To whom it may concern,
I am a working illustrator. I have been illustrating since I graduated from Art Center College of Design in 1986. My main focus is children's books but I also do editorial and advertising illustration along with fine art.
I would like you to know that owning the copyright to all my work is very valuable to me. It is one way that I earn a living. My business and my whole income rest on the fact that I can charge to use my artwork in different ways. When I am negotiating a contract I break down the copyright usage into many different categories based on what they can afford. I never give away my rights to copy any of my work. The copyright is the product that I sell.
Once an illustration is published it does not lose value. Another company may see that illustration and want to use it. I can charge them, even years after the first printing, to use that illustration for a different purpose. Every illustration I do becomes my inventory. That's my product.
I worked on a series of 6 books and did about 200 illustrations for them. They wanted to do a full buyout of the copyright. They had paid me to do the illustrations and to buy out the copyright it was an additional fee, equal to the initial fee. Once the books went out of print, I stated in my contract that the copyrights would go back to me. The books eventually did go out of print and now I own the right to use them once again. With the use of the Internet I am able to make them available for purchase once again.
Please do not make it easier for anyone to steal my images and my income by passing this bill!
Thank you,
Lori Mitchell