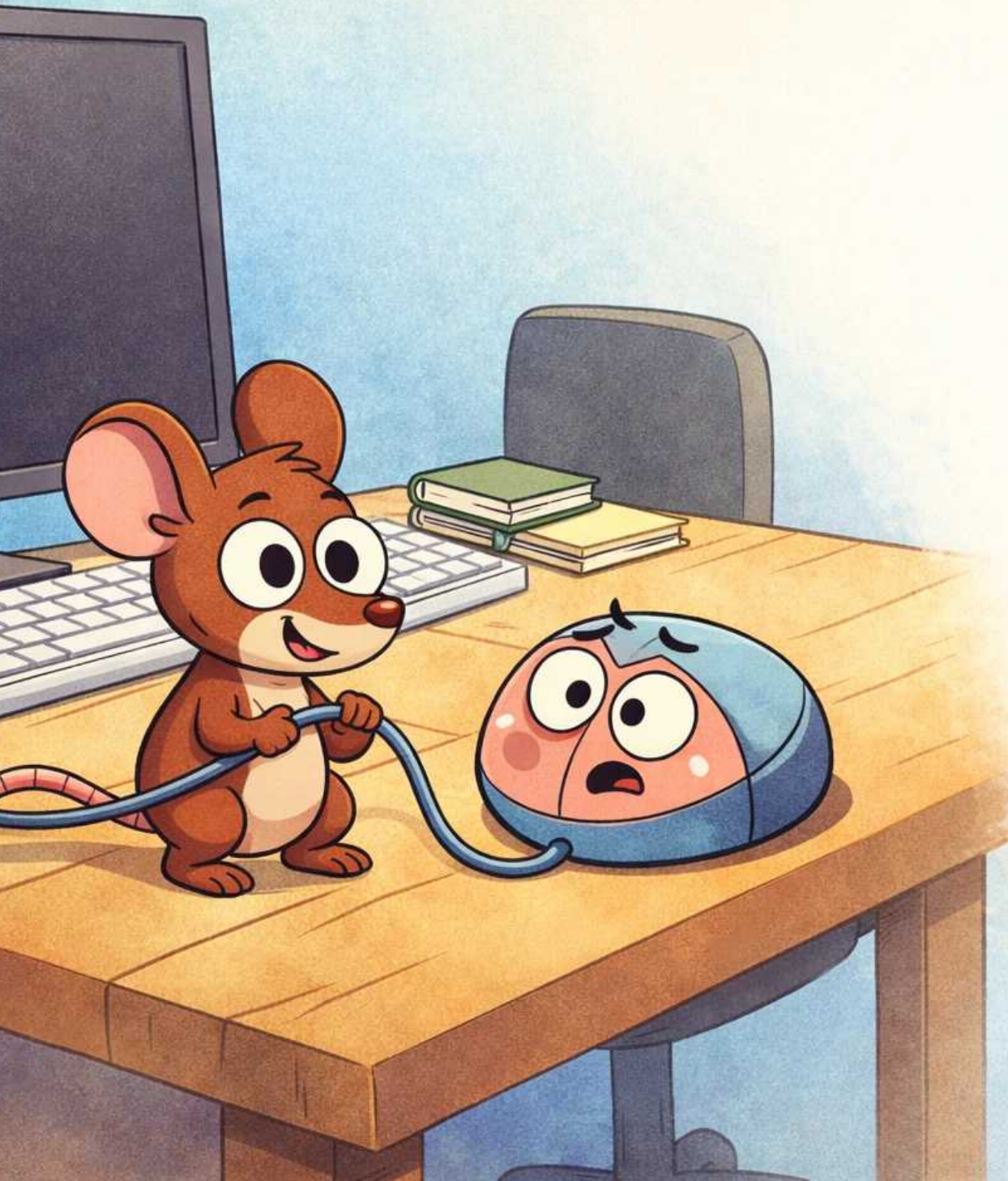


Tik and the Big Cat



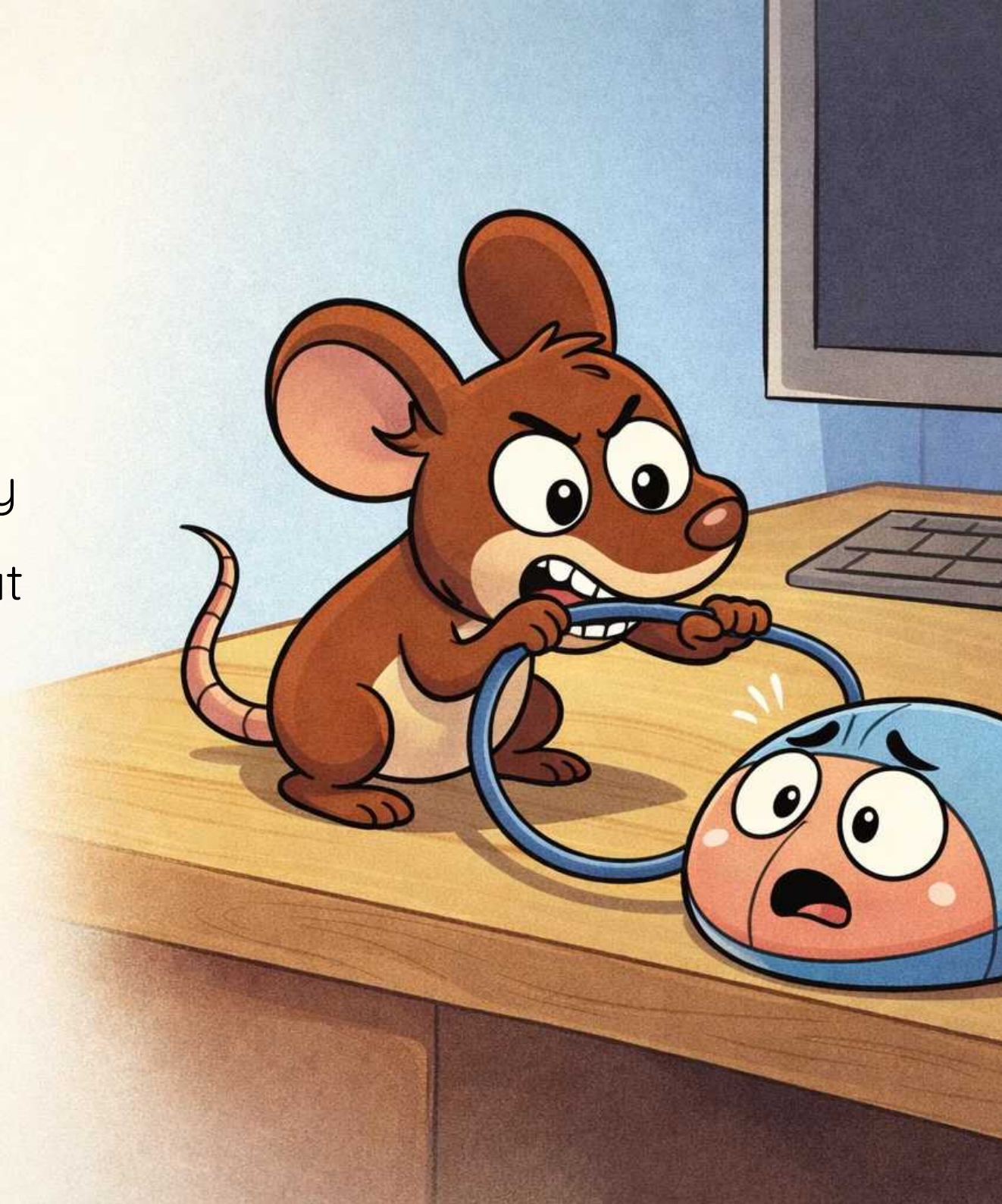
Pip the mouse finds a house. The window is open. The room is **darkish** and still. And best of all, no one is home. It is just what Pip wants. Pip sniffs. 'No cats,' he whispers. 'No dogs. No one at all.' Pip creeps along the sill and peers inside. He rests one paw on the frame. 'Just me.'



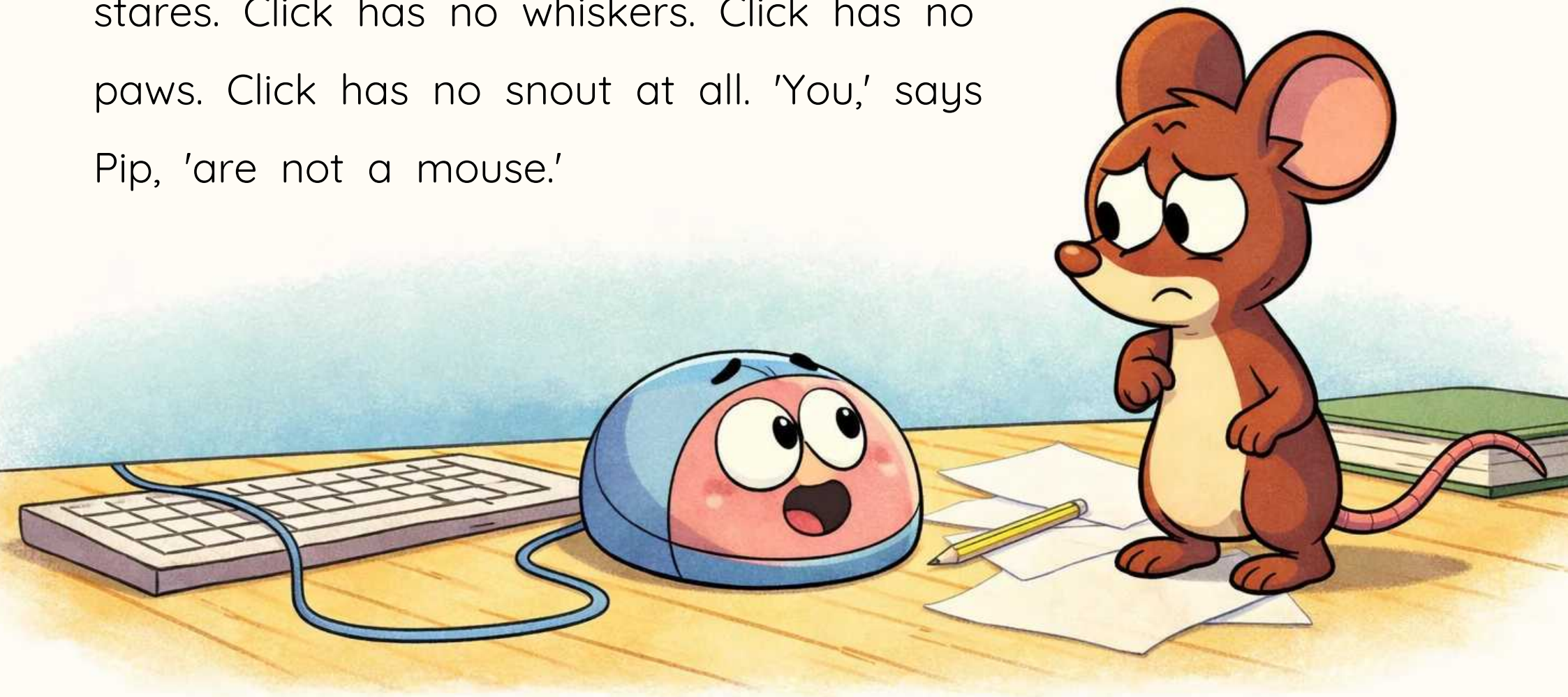


Pip jumps up to the desk to look around. Papers. A big bright screen. Then Pip spots a rope. It is **longish**, thick, and smooth. 'A rope!' says Pip, grabbing it with both paws. 'This could tie my door shut. This could haul my food home. This could be the best rope ever!' He pulls. He tugs. He yanks with all his might.

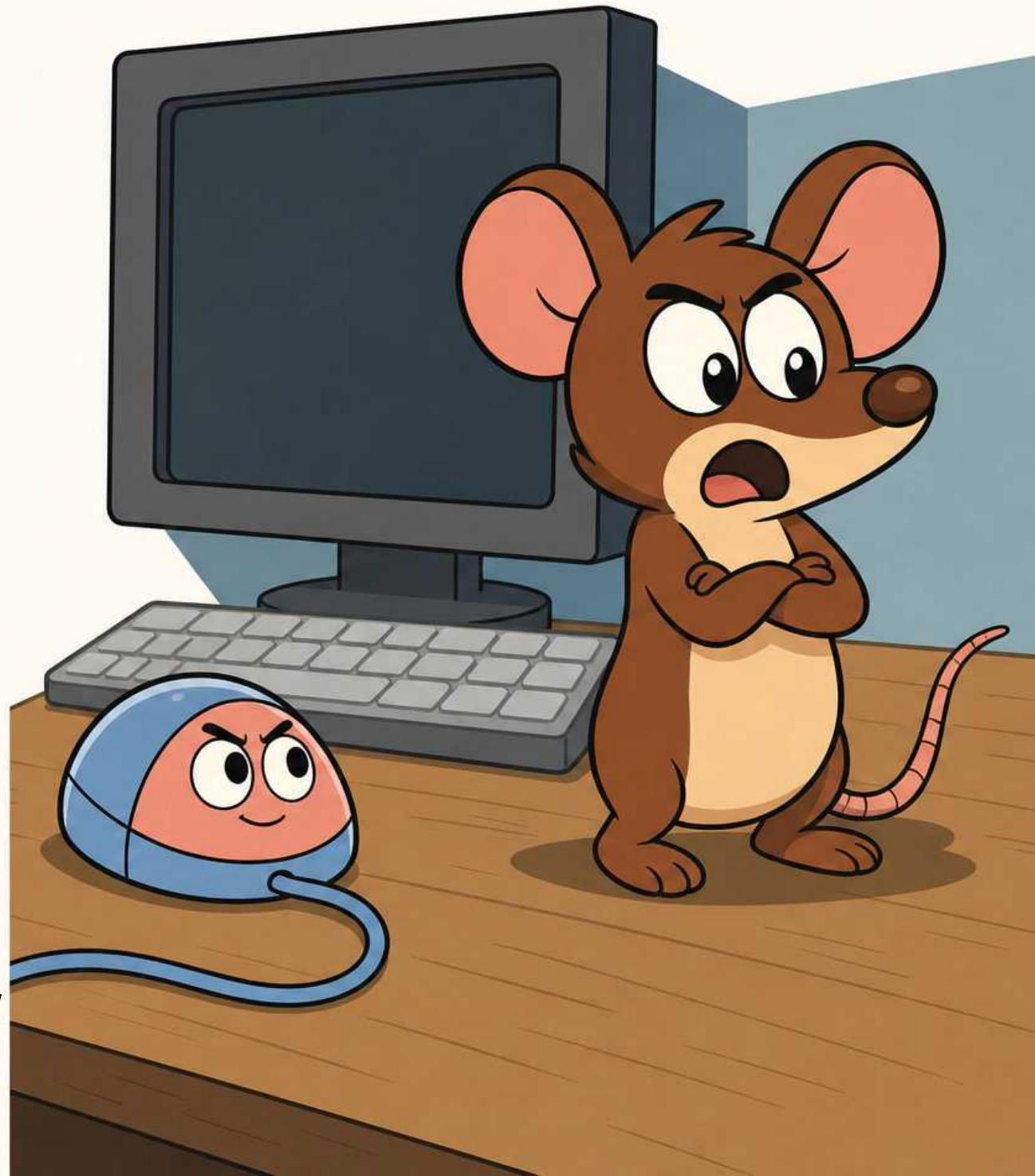
The rope will not move.
So Pip does what any
smart mouse would do.
Pip bites it. Hard.
Crunch. 'Ow!' yells a tiny
voice. 'Ow! Ow! Ow! That
is my tail, you big nut!'
Pip freezes. Pip stares.
What **gibberish** is this?
A thing on the desk is
yelling at him.



Pip spins around. There on the desk sits a small, **roundish** thing with a cord for a tail. What an **outlandish** thing! 'My name is Click,' it says, 'and I am a mouse.' Pip stares. Click has no whiskers. Click has no paws. Click has no snout at all. 'You,' says Pip, 'are not a mouse.'



'I am a mouse!' says Click.
'I click! I scroll! I can find
all things on the internet!
Can you do that?' 'I can
chew through a wall,' says
Pip. 'I can open many tabs
at once,' says Click. 'That
is **foolish,**' says Pip. 'No
mouse can do that.' 'You
need me,' says Click. 'I can
tell. You look like a mouse
who could use a little help.'





'Fine,' says Pip. 'Can you find me food? I am **famished**. No food for days!' 'Easy!' says Click. 'And the cat,' Pip whispers. 'There is a cat in this house. A big one. Can you help me hide from the cat?' Click puffs up. 'Hide? That cat will take one look at me and run.' Pip looks at Click. Click is **smallish**. Really **smallish**. 'Sure,' says Pip. 'Sure it will.'

Then Pip hears it. A deep, rumbling purr. And the soft pad, pad, pad of big paws. Pip gets **skittish**. The cat is not a small cat. It is the kind of cat that stares at a mouse like Pip stares at cheese. The cat's **yellowish** eyes glare. The cat's claws scratch the desk. 'Click!' Pip squeaks. 'Click, help me!'





The cat lunges. Pip dodges left. The cat swipes. Pip dodges right. 'Click! You said you would help! You said the cat would run!' 'I am working on it!' shouts Click. 'Give me one minute!' 'I do not have one minute!' The cat's claws rake hard across the desk. Papers zip off the edge and **vanish**. Pip runs as fast as he can.

Then the screen lights up.
A huge, **brutish** dog roars
from the screen. Woof!
Woof! Woof! The cat
freezes. The cat's eyes
open wide. The cat's fur
puffs up. The cat bolts off
the desk, through the door,
and out of the room. Click
sits on the desk, looking
very proud. 'Many tabs,'
says Click. 'I told you so.'





Pip picks Click up and hugs that funny little mouse so hard that Click's cord wiggles wildly. 'My **wish** was a house with no one in it,' says Pip. 'But a friend is the best surprise of all. You are the oddest mouse ever.' 'The best mouse,' says Click. Pip laughs. 'Yes,' says Pip. 'The best mouse.'



Tik and the Big Cat

Pip the mouse thinks he's found the perfect house: window open, room dark, nobody home. But the rope he grabs to tie up his curtains turns out to belong to someone else entirely, a small, roundish stranger who insists it's a mouse too. Can two very different mice outsmart the giant cat who's about to walk in? Created to align with the UFLI Foundations scope and sequence (Lesson 122: -ish), this book practices words like 'smallish', 'darkish', 'foolish', 'famished', 'gibberish'.

Phonics Focus: -ish

brutish, darkish, famish, famished, foolish, gibberish, longish, outlandish, roundish, skittish, smallish, vanish, wish, yellowish

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