

The MONSTER Within!

1

When I was little my dad sat me on his knee and asked me a question:

'Do you know what the worst thing you can lose is?'

'My pocket money?'

'No.'

'Spot the dog?'

2

'No. The worst thing you can lose is your temper. A bad temper is like a monster who scares people away and nobody loves. It has sharp claws and sharp teeth and snarls at anyone who comes near. It has no friends and lives in a cold, dark place with nobody to talk to and nobody to laugh with. It makes sweet things taste like bitter lemons and turns beautiful drawings into an ugly scribble.

3

'We all have a monster inside us but you have to keep it locked away. If you don't, it will make you very unhappy. Do you know how to keep it locked away?'

'Take a deep breath and count to ten:

'1... 2 ... 3 ...4 ... 5 ... hold it ... 6 ... 7 ... 8 ... 9 ...10.

4

'Now breathe out, and if you are still angry, count again. That way your monster will never be free to scare away your happiness.'

I uncrossed my arms to give him a big hug and put my head on his shoulder.

It was a long time before my monster got out of its cage again.

5



10