

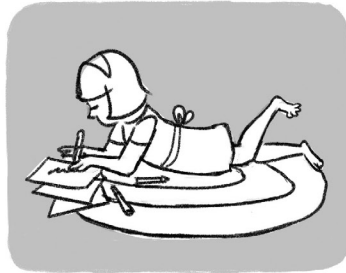


Lynne G. Hood grew up on Anglesey, a small island in Wales, within an extended family of storytellers. Since graduating from Central St Martins in 2002, she has worked in animation, juggling both stop-motion puppetry and digital mediums. She is also teaching film making at several U.K. universities. Recently, she has returned to her first love, drawing comics books.



## FINDING MY CREATIVE VOICE

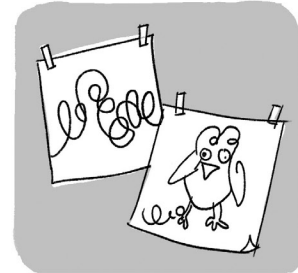
by Lynne G. Hood



I HAVE DRAWN ALL MY LIFE.



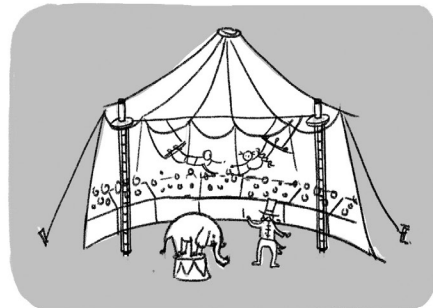
EVER SINCE I COULD HOLD A CRAYON IN MY CHUBBY HAND.



ONE DAY THE SCRIBBLES BECAME AN OWL.



I DECIDED AGED THREE I WOULD DRAW FOR A LIVING.



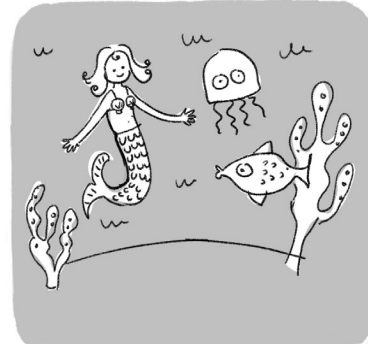
MY DRAWINGS CONVERTED WHATEVER WAS IN MY IMAGINATION INTO REALITY.



MY FAMILY ARE REALLY INTO BOOKS, I WAS TAUGHT TO READ BEFORE I WENT TO SCHOOL.



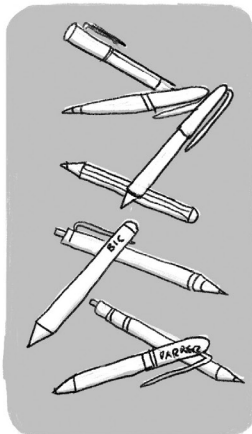
I LOVED READING TWINKLE AND PLAYHOUR COMICS, LATER BUNTY AND JUDY.



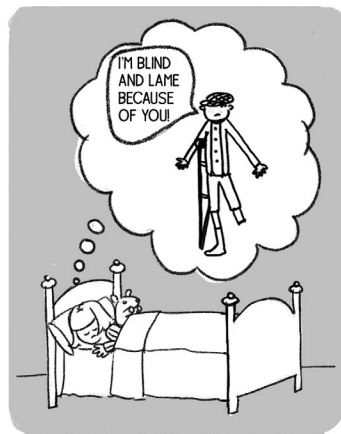
THE FIRST COMICS I EVER MADE AGED SIX WERE ABOUT A MERMAID CALLED JESSICA AND HER FRIENDS.



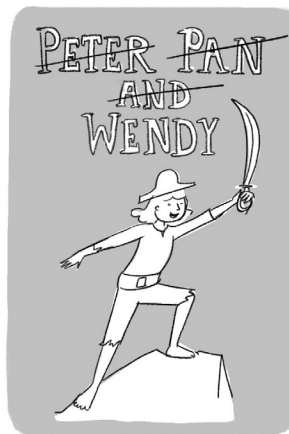
AGED 10 I CONSIDERED MYSELF AN AUTHOR/ ILLUSTRATOR. I WOULD SPEND HOURS MAKING LITTLE BOOKS, GLUING MY COMIC STRIPS ONTO PAPER AND SEWING THE PAGES TOGETHER.



MY PARENTS WOULD GET CROSS WITH ME FOR HOARDING ALL THE PENS IN THE HOUSE.



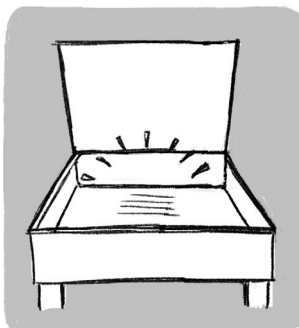
THE WORLDS I DREW WERE REAL TO ME; I HAD TO FINISH PEOPLE OFF PROPERLY.



IN PETER PAN I THOUGHT WENDY'S CHARACTER WASN'T ADVENTUROUS ENOUGH, SO I DREW A SEQUEL.



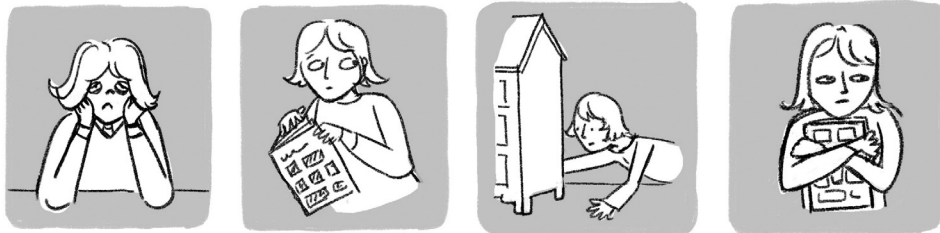
ONE DAY THE COMIC BOOK I HAD WORKED SO HARD ON WAS GONE!



MY MOTHER HAD TIDED MY ROOM WHILE I WAS IN SCHOOL AND THROWN IT AWAY.



SHE WAS MYSTIFIED BY MY ANGER, THE PILE OF PAPER LOOKED LIKE RUBBISH TO HER.



I WAS CRUSHED. MY DRAWINGS WERENT VALUED. I BEGAN TO DRAW SECRETLY, HIDE MY WORK AND NOT SHOW IT TO ANYBODY.



AS I WAS GROWING UP, WELL MEANING ADULTS TRIED TO DISSUADE ME FROM MY DREAMS. ME WORK IN BANK?



THIS IS WHY. AS A TEACHER, ITS VERY IMPORTANT FOR ME TO ENCOURAGE MY STUDENTS TO FOLLOW THEIR DREAMS.



AT SECONDARY SCHOOL, WHICH WAS HUGE IN COMPARISON TO MY PRIMARY SCHOOL,



I HAD ART LESSONS FOR THE FIRST TIME AND THREW MYSELF INTO THEM ENTHUSIASTICALLY.



FOR THE FIRST TIME I HAD ENCOURAGEMENT... KIND OF.



WHEN I WAS 17 I WON A BURSARY TO THE NATIONAL YOUTH THEATRE.



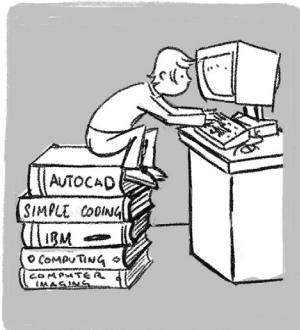
FOLLOWED BY ATTENDING UNIVERSITY IN LONDON, OPENING MY HORIZONS.



I EXPANDED MY COMIC BOOK AND DRAWING INFLUENCES.



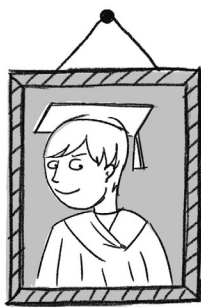
BEGAN TO MAKE STOPMOTION FILMS WITH AN OLD SUPER 8 CAMERA.



TAUGHT MYSELF COMPUTER ANIMATION, BY READING DULL MANUALS WITH NO PICTURES (THIS WAS THE LATE 90's).



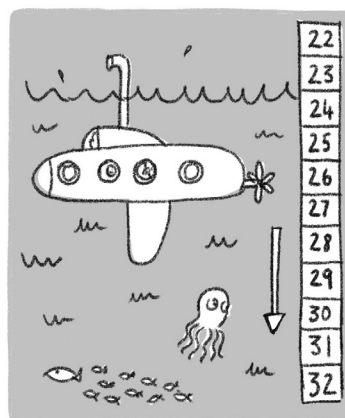
I ENJOYED THE LONDON DANCE SCENE. ONE NIGHT I MET MY FUTURE HUSBAND TO BE.



AFTER GRADUATION I WORKED AS A THEATRE DESIGNER AND CINEMA USHERETTE FOR A YEAR.<sup>gf</sup>



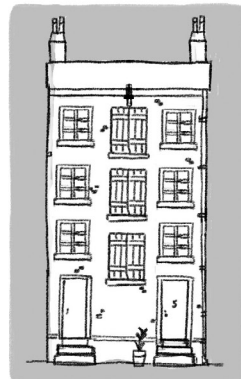
BEFORE MY DREAM CAME TRUE AND I FOUND WORK AT AN ANIMATION STUDIO.



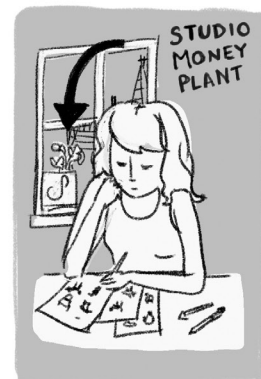
ANIMATION TAKES A LONG TIME TO CREATE. YEARS CAN PASS BY WORKING ON A SERIES.



I LOVED MY WORK AND WORKED HARD, THE HOURS WERE LONG BUT I WAS HAPPY, I HAD FOUND MY TRIBE.



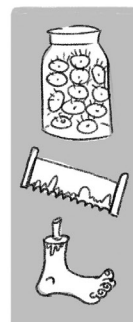
IN 2010, I MOVED INTO AN ATTIC SPACE IN SOHO WITH SIX OTHER CREATIVES.



I WAS SO BUSY WORKING COMMERCIALY. I NEVER HAD TIME TO MAKE MY OWN ART.



I TOOK PART IN TWO ART FOR TV A N.Y. EXHIBITION FOR ANIMATORS. MY CONTRIBUTION WAS A PAIR OF MODELS BASED ON A GOTHIC POEM ABOUT BODY SNATCHING.



SMUGGLING TINY MODEL BODY PARTS THROUGH CUSTOMS.



ALTHOUGH I WAS A COMMERCIAL DESIGNER, I WAS UNUSED TO THE IDEA OF SELLING MY OWN WORK AND DIDN'T KNOW ITS VALUE.



I DIDN'T WANT TO SELL THE FIRST PERSONAL ART I'D MADE IN YEARS.



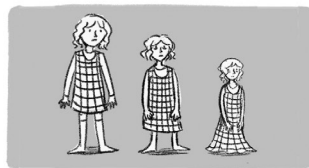
SEEING THE SUNRISE OVER NY THE MORNING AFTER THE GALLERY OPENING I WAS ELATED. MY CAREER WAS GOING WELL AND NOW MY WORK WAS IN AN N.Y. EXHIBITION.



I HAD NO IDEA CRACKS WERE APPEARING IN MY WORLD.



IN 2013 I LOST MY MOTHER, MY HUSBAND, MY HOME AND AT THE TIME I THOUGHT, MY FUTURE.



I PHYSICALLY SHRANK DURING THIS TIME.



MY WORRIED STUDIO BUDDIES WOULD LEAVE CAKE ON MY DESK.



ONCE THE DUST HAD SETTLED, I TRAVELLED TO SRI LANKA TO TEACH.



ON MY ARRIVAL AT THE SCHOOL RODNEY THE MANAGER SAID, 'I WAS HOME' (AND I WAS).



CHADRANDA THE COOK SAID I WAS TOO THIN AND FED ME HUGE PORTIONS OF FOOD.



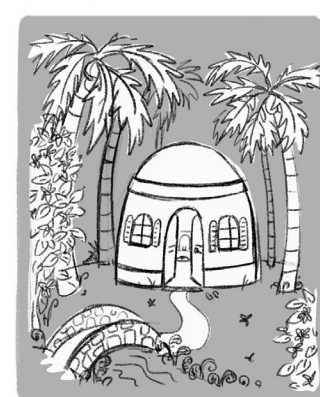
THE QUIET ROUTINE OF VILLAGE LIFE AND THE LOVE I WAS SHOWN BY THE SCHOOL CHILDREN HELPED ME HEAL.



I SPENT HOURS GAZING AT THE SEA, FEELING PEACEFUL.



EVENTUALLY I LEFT THE SCHOOL TO EXPLORE THE ISLAND.



MY WANDERINGS TOOK ME TO THE MAGICAL SECRET GARDEN.



WHERE HANGING UPSIDE DOWN IN THE PEACE DOME I MET MY FRIEND JOHN.



OUR ADVENTURES TOOK US FROM BEING CHASED BY WILD PIGS IN INDIA.



TO JAMMING IN BASEMENTS CLUBS IN COLOMBO, WHERE I LEARNT TO PLAY THE BASE GUITAR.



I'D BROUGHT MY LAPTOP AND WAS ABLE TO WORK REMOTELY, WHILST MONKEYS PLAYED ABOVE ME.



EVENTUALLY IT WAS TIME TO RETURN TO THE U.K. BUT I DIDN'T FIT INTO MY OLD LIFE ANYMORE.



BACK IN THE U.K. REALITY WAS WAITING FOR ME. I HAD A LOT TO DEAL WITH.



I THREW MYSELF INTO LEARNING NEW SKILLS AND WENT TO WORK IN IRELAND.



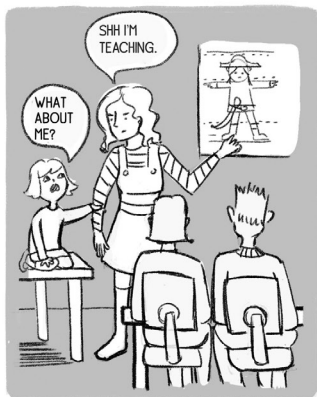
ON MY RETURN TO LONDON, WHILST WORKING AT A STUDIO I MET MY PARTNER MATTHEW.



I BEGAN TO REBUILD MY LIFE, BUT I DIDN'T WANT TO WORK ON OTHER PEOPLE'S IDEAS ANYMORE.



THE LONG IGNORED CREATIVE CHILD INSIDE OF ME HAD BEEN AWAKENED.



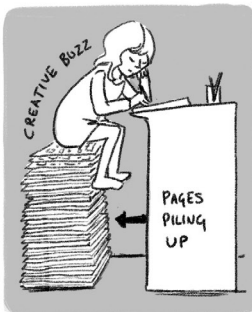
SHE WAS VERY PERSISTENT AND WOULDN'T LEAVE ME ALONE.



WHEN YOU'VE SPENT YEARS FULFILLING CLIENT BRIEFS, WHAT IS YOUR OWN STYLE?



PEOPLE ADVISE YOU TO BE COMMERCIAL BUT HOW DO YOU STAND OUT?



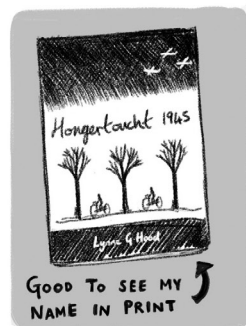
AN IDEA WAS BUZZING IN MY HEAD, I BEGAN TO DRAW IT.



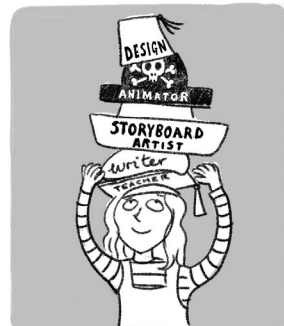
I SIGNED UP FOR WRITING CLASSES TO IMPROVE MY STORYTELLING.



I RETURNED TO DRAWING MY STORY, USING MY STRENGTHS.



THIS YEAR ONE OF MY COMIC BOOKS MADE THE LONG LIST FOR THE LDC PRIZE.



THESE DAYS I WEAR A LOT OF HATS BUT I'M GETTING BETTER AT BALANCING THEM.



BUT THE BEST STORY I AM WRITING IS THE LIFE I AM CREATING WITH MY HUSBAND MATTHEW, IN OUR BARN IN WALES.