

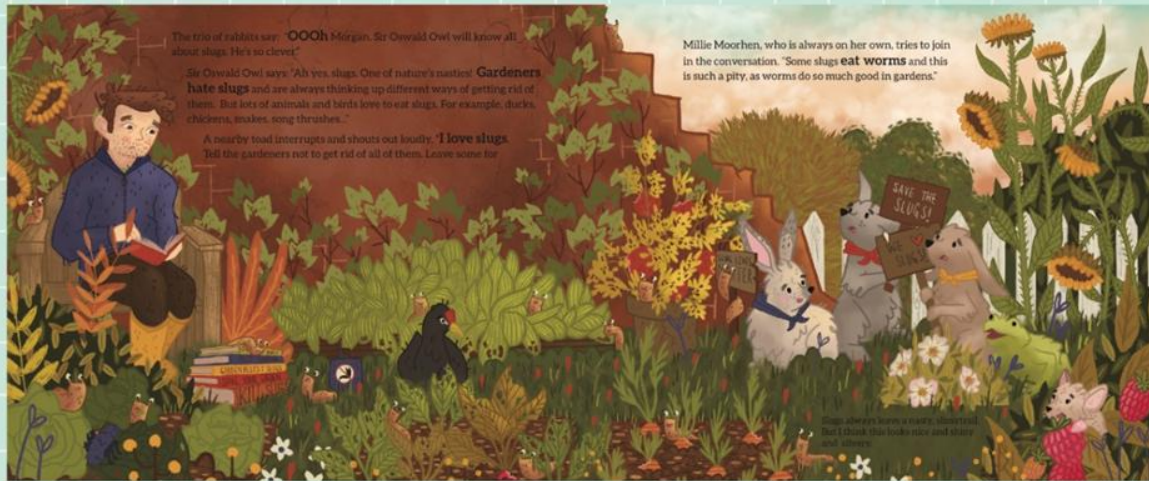
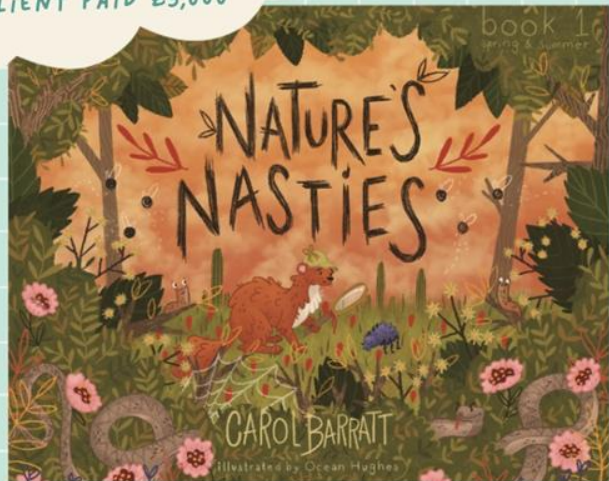


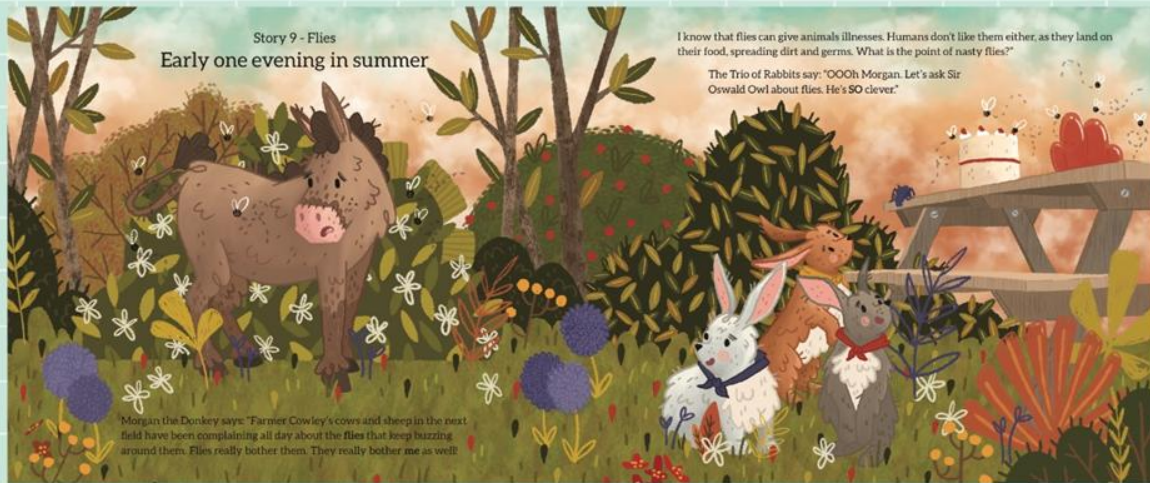
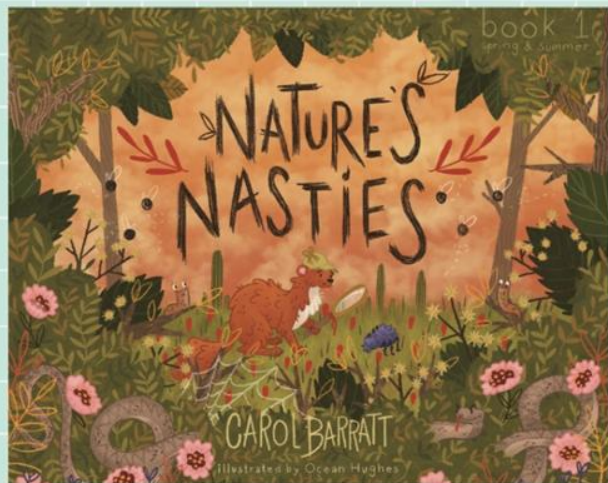
MY JOURNEY  
AS A  
FREELANCE  
ILLUSTRATOR

OCEAN HUGHES

FEB 2018 — SEPT 2018  
CLIENT PAID £3,000

# MY FIRST FREELANCE GIG







GRADUATION DAY 2019! :-)



NEW DESIGNERS!



#### PROS OF HAVING AN AGENT

- THEY FIND YOU WORK
- THEY HANDLE CONTRACTS & NEGOTIATIONS
- THEY PITCH YOUR WORK AT BIG INDUSTRY EVENTS
- THEY HELP DEVELOP YOUR CAREER

#### CONS OF HAVING AN AGENT

- THEY TAKE A COMMISSION USUALLY 25-35% (MINE IS 30%)
- THEY DON'T GUARANTEE CONSTANT WORK
- YOU NEED THE RIGHT FIT

#### HOW TO GET THE MOST OUT OF YOUR AGENT:

- COMMUNICATE OPENLY
- BE PROACTIVE WITH NEW WORK
- ASK QUESTIONS & SEEK ADVICE



BUT REMEMBER, AN AGENT ISN'T A NECESSITY—MANY ILLUSTRATORS SUCCEED WITHOUT ONE. IT'S ALL ABOUT WHAT WORKS FOR YOU.

AUG 2020 — FEB 2021  
CLIENT PAID - £7,520  
AFTER PLUM COMMISSION,  
I KEPT £5,264

## ARCTURUS — "I CAN BE A..." SERIES



### KEY LESSONS:

• TIME MANAGEMENT  
IS EVERYTHING.

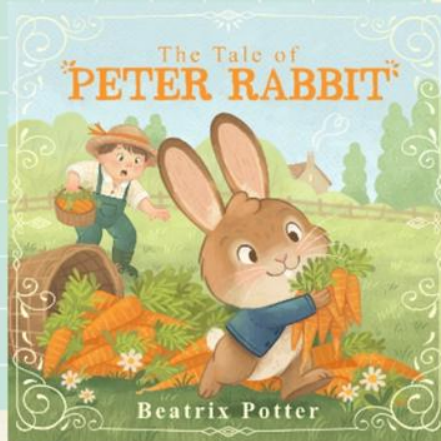
• ASK FOR HELP  
WHEN YOU NEED IT.

• NOT EVERY JOB IS A  
DREAM, BUT EVERY JOB  
TEACHES YOU SOMETHING.

THIS JOB MADE ME REALISE I WANTED  
TO SHIFT FROM FACTUAL TO NARRATIVE  
ILLUSTRATION—SOMETHING THAT SHAPED  
MY NEXT CAREER MOVES.

# CREATE YOUR OWN OPPORTUNITIES

PEACHTOBER



## INSTAGRAM DRAWING CHALLENGES

- PEACHTOBER
- FOLKTALEWEEK
- OURPLANETWEEK
- INKTOBER
- DRAW365
- DRAWTOWER



# SELLING PRODUCTS ONLINE



## GROWING AN ONLINE PRESENCE

\*SHARED PROCESS SHOTS, TIME-LAPSES & PROJECTS

\*CONNECTED WITH ILLUSTRATORS & BUILT AN AUDIENCE

\*ATTRACTED CLIENTS LOOKING FOR MY STYLE

\*CONSISTENCY MATTERS MORE THAN PERFECTION!

## KEY LESSONS

\*NOT EVERY OPPORTUNITY COMES TO YOU—YOU HAVE TO PUT YOURSELF OUT THERE!

\*PERSONAL PROJECTS OFTEN LEAD TO CLIENT WORK.

\*BUILDING A CAREER TAKES TIME, AND THAT'S OKAY.

NOV 2021 - MAR 2022  
CLIENT PAID - £3,187  
AFTER PLUM COMMISSION,  
I KEPT £2,231

# LANDING MY FIRST PICTURE BOOK! (YAY!)



## CHARACTER DESIGNS



\*MORE CREATIVE FREEDOM  
THAN EVER BEFORE

\*DEVELOPED MY VOICE AS  
AN ILLUSTRATOR

\*GAINED CONFIDENCE &  
INDUSTRY RECOGNITION!

WINNER: BEST IN DESIGN  
AUSTRALIAN DESIGN AWARDS

#8 ON BETTER READING AUSTRALIA'S  
TOP 50 KIDS LIST (RIGHT BETWEEN  
HARRY POTTER & THE GRUFFALO!)

# MY FIRST AUTHOR ILLUSTRATED BOOK!

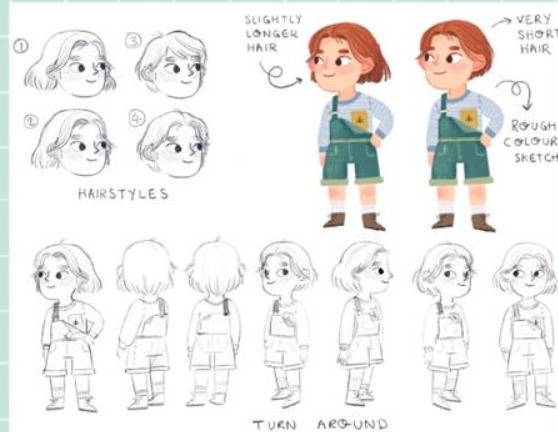
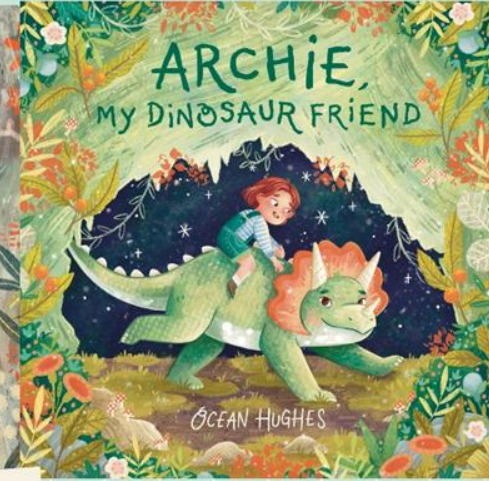
2019



2020



2022



## THE JOURNEY

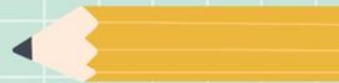
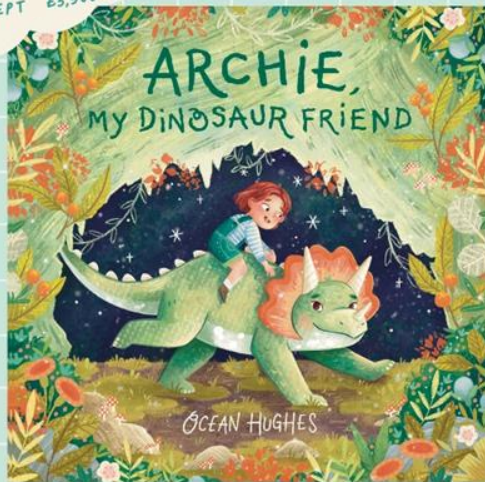
1. PEACHTOBER PROMPT: 'DINO'
2. ADDED COLOR, SHARED WITH MY AGENT
3. DEVELOPED A FULL BOOK PROPOSAL
4. PITCHED AT MAJOR BOOK FAIRS
5. GOT AN EMAIL... JELLYCAT WANTED TO PUBLISH IT AND MAKE A PLUSH TOY!

## BIGGEST LESSONS

- PERSONAL PROJECTS CAN OPEN UNEXPECTED DOORS.
- TRUST YOUR INSTINCTS—DEVELOP IDEAS THAT EXCITE YOU.
- THE CREATIVE JOURNEY IS FULL OF SURPRISES!

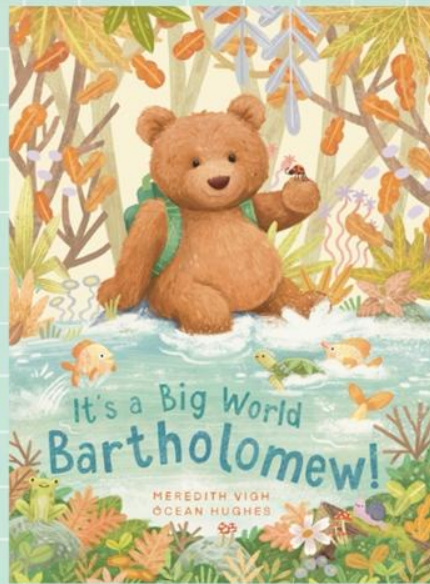
NOV 2022 - MAY 2023  
CLIENT PAID £5000  
AFTER PLUM COMMISSION,  
I KEPT £3,500

## ARCHIE MY DINOSAUR FRIEND



AUG 2023 - DEC 2023  
CLIENT PAID £4,500  
AFTER PLUM COMMISSION,  
I KEPT £3,150

## BARTHOLOMEW BEAR BOOKS



MAR 2024 - JUL 2024  
CLIENT PAID £4,500  
AFTER PLUM COMMISSION,  
I KEPT £3,150

CLIENT PAYS £250 A DAY  
AFTER PLUM COMMISSION,  
I KEEP £175 A DAY

# JELLYCAT TOY DESIGNS



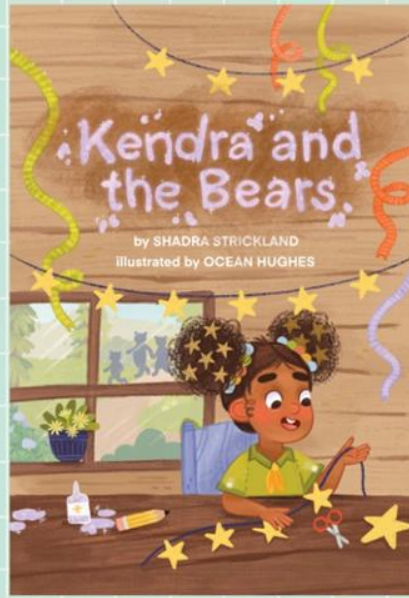
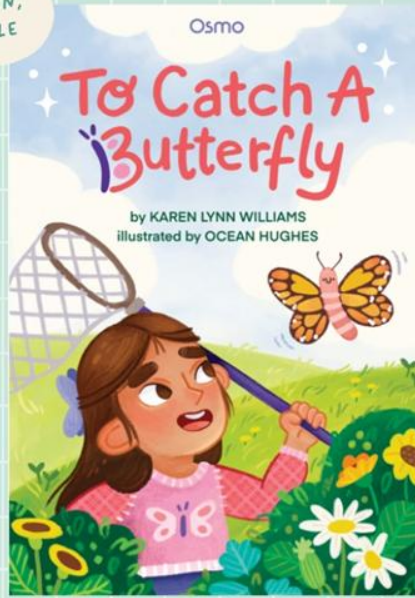
# CHRISTMAS STORY & ACTIVITY BOOKS



6 MONTHS PER TITLE  
CLIENT PAID £2766 PER TITLE  
AFTER PLM COMMISSION, I KEPT  
£1936 PER TITLE

3 MONTHS PER TITLE  
 CLIENT PAID - £3636  
 AFTER PLUM COMMISSION,  
 I KEPT £2545 PER TITLE

# OSMO READING ADVENTURES



MAY 2021 — JUN 2021  
REDESIGN 10 PRODUCTS  
CLIENT PAID - £1065  
DID NOT INVOLVE MY AGENT

# BRECON BREWING PACKAGING DESIGN



FIRST ILLUSTRATION



NEW ILLUSTRATION

GROSS INCOME £8139  
TOTAL PROFITS £6020

## WANDERING WOODLANDS PLANNER RANGE

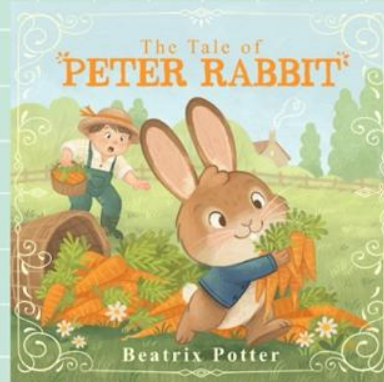


## PERSONAL PROJECTS & EXPANDING MY WORK

### BOARD BOOK SERIES PROPOSAL

#### LESSONS LEARNED

- PERSONAL PROJECTS KEEP YOUR WORK FRESH & EXCITING.
- YOU CAN SHAPE YOUR OWN CAREER BY PUTTING THE RIGHT WORK OUT THERE.
- IT'S OKAY FOR YOUR CAREER TO EVOLVE AND ADAPT OVER TIME



PORTFOLIO PROJECTS:  
CHILDREN'S BOOK REDESIGNS

# THE CHALLENGES OF FREELANCING

## INCOME INSTABILITY

SOME MONTHS WERE BUSY, OTHERS HAD NOTHING. THAT'S JUST FREELANCING!

- ALWAYS HAVE A FINANCIAL BUFFER WHERE POSSIBLE.
- MULTIPLE INCOME STREAMS! (FREELANCE, SHOP, LICENSING) THEY REALLY HELP STABILITY.
- SLOW PERIODS AREN'T FAILURES —THEY'RE CHANCES TO WORK ON PERSONAL PROJECTS AND FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES

## IMPOSTER SYNDROME & CREATIVE DOUBT

EVEN NOW, I SOMETIMES WONDER, 'AM I GOOD ENOUGH?'

- YOU'LL NEVER FEEL 100% READY— JUST GO FOR IT ANYWAY.
- COMPARING YOURSELF TO OTHERS ISN'T HELPFUL—FOCUS ON YOUR JOURNEY.
- GROWTH HAPPENS THROUGH ACTION, EVEN WHEN YOU FEEL UNCERTAIN.

## WORKLOAD & BURNOUT

AT FIRST, I SAID YES TO EVERYTHING... UNTIL I BURNED OUT.

- IT'S OKAY TO SAY NO TO PROJECTS THAT AREN'T THE RIGHT FIT.
- BALANCE IS KEY—BREAKS ACTUALLY MAKE YOU MORE PRODUCTIVE.
- SETTING BOUNDARIES (WORK HOURS, REALISTIC DEADLINES) IS ESSENTIAL

# 5 THINGS I WISH I'D KNOWN SOONER

## KEEP CREATING & SHARING YOUR WORK

SOME OF MY BIGGEST OPPORTUNITIES CAME FROM PERSONAL PROJECTS. YOU NEVER KNOW WHO MIGHT SEE YOUR WORK OR WHAT IT COULD LEAD TO!

- MAKE THINGS THAT EXCITE YOU
- PUT YOUR WORK OUT INTO THE WORLD—CLIENTS ARE ALWAYS WATCHING!

## DON'T WAIT UNTIL YOU FEEL 'READY'

YOU'LL NEVER FEEL 100% READY — AND THAT'S OKAY.

- START WHERE YOU ARE
- LEARN AS YOU GO
- CONFIDENCE COMES WITH EXPERIENCE

## BE PATIENT—CAREERS TAKE TIME TO BUILD

IT'S EASY TO FEEL LIKE EVERYONE ELSE IS AHEAD, BUT SUCCESS DOESN'T HAPPEN OVERNIGHT

- KEEP GOING, EVEN WHEN THINGS FEEL SLOW
- YOUR JOURNEY IS YOURS—THERE'S NO SET TIMELINE

## THE BUSINESS SIDE OF ILLUSTRATION MATTERS

FREELANCING MEANS ALSO BEING A BUSINESS OWNER!

- LEARN ABOUT CONTRACTS, PRICING, AND LICENSING
- PROTECT YOUR WORK AND UNDERSTAND YOUR RIGHTS

## BUILD RELATIONSHIPS & PUT YOURSELF OUT THERE

MANY OF MY BEST OPPORTUNITIES CAME FROM NETWORKING

- CONNECT WITH OTHER ILLUSTRATORS
- REACH OUT TO PEOPLE—OPPORTUNITIES OFTEN COME THROUGH RELATIONSHIPS.



THANKS SO MUCH FOR HAVING ME  
I CAN'T WAIT TO SEE WHERE YOUR CREATIVE JOURNEYS TAKE YOU!

### USEFUL RESOURCES FOR ILLUSTRATORS

- STEPHANIE FIZER COLEMAN'S RESOURCES FOR BOOK ILLUSTRATORS - PACKED WITH ADVICE ON BREAKING INTO THE INDUSTRY, BUILDING YOUR PORTFOLIO, AND WORKING WITH PUBLISHERS.
- THE ASSOCIATION OF ILLUSTRATORS (AOI) - A FANTASTIC RESOURCE FOR ILLUSTRATORS, OFFERING LEGAL ADVICE, PRICING GUIDANCE, AND INDUSTRY INSIGHTS. THEY EVEN HAVE A PRICING CALCULATOR TO HELP YOU SET FAIR RATES!

FEEL FREE TO REACH OUT!  
[OCEAN@OCEANHUGHES.COM](mailto:OCEAN@OCEANHUGHES.COM)

FIND ME HERE :-)  
WEBSITE: [OCEANHUGHES.COM](http://OCEANHUGHES.COM)  
INSTAGRAM: [@OCEANHUGHES](https://www.instagram.com/OCEANHUGHES)

