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book about a

How to Build a Tiny House

By Author Susan Schaefer Bernardo and Illustrator Courtenay Fletcher

Hello! We are Susan Bernardo and Courtenay Fletcher and we're building a children's book together. It's called **The Big Adventures of Tiny House**. Creating and indie publishing a children's book is a lot like building a tiny house the DIY way. It all starts with an idea.

Unlike most authors and illustrators in the conventional publishing world (who usually operate independently of each other) we function a lot like a design+build team. We work closely together throughout the whole process, from story concept to printed book to sales and promotion.

This will be our third published book together, so we have a lot of experience tucked into our tool belts!

INSPIRATION

The inspiration for the book came when Susan first saw the tiny home on wheels built by Alexis Stephens and Christian Parsons of Tiny House Expedition. Their epic travels and all the cool ways they used salvaged materials in their home really sparked our imagination (we're sure they've helped inspire actual house designs, too, not just picture books!).



Creating Photoshop texture brushes from ink, coffee, beet juice and various natural materials.



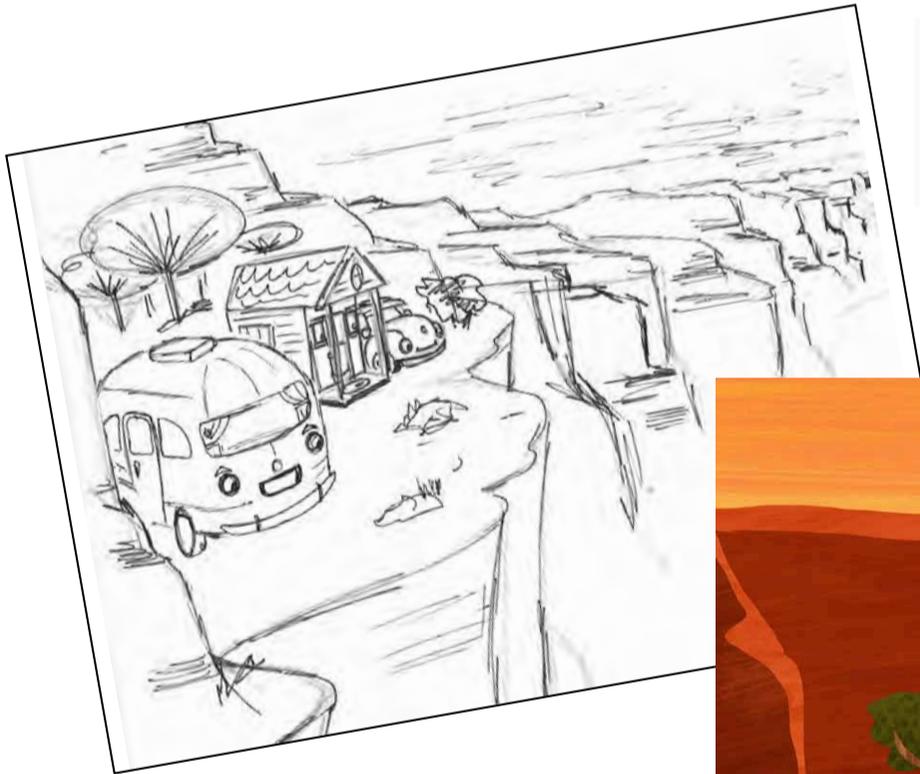
BUILDING

Courtenay creates the illustrations – refining the style as she goes and determining the color palette, texture, and look of the characters. She always starts with hand-drawn sketches, and then uses a range of high tech tools for the finishing work.

Next the **building inspector proofreader** checks to make sure everything is up to code! Courtenay also does color-corrections at the printer, to make sure the illustrations look exactly as she imagined them.



Preliminary sketch and finished illustration for page 20 “Grand Canyon.”



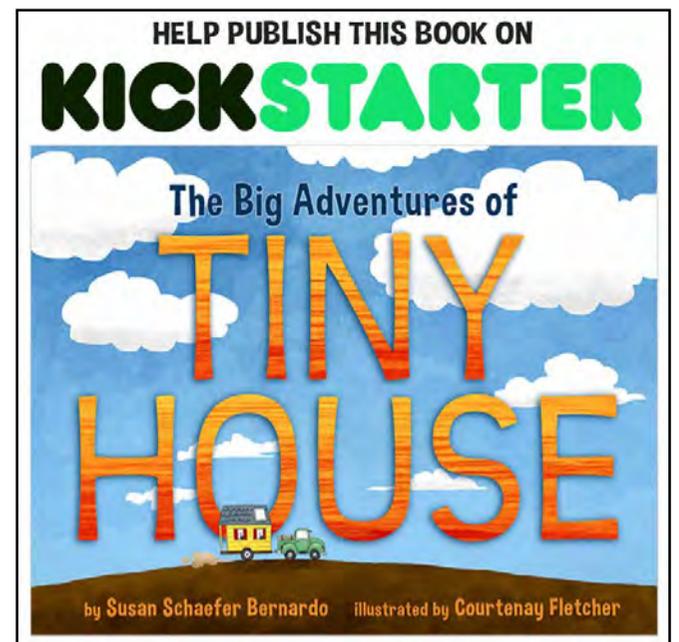
I’m constantly sketching and resketching, playing with perspective and size, making sure there’s a nice variation between all of the illustrations in the book. Since I also do the book design, I am thinking of fonts and text placement as I go along.



THE BARN-RAISING

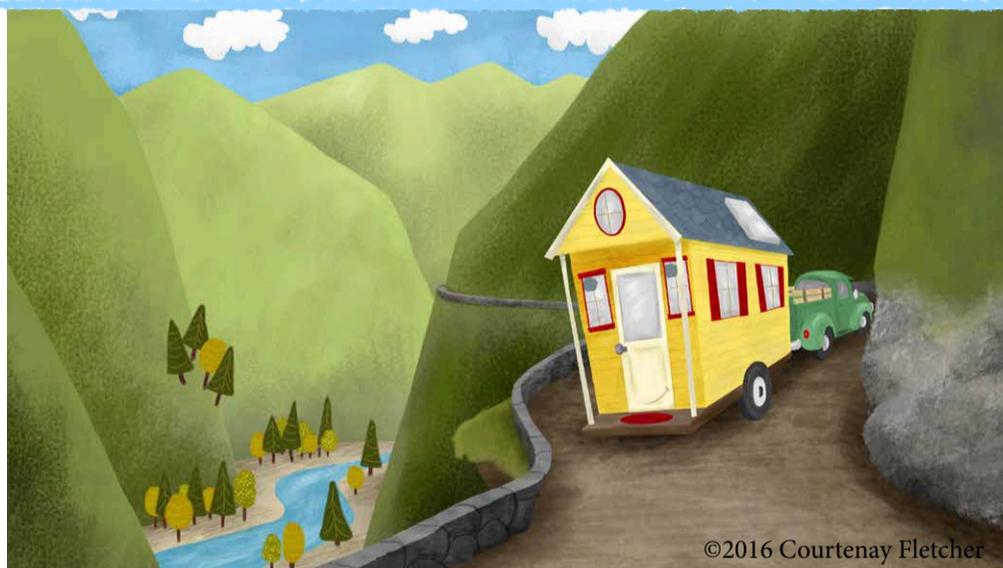
Although indie publishing is lots of work and can make distribution challenging, taking the DIY road means we can stay absolutely true to our creative vision and bring the book to completion in much less time than conventional publishing would take.

Crowdfunding a book is a lot like an old-fashioned barn-raising, where the whole community pitches in to get the job done. We are so blessed to have a “village” of family and friends old and new who believe in our work and are helping us turn the vision into a reality!



Our Kickstarter campaign runs through Oct. 19th, 2016 so if you'd like to be one of our Kickstarter Backers and help publish this book, go to:

<https://www.kickstarter.com/projects/1678479880/the-big-adventures-of-tiny-house-a-new-childrens-b>



A LITTLE BIT ABOUT OUR JOURNEY...



In 2012, we published our first book **Sun Kisses, Moon Hugs**– a lyrical picture book to reassure children that we are always connected to the ones we love. That first book gave us terrific “on-the-job” training: from specs of a children’s book, working with a printer, funding, distribution, marketing, business licenses, copyright, and more. We gained a lot of experience, met amazing people in the children’s book world, and realized how much we liked working with each other to make books that mattered.

Trusting our instincts led to an amazing opportunity: collaborating with LeVar Burton of Reading Rainbow on a book to help children cope with traumatic events and “stormy” emotions. What a journey we’ve been on since **The Rhino Who Swallowed a Storm** was published in 2014! It was featured on Good Morning America, won the Golden IPPY, was read aloud by the Bidens and by First Lady Michelle Obama to military kids, and was selected as one of 7 children’s books to be sent to the International Space Station for the Storytime from Space program! Yes, we have a book ORBITING THE PLANET – we even got to go out for the rocket launch at Cape Canaveral last December. Shoot for the moon...you never know what will happen!

For more info about Courtenay and Susan, visit www.TheBigAdventuresofTinyHouse.com