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# Down the Sleepy River

A Mindful Bedtime Book

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For Rosie

A STUDIO PRESS BOOK

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FSC DUMMY

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Emma Drage

illustrated by  
Carmen Saldaña





## Notes for Parents & Caregivers

Think of this book as a gift to your child – not only for today but for the future, too. It will help you to plant seeds that will benefit your child for their entire life.

Mindfulness is a pretty straightforward word. It describes those times when the mind is fully attending to what is happening, to what we are doing and to the space we are currently moving through. Scientific studies have long linked several health benefits to the practice of mindfulness, such as increased attention and focus, lowered anxiety levels and increased immune function. But what about mindfulness at home? Can we make it accessible to our children, too?

The answer is also straightforward: yes.

Children have the ability to tap into the present moment quite naturally, but we

teach them to bypass their natural instincts, hurrying them along from one thing to the next as we go about our busy lives. Our focus is generally on what's not yet been or on what's already happened – we rarely allow ourselves to be in the present scene of our lives. Yet true joy can only be found in the here and now.

Practising mindfulness can help children learn to focus, manage stress, regulate emotions and develop a positive outlook. Positive effects on overall mental health and wellbeing have been reported by many families who develop a mindfulness practice.

There are several ways to start introducing mindfulness into your children's lives. This wonderful book by Emma Drage is a brilliant way of giving it a go.

*Breathe in, breathe out. Feel the air on your face.  
Listen as the leaves blow gently in the breeze...*

As you and your child focus on the beautiful illustrations in the book, reading and absorbing the lovely story and spending precious time together, you can be as creative as you like.

You can take a few deep breaths in and out together.

Try breathing into each other's hair or neck, to feel the sensations of your breath.

Go on a mindful walk, listen to the sounds of the gurgling river, the rustling leaves underneath your feet or watch the birds high up in the sky.

Simply noticing and appreciating your surroundings can make mindfulness an easy and effective tool to be used by the whole family.

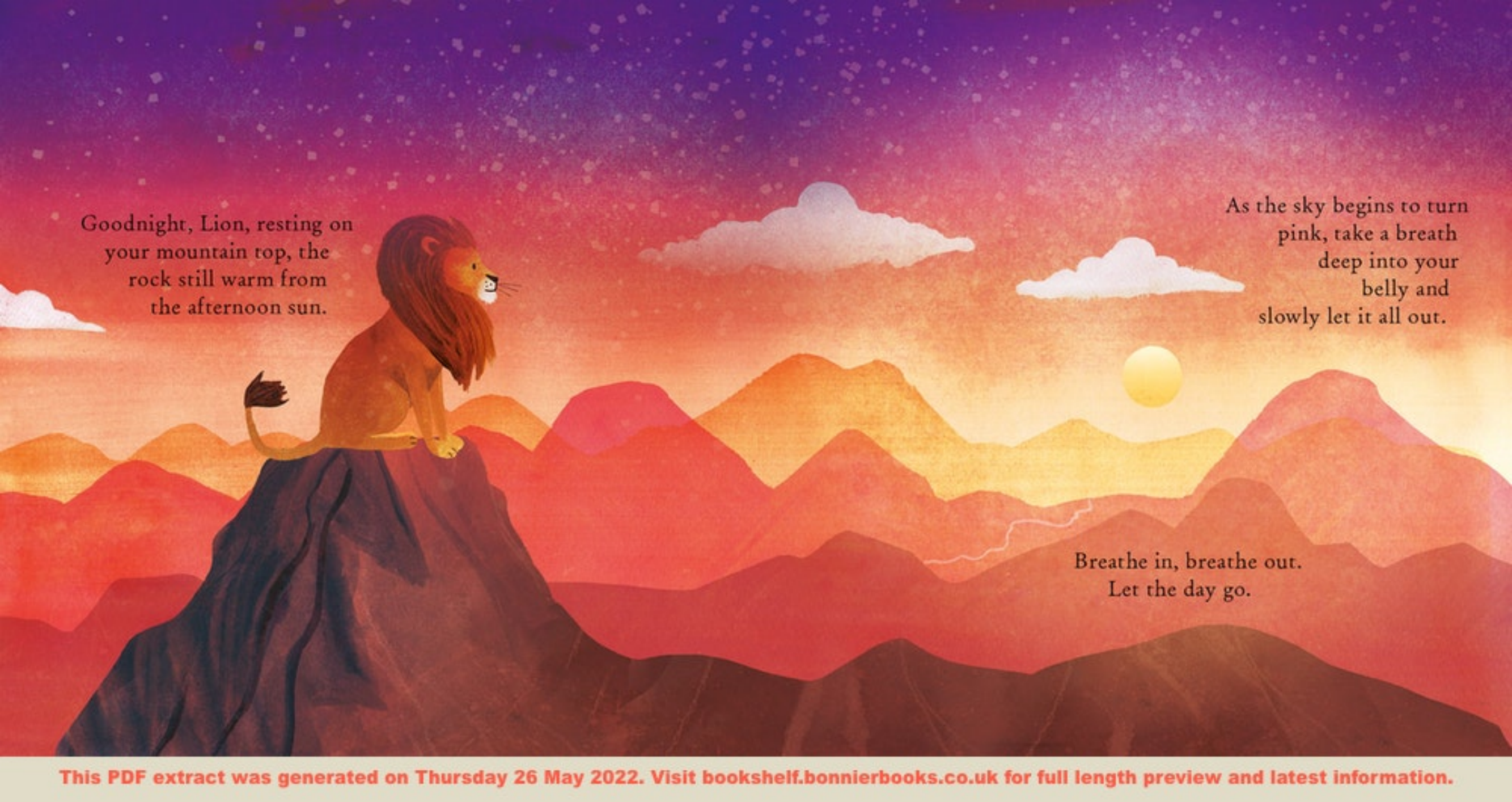
My three daughters are nearly teens now, and I can see the little plants flourishing from the mindful seeds we sowed together when they were smaller. One of my daughters loves lighting candles in her room and listening to calming music. Another turns on guided meditation stories for bedtime, all by herself. And my eldest and I often go out for walks, noticing the nature, sounds and scenery around us.

I'm excited for you and the mindful journeys you are about to experience together with your child. Enjoy this moment.

**Dani Binnington**

*Wellbeing expert, yoga teacher and founder of the 'Superfood Supperclub'*



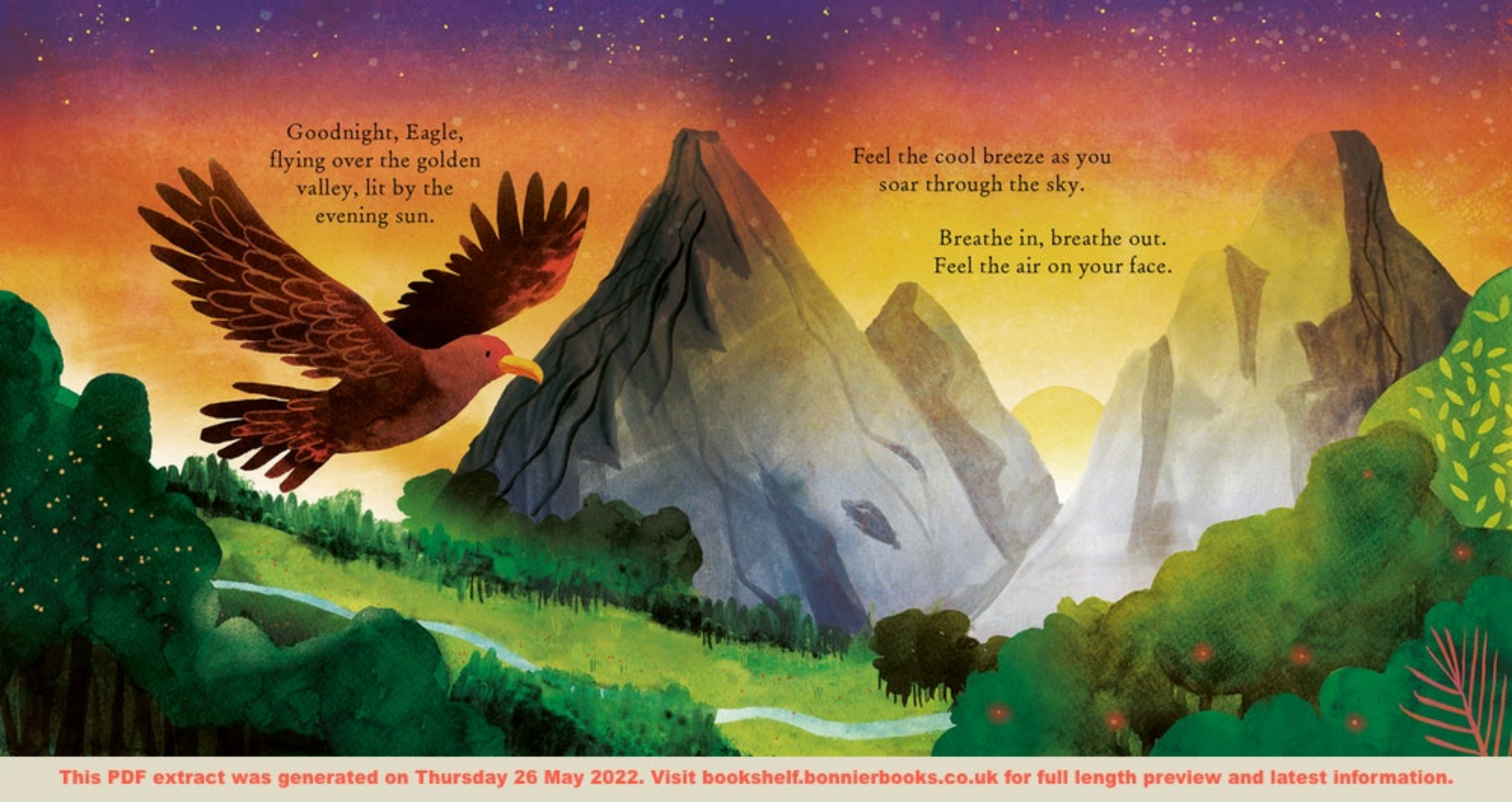
A lion with a large brown mane is sitting on a dark, jagged rock peak. The lion is facing right, looking out over a landscape of rolling hills and mountains. The sky is a vibrant mix of purple, pink, and orange, with a large yellow sun setting on the horizon. There are a few white clouds scattered across the sky. The overall scene is peaceful and contemplative.

Goodnight, Lion, resting on  
your mountain top, the  
rock still warm from  
the afternoon sun.

As the sky begins to turn  
pink, take a breath  
deep into your  
belly and  
slowly let it all out.

Breathe in, breathe out.  
Let the day go.






Goodnight, Eagle,  
flying over the golden  
valley, lit by the  
evening sun.

Feel the cool breeze as you  
soar through the sky.

Breathe in, breathe out.  
Feel the air on your face.





Goodnight, Parrot, settling in your nest as  
the last of the sun shines through the trees.

Listen as the leaves blow  
gently in the breeze and the  
stream trickles below.

Breathe in, breathe out,  
as sounds come and go.





Goodnight, Monkey, resting safely  
in the tree as the daylight fades.

Imagine your breath can  
reach to the tips of your  
fingers and your toes.

Breathe in, breathe out.  
Let the relaxing  
feeling flow.