Goodnight, sweet dreams, I love you

short stories to be wiser, brighter, and stronger

Roberto Damante





Goodnight, sweet dreams, I love you

A collection of short stories
to be wiser, brighter, and stronger

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For the grown-up reading along

Every feeling in this book is a little furry friend with a job to do. None of them are bad. Some are just louder than others.

At the end of each poem there's a small question about the body. You don't have to ask it. If you do, let your child answer however they like. A fizzy tummy, a tight chest, warm hands. Noticing where a feeling lives is how kids start to understand it, and it helps grown-ups too.

Read one a night, or read them all.



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never

just

always

like

should

maybe



Onehundredthousandmillionwords

Onehundredthousandmillionwords

We don't need "just", for it makes small our might,
As if our worth depends on shrinking our light.

Not "never", so final, it closes the door,
When life brings us chances we hadn't before.

And "always" is heavy, an infinite chain,
That weighs on the heart and magnifies pain.

Let go of the "shoulds", they're riddled with guilt,
Dimming the towers of dreams we've built.

"Maybe" is slippery, unsure, and vague,
When clarity's needed to cut through the haze.

And "like", so uncertain, a filler we speak,
Yet we hold the power to say what we seek.

Our words shape our world, they matter, they guide.
In speaking with purpose, we speak from inside.





Little What Not

Little What Not

Little What Not wasn't so little,
he was oh so very tall and sprawl,
and each door was a close call.

It was hard not to see him, and he became well known,
With feet that would clatter on cobblestone.
He'd duck through doorways, bend with a groan,
His head brushing ceilings wherever he'd roam.

Yet despite his size, he was gentle and kind,
With a heart twice as big as his towering mind.
He helped all he met, from the small to the grand,
Lifting them up with a wave of his hand.

But Little What Not still wished to be small,
To slip through the cracks, to blend with the wall.
Until one day, he learned something true...
Being big wasn't bad, it just meant he grew.

Now he stands tall, with pride in his stride,
No longer shrinking, he walks with wide eyes.
For Little What Not was never so small,
He's learned to embrace being big after all.

Furry Feelings

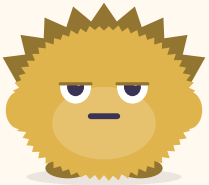
Meet the friends who live inside you



Anxious



Worry



Pet Peeve



Anger



Grief



Shame



Disgust



Guilt



Betrayal



Jealousy



Love



Joy



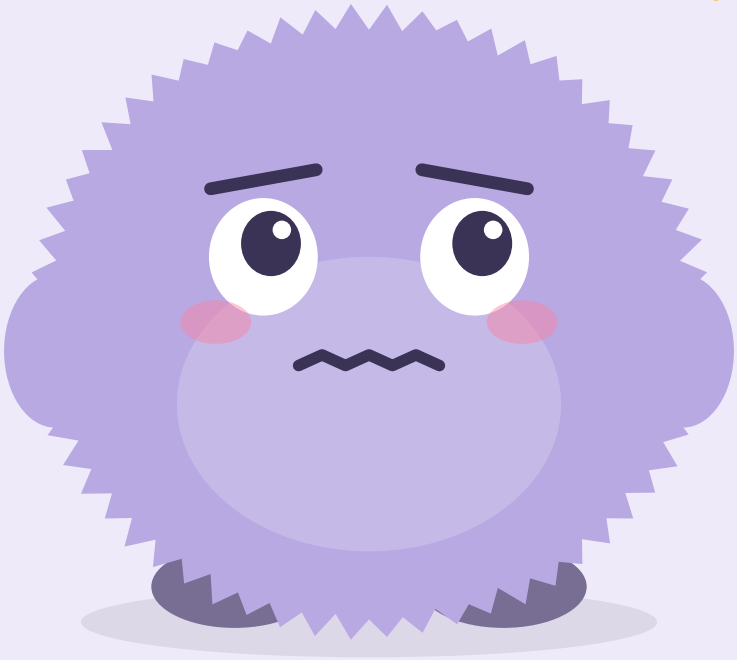
Hope



Gratitude



Courage



Anxious

Anxious

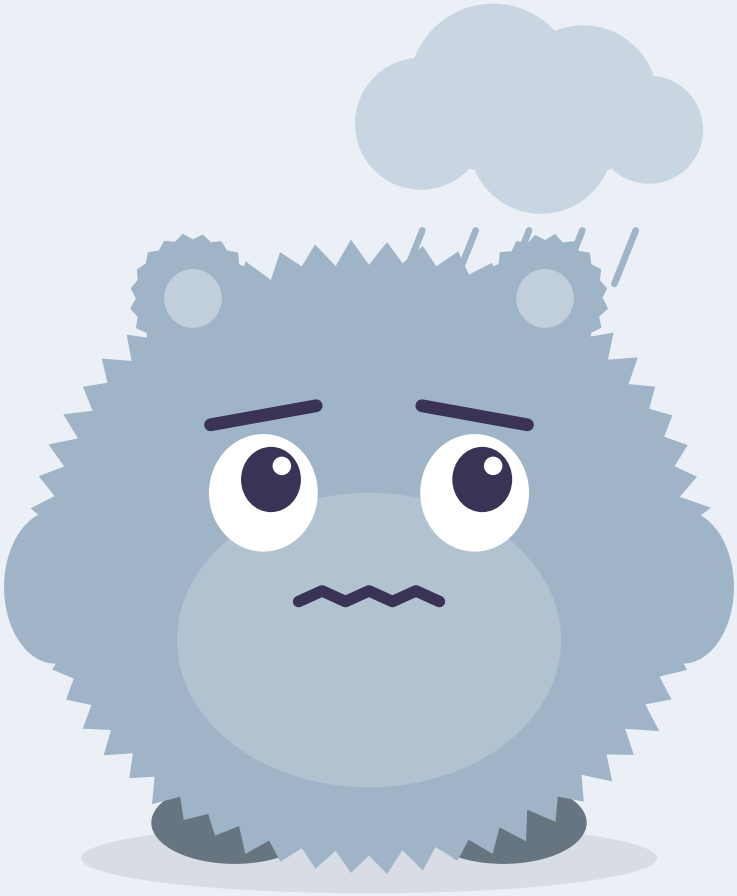
Steady the moon for the sun to rise,
Hold the night gently as light fills the sky.
Each has its moment, its own time to shine,
One fades in peace, while the other climbs high.

The moon doesn't rush, and the sun won't delay,
They pass the baton in a quiet but epic display.
A rhythm, a trust, a day that will unfold,
As the warmth of the sun lets the darkness grow cold.

So steady the moon, let it rest in its glow,
For the sun's steady climb will soon start to show.
In the balance they keep, we find our own way,
To rise with the morning and rest with the day.

before you sleep

Where does Anxious live in your body tonight? Put a hand there and breathe slowly, like the moon.



Worry

Worry

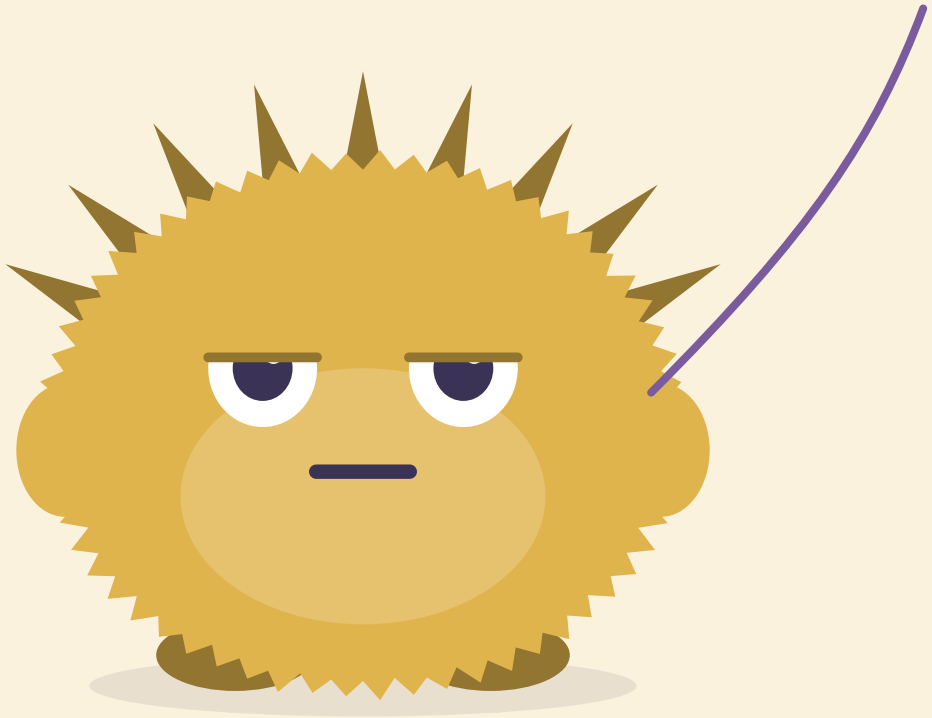
Focus on what and why,
The rest is up to the sky.
Let go of the when and how,
Release the weight you carry now.

The timing's not your toll to bear,
Detach from trying to steer the air.
Flow with the current, trust the stream,
Let go of the need to shape the dream.

The future unfolds in its own sweet way,
No need to rush or force delay.
In what you seek and why you care,
The answers rise, light as air.

before you sleep

Is Worry heavy or light right now? Breathe out long and let your shoulders drop.



Pet Peeve

Pet Peeve

This is my pet, Peeve.

Never get a peeve for a pet!
They make the worst pets,
And you'll fret to find a pet peeve vet.

Pet peeves get on your nerves and make you perturbed.
You'll be worried, upset, unsettled and disturbed.

Worst of all, pet peeves get comfortable and never leave
Because there's always another peeve up your sleeve.

This is my pet, Peeve.

before you sleep

What is one little thing that bugged you today? Give it a silly name and let it go.



Anger

My little anger

Anger

Sometimes I feel a storm
Raging inside of me.
It makes me feel warm
And it makes me feel free.

Anger is always by my side.
Showing up when I'm worried,
And stomps when fears can't hide.

It's red and full of fire,
With a voice that's bold and loud,
He roars when I feel small,
And stands tall when I'm not proud.

Though some folks say he's trouble,
And quick to cause a fight,
He's just there to protect me
When things don't feel quite right.

He thumps inside my chest,
He flares up in my head,
But really, he just wants to show
The things I've left unsaid.



Anger (continued)

Though he's not the quietest,
Or the calmest friend I know,
Anger loves me fiercely,
And shows me where to go.

Sometimes he feels too strong,
And I need to let him rest,
But when I'm feeling cornered,
He fights for me the best.

So while he's wild and fiery,
And not the easiest to host,
Anger's still my best friend,
Who loves me the very most.

The storm that rumbles through
Is a perfect part of me.
I love you little anger,
I'll take care of you, and you take care of me.

before you sleep

Where does Anger get hot? Squeeze your fists tight, then let them go soft.



Grief

Oh good, Grief!

Grief

He visits me late at night,
and comes with heavy steps,
and dims the brightest light.

He sits beside me quietly,
with tears that never seem to end.
He holds my heart so gently,
a sad.... but caring friend?

Though his weight feels like stone,
he's here to help me see,
that even in the darkest times,
there's room for memory.

Grief helps me remember
the love is still around,
and even though he's sorrowful,
with him, my strength is found.

Good Grief is deceivingly free,
Gruff, tough, and rough as can be.
Grief is a bird who gets no applause,
For the heavy lifting endured without any pause.



Grief (continued)

It soars through the storm, though broken and frayed,
A quiet companion in the shadows stayed.
Wings weighted with sorrow, yet still it will rise,
Carving out space in the endless gray skies.

It carries the loss, the ache, and the sting,
Yet somehow still manages to teach us to sing.
For in its raw beauty, we start to perceive,
Through good grief, we learn how to grieve.

before you sleep

Who or what do you miss? Hold your own hand and say their name.



Shame

Shame

Shame whispers in my ear,
and tells me all the reasons
Why I should disappear.

Shame shrinks me down to nothing,
And makes me feel so small...
But deep inside, I know it's there to help me stand tall.

Shame pushes me to learn
That I CAN grow from every mistake,
And let my courage burn
With strength that nothing can break.

It helps me face my fears,
And rise above the pain,
To wipe away the tears,
And stand up tall again.

Though Shame may make me FEEL doubt,
it teaches me what's true
And that every fall can lead to flight,
And bring me something new.



Shame (continued)

It teaches me forgiveness,
For all the things I've done,
And when I've faced him bravely,
I know the battle's won.

before you sleep

Can you give yourself a hug and say, I'm still learning?



Disgust

Disgust

Disgust scrunches up his nose,
He turns away from what's not right,
And everything that shows.

He wrinkles up at messes,
And things that feel unfair,
But really, he's just helping me
To show how much I care.

He warns me when something is wrong,
When things don't feel quite true,
He helps me set my boundaries,
And tell me what to do.

Though some may find him picky,
He's there to show me why
I deserve to live a life
Where I don't have to lie.

before you sleep

Scrunch up your nose as far as it goes, then let your whole face relax.



Guilt

Guilt

This is my friend, Guilt,
He lingers when I'm wrong,
He taps me on the shoulder,
And sometimes he stays too long.

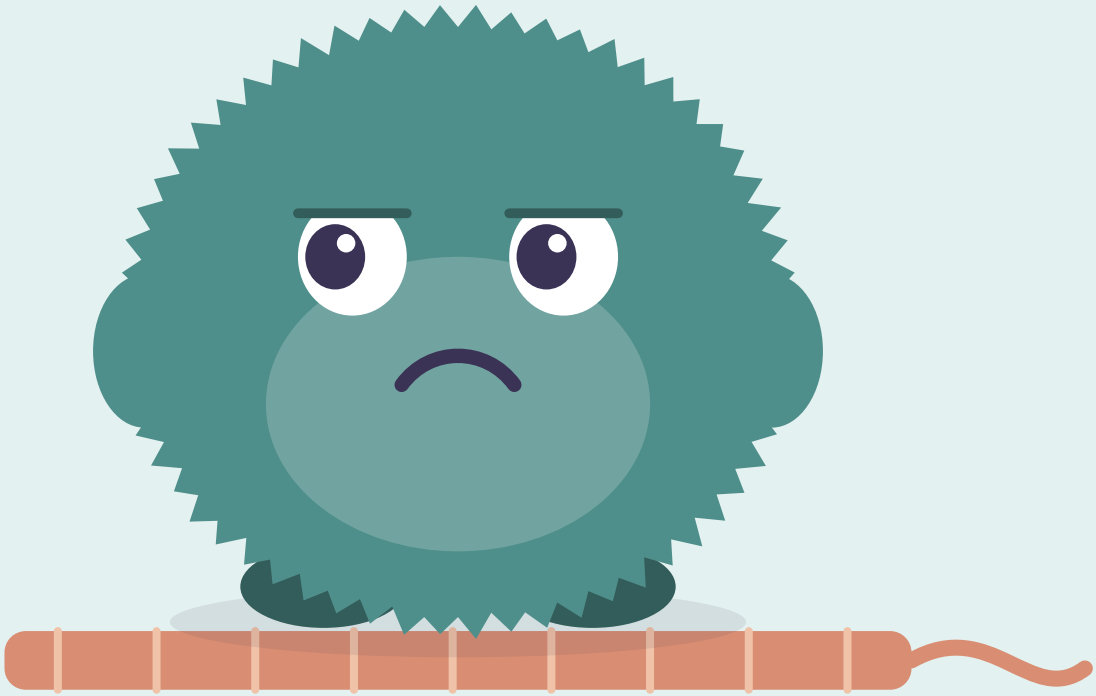
He shows me what I've done,
And helps me see the truth,
That sometimes I must make amends
To find my inner youth.

Though Guilt can feel unpleasant,
He's guiding me to see,
That making things right with others
Is how I set myself free.

He shows up to help me learn and grow
To reflect on what I've done,
Though Guilt can be cumbersome,
Sometimes it's better than having none.

before you sleep

Is there something you'd like to make right tomorrow?



Betrayal

Betrayal

Betrayal is sneaky
And shows up from behind,
It pulls the rug beneath my feet,
And leaves me in a bind.

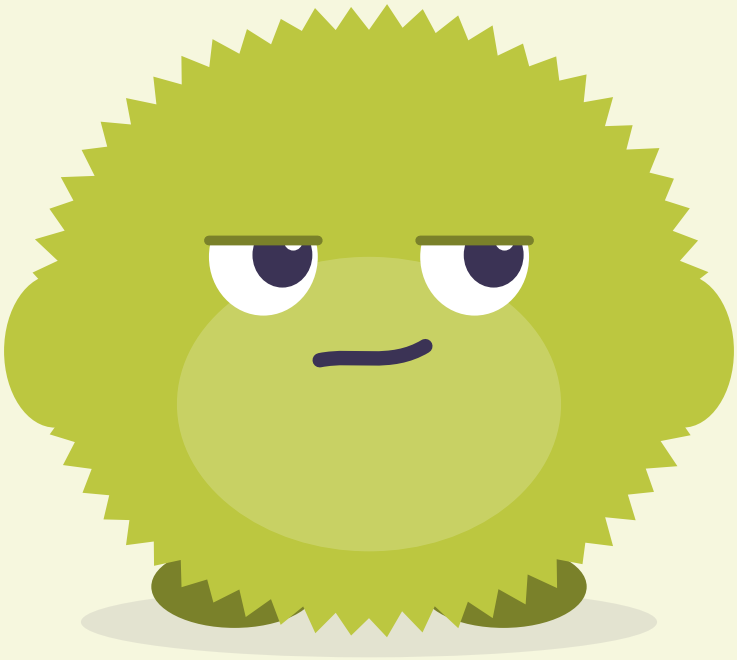
Oh! It stings my heart with sorrow,
and breaks the trust I knew,
But even in the painful grip,
It shows me what is true.

It helps me see who's loyal,
And who I can still believe,
And though he hurts so deeply,
He teaches when to leave.

Betrayal's hard to handle,
But in the bitter end,
I learn the strength within myself
And find a truer friend.

before you sleep

Who makes you feel safe? Picture them sitting beside you.



Jealousy

Jealousy

Jealousy tugs at what I see,
And points to all the things I want
And says, "hmm.. they're not for me."

Jealousy makes me feel so restless,
Like I don't have enough,
But it's just showing me
That I am really tough.

Jealousy shows me what I care for,
And pushes me to try,
To work harder for the things that I want
And aim to reach the sky.

Though Jealousy can sting a bit,
And make me feel quite low,
It's really just a chance for me
to begin to show how I can grow.

before you sleep

What do you wish you had? What does that tell you about what you love?



Love

Love

Love,
She's warm and full of light,
She wraps me in her cozy arms,
And makes the world feel bright.

She glows in every corner,
In every word and touch,
She's soft and kind, a gentle force,
That gives so very much.

Love dances in the sunshine,
And whispers in the rain,
She heals me when I'm hurting,
And eases all my pain.

No matter where I go in life,
She's always by my side,
For Love is my forever friend,
With arms always open wide.

before you sleep

Where do you feel Love? Is it warm? Is it in your chest, your tummy, your hands?



Joy

Joy

This is my friend, Joy,
She sparkles in the air,
She dances with the butterflies,
And lifts me without care.

She bubbles up like laughter,
And skips in every song,
She fills my heart with happiness,
And makes me feel so strong.

Joy lights up every moment,
With colors bright and new,
She's there when things are going right,
And when my dreams come true.

Her giggles are contagious,
Her smiles never end,
For Joy is more than happiness,
She's my forever friend.

before you sleep

What made you giggle today? Let your face remember it.



Hope

Hope

Hope is always looking up high,
She sees the stars on cloudy nights,
And paints them in the sky.

She whispers in the silence,
And holds me when I'm weak,
She tells me brighter days will come
And all the joy I seek.

Hope lifts me when I'm weary,
She shines when things are gray,
She keeps me moving forward
When I've lost my way.

With Hope beside me, every storm
Feels softer in its weight,
For she reminds me, in her light,
That it's really never too late.

before you sleep

Look up. What would you like tomorrow to bring?



Gratitude

Gratitude

Thanks for making me see
the glimmers that light my life,
The little things that mean the most to me.
And sometimes I might miss...
The bigger things that are meant for me
When the universe sends me a kiss.

Gratitude sparkles in the sunrise,
And in a friend's kind word,
It shows me beauty everywhere,
In the things that go unheard.

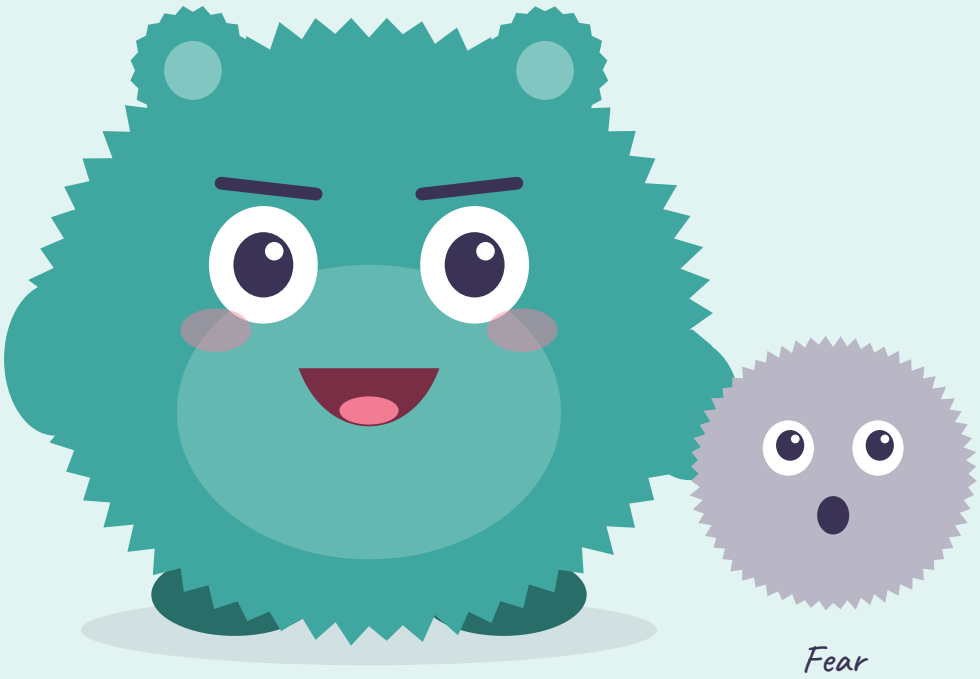
Gratitude makes life richer,
She fills my heart with cheer,
She reminds me of the blessings
That are always near.

With her, I see the world anew,
In every shade and hue,
For Gratitude's a faithful friend,
And always sees me through.

So instead of complaints and sighs,
Say thank YOU, and rise.

before you sleep

Name three little glimmers from today.



Courage

Courage

Courage walks beside fear,
holding hands through trembling times,
Sometimes just a whisper in my ear.

Courage tells me I am stronger
Than anything I face,
It helps me stand tall on my feet
And find my inner grace.

Courage feels scary,
But it's the bravest friend,
It pushes me through challenges
And sticks with me till the very end.

With Courage by my side, I know
I'll never walk alone,
For Courage shows me who I am,
And how much I have grown.

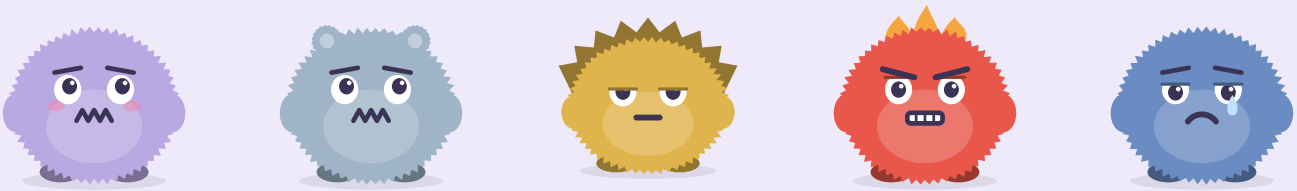
before you sleep

Plant your feet. Feel how strong your legs are holding you up.



Goodnight,
sweet dreams, I love you.

Anger who loves you fiercely. Grief who helps you remember. Worry, Shame, Joy and Hope. Every feeling in this book is a furry friend with a job to do, and a reason to say goodnight, sweet dreams, I love you.



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