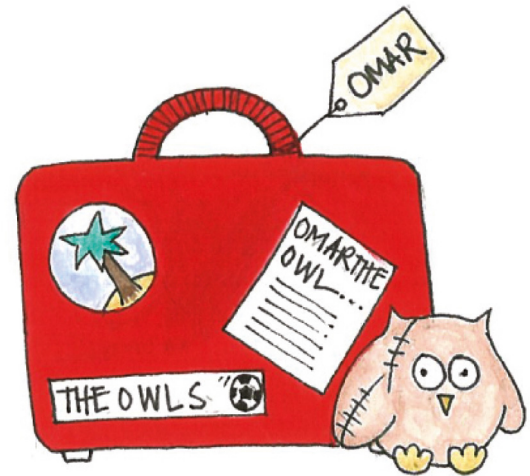


Omar the owl



This book is dedicated
to all our little owls ...



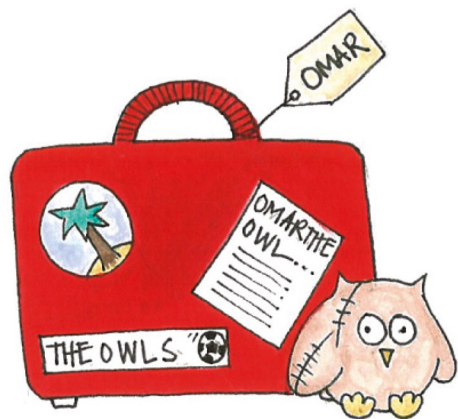
Omar was a little owl. Just like other little owls he liked to read books,
play hide and seek and catch worms. He lived with his little brother and sister,
Claude and Olive, and all his friends at the big nest in London wood.





One morning Omar woke up with a jingly jangly feeling in his tummy. (A feeling that wasn't completely down to all the worms he'd eaten the day before.)

Today was a special day. Omar, Olive and Claude were going to live with Mr and Mrs Toot. They needed Mummy and Daddy Toot to care for them because their other Mummy and Daddy couldn't look after them.





Omar thought Mummy and Daddy Toot were nice enough, but he wasn't sure how he felt about living somewhere else. He liked playing in his wood with his friends, thank you very much.

Mr and Mrs Foster, who were looking after them, and everyone else at the big nest told Omar that living with the Toots would take a bit of getting used to, and Susie Squirrel from the big nest would be popping in to make sure they were safe and happy. This made Omar feel a little better.





When they arrived, Mummy and Daddy Toot were waiting in the doorway of their cosy home. They showed them where they'd be sleeping. Omar was pleased to see that all his favourite toys were waiting for him on his bed.

Soon it was time for Susie Squirrel to go back to the big nest. Omar felt a little funny in his tummy again.

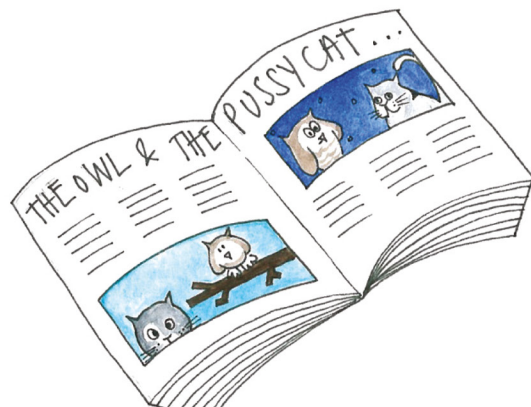




“Right, who’s up for catching some worms?” called Daddy Toot. “We are!” Omar, Olive and Claude said. Omar found the biggest worm, and it was the tastiest worm he’d ever eaten.

Over the next few weeks, they caught worms, played hide and seek and flew around the trees. Claude even learned to turn his head all the way round! But the best bit was cuddling up and reading stories with Mummy and Daddy Toot...

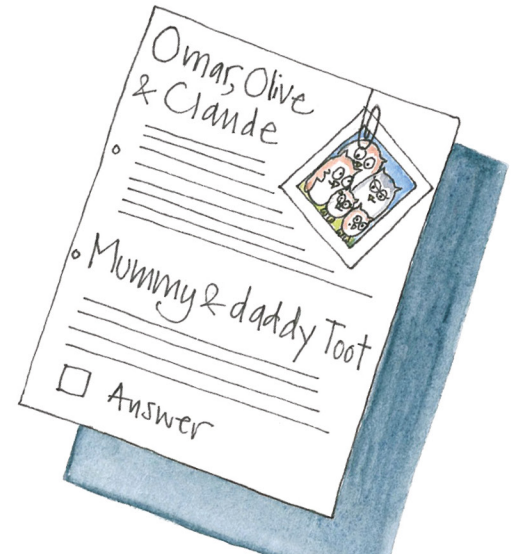
Omar, Olive and Claude were very happy and liked Mummy and Daddy Toot a lot.





Susie Squirrel went to see the wise old owls and animals at the big nest, in the big tree, to tell them all about how Omar, Olive and Claude were getting on and to decide if they would stay with the Toots.

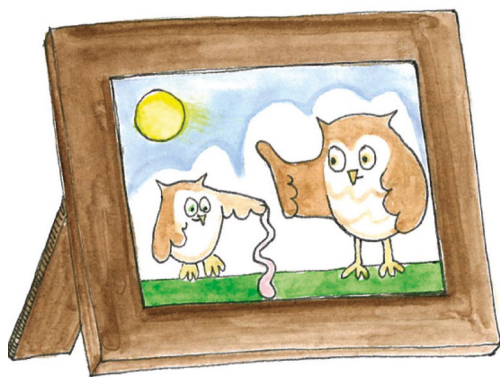
They all thought about it very carefully and said that Claude, Omar and Olive should stay with Mummy and Daddy Toot.





Omar had a happy jingly jangly feeling in his tummy.
This time it had nothing whatsoever to do with worms.

It was to do with being happy.





Notes for carers

After you've read the story, it's important to have a chat with the child to make sure they have answers to all their questions. Below you'll find some suggested questions and answers to get you started. Use the story to explain things and illustrate the points you're making.

Some questions you could ask:

Do you know what going to live with another family is called?

It's called adoption. Like Omar, if you're adopted you'll go to live with a family where you are safe, loved and cared for. Sometimes, if you can't live with your Mummy and Daddy it's best for you to be adopted.

How are you feeling about being adopted?

Just like Omar, you may get a jingly jangly feeling in your tummy, or it may be another feeling. Let's think about how it makes you feel.

What is important about you being adopted is that you are happy in a secure and loving home. Your new family will be carefully chosen for you and social workers like Susie Squirrel (or use the name of the child's actual social worker) will be there to make sure you are happy.

Who will tell me what's going to happen?

Susie Squirrel, the social worker for Omar, Olive and Claude, made sure they knew what was going on. Yours will do the same. The most important thing to them, and everyone, is that you are happy.

Do you have any questions?

Try and prompt children to ask questions. They may be unsure if they can do this.

Some questions you may be asked:

What does it feel like to be adopted?

Just like Omar you may get a jingly jangly feeling in your tummy, but it may feel different for you. How do you think you will feel?

What will my new Mummy and Daddy be like?

That's a difficult one because everyone's different. There could be two parents or just one, they could live in a flat or a house or even on a boat! The main thing you need to know is that they all know how to look after children and yours will have been specially chosen for you – just like the Toots were specially chosen for Omar, Claude and Olive.

Can I take all my toys and books to my new family?

Yes, we'll bring all your favourite things to your new home, just like Omar; all his toys were on his bed at the Toots home.

What about my Mummy and Daddy, will they know I'm ok?

Yes, Susie Squirrel will tell Omar's Mummy and Daddy that he is OK. Your social worker will do the same. Maybe you could draw them a nice picture of your new home. If you want to you will be able to write letters to your Mummy and Daddy. Your new family will help you do this.

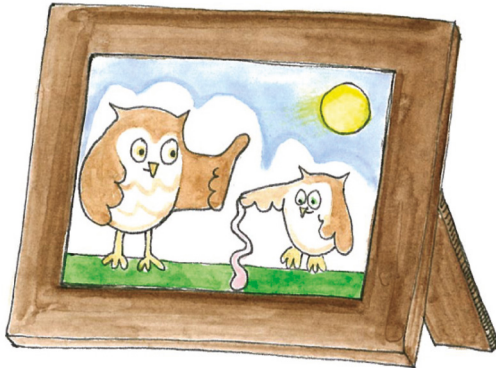
What if I'm not happy?

If you would like to talk to someone, there are grown-ups who you haven't met yet whose job it is to listen to children and consider their views and feelings. You can see their details on the next page.

Things you need to know

We want to make sure you have lots of information about your rights, and the contact details of all the people who can listen to you and help you as much as possible.

Your adoption story may be really similar or very different to Omar's story. You may be unhappy about what is happening, and want to tell someone about it, you might have a suggestion on how we can do things better or you may just want to let us know how well things are going. Whatever your reason, here is a list of independent people and organisations who welcome your call or email. You can talk to your foster carer, your social worker or your local Adopt London Regional Adoption Agency, they will all help you decide who is the best person to contact, or you can contact these organisations directly.



Children's Commissioner for England

Sanctuary Buildings
20 Great Smith Street
London

SW1P 3BT

childrenscommissioner.gov.uk

0800 528 0731

Your Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO)

Find out about IROs with **Rights4Children**.

Ask your social worker and they will provide your IRO's contact details.

Ofsted

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester

M1 2WD

gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted

0300 123 1231

Childline

childline.org.uk

Call free on 0800 1111

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This booklet was produced with permission from Islington Council and adapted for use by Adopt London
www.adoptlondon.org.uk

Omar the owl was written and designed by Karian and Box
www.karianandbox.com
Illustrated by Minda Galvin

