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# Down the Sleepy River

A Mindful Bedtime Book

Down the  
Sleepy River



For Rosie

A STUDIO PRESS BOOK

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FSC DUMMY

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# Down the Sleepy River

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.

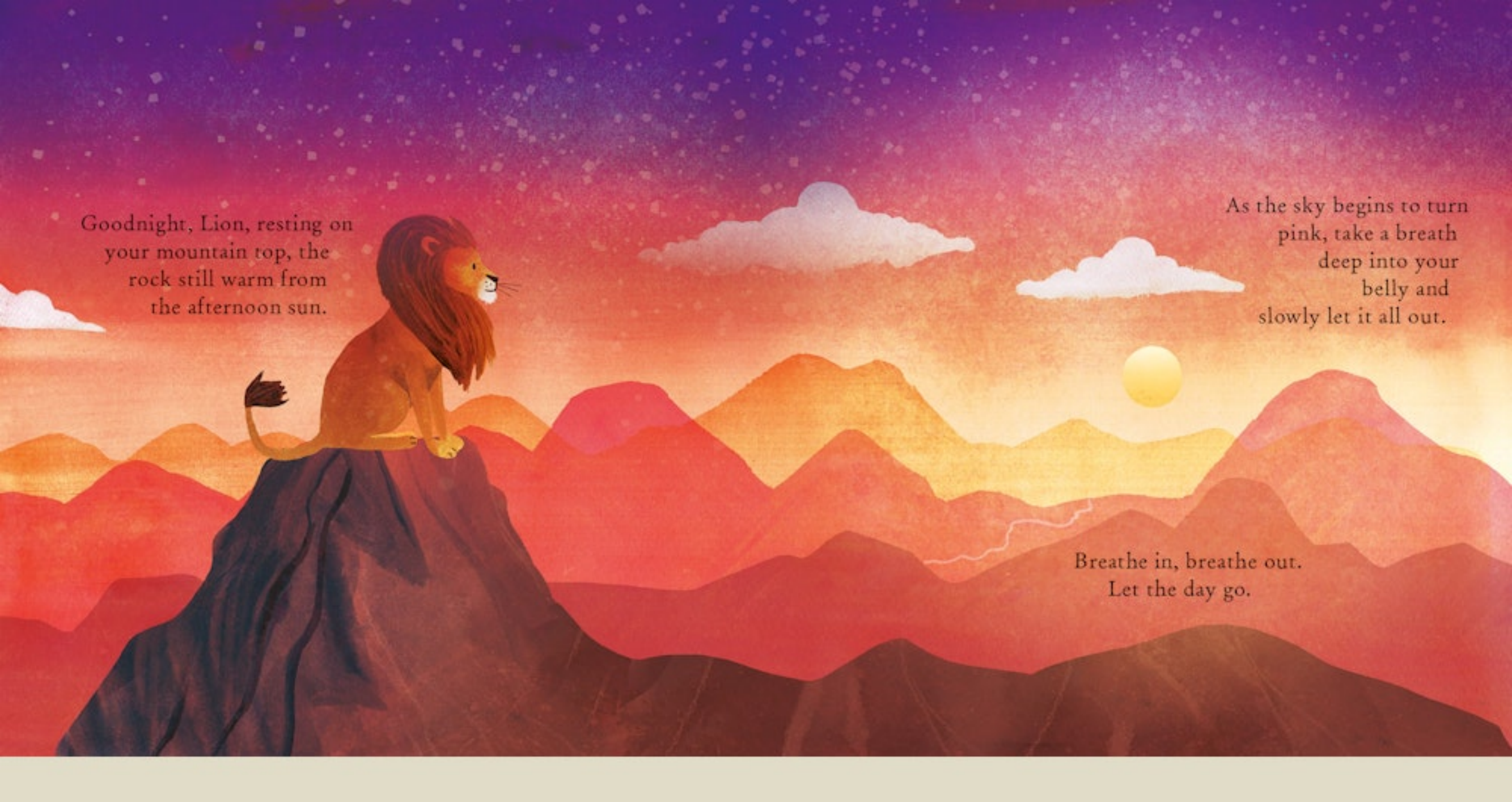
Simply noticing and appreciating your surroundings can make mindfulness an easy and effective tool to be used by the whole family.

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**

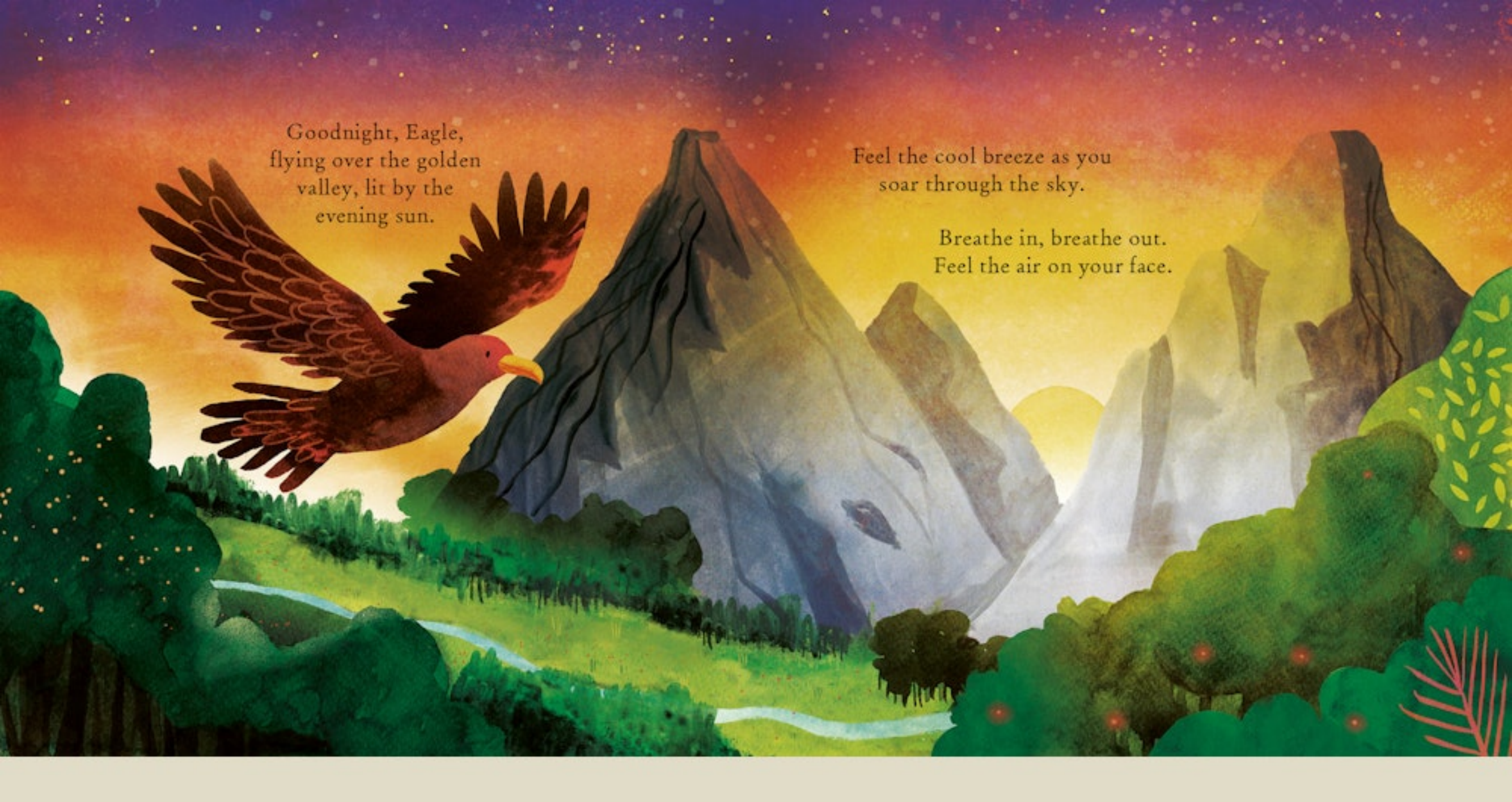
*Wellbeing expert, yoga teacher and founder of the 'Superfood Supperclub'*

A lion with a large brown mane is sitting on the peak of a dark brown mountain. The background features a sunset sky with a yellow sun, pink and orange clouds, and a starry purple night sky. The mountains in the distance are layered in shades of red, orange, and yellow. 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.

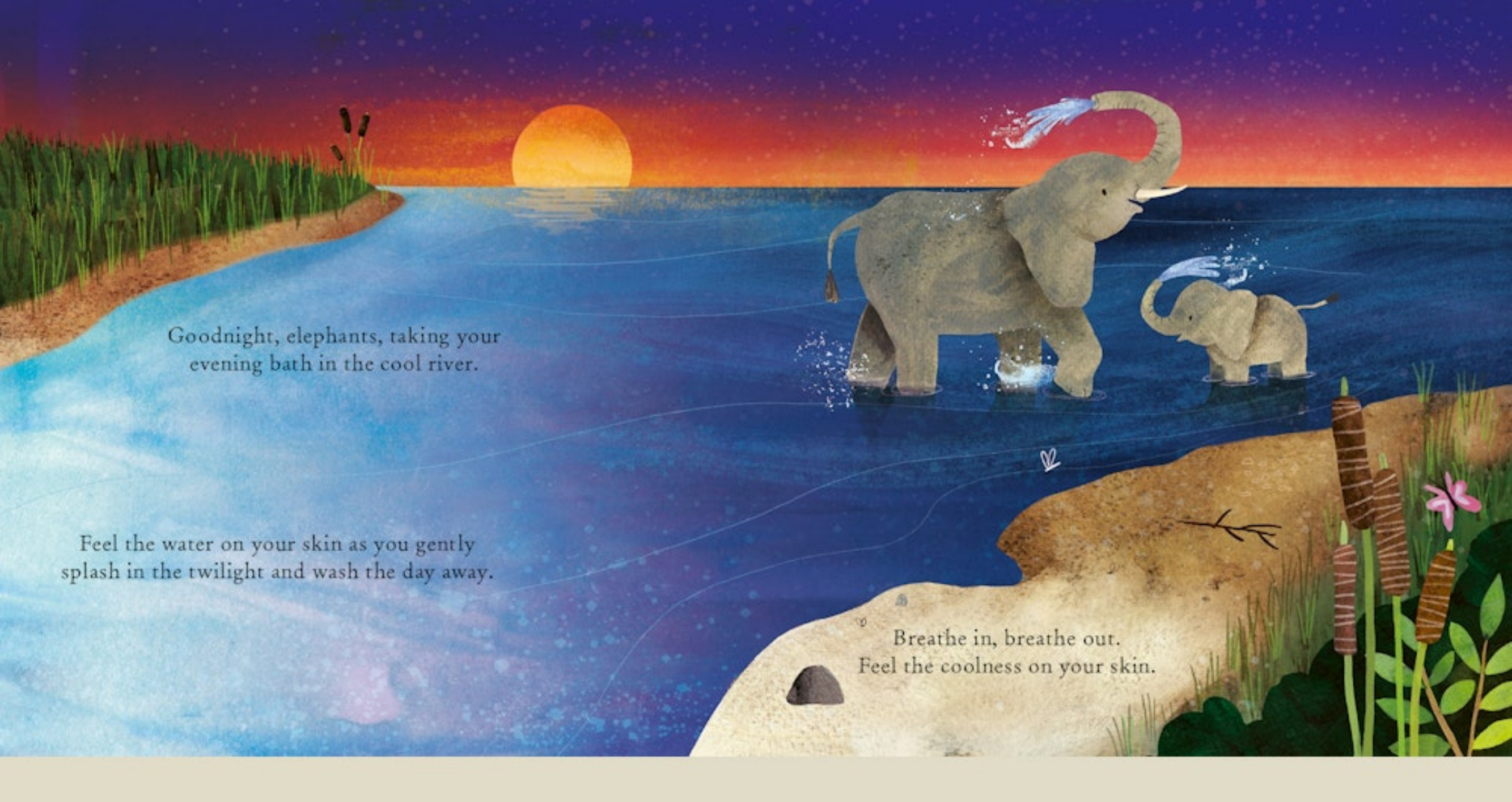
Breathe in, breathe out.  
Let the relaxing  
feeling flow.



Goodnight, Leopard,  
lounging on your branch  
as the water flows gently by.

Now the day is done, let  
your thoughts float away  
like the leaves in the stream.

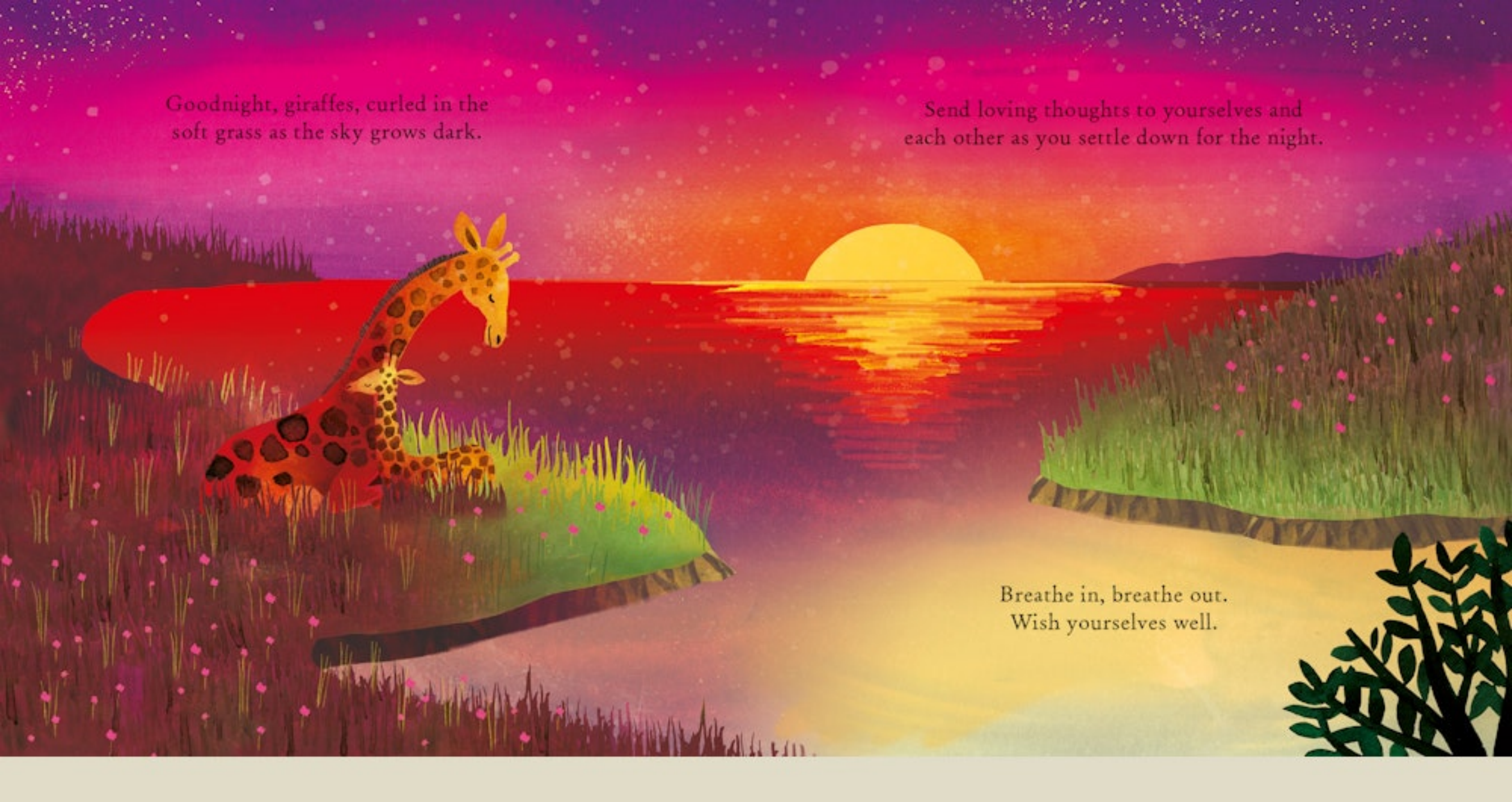
Breathe in, breathe out.  
Gently let your thoughts go.

An illustration of two elephants, an adult and a smaller one, standing in a river. The adult elephant is on the left, spraying water from its trunk. The smaller elephant is on the right, also spraying water. The background shows a sunset with a large orange sun and a starry night sky. The water is a deep blue, and the banks are sandy with some green reeds and plants.

Goodnight, elephants, taking your  
evening bath in the cool river.

Feel the water on your skin as you gently  
splash in the twilight and wash the day away.

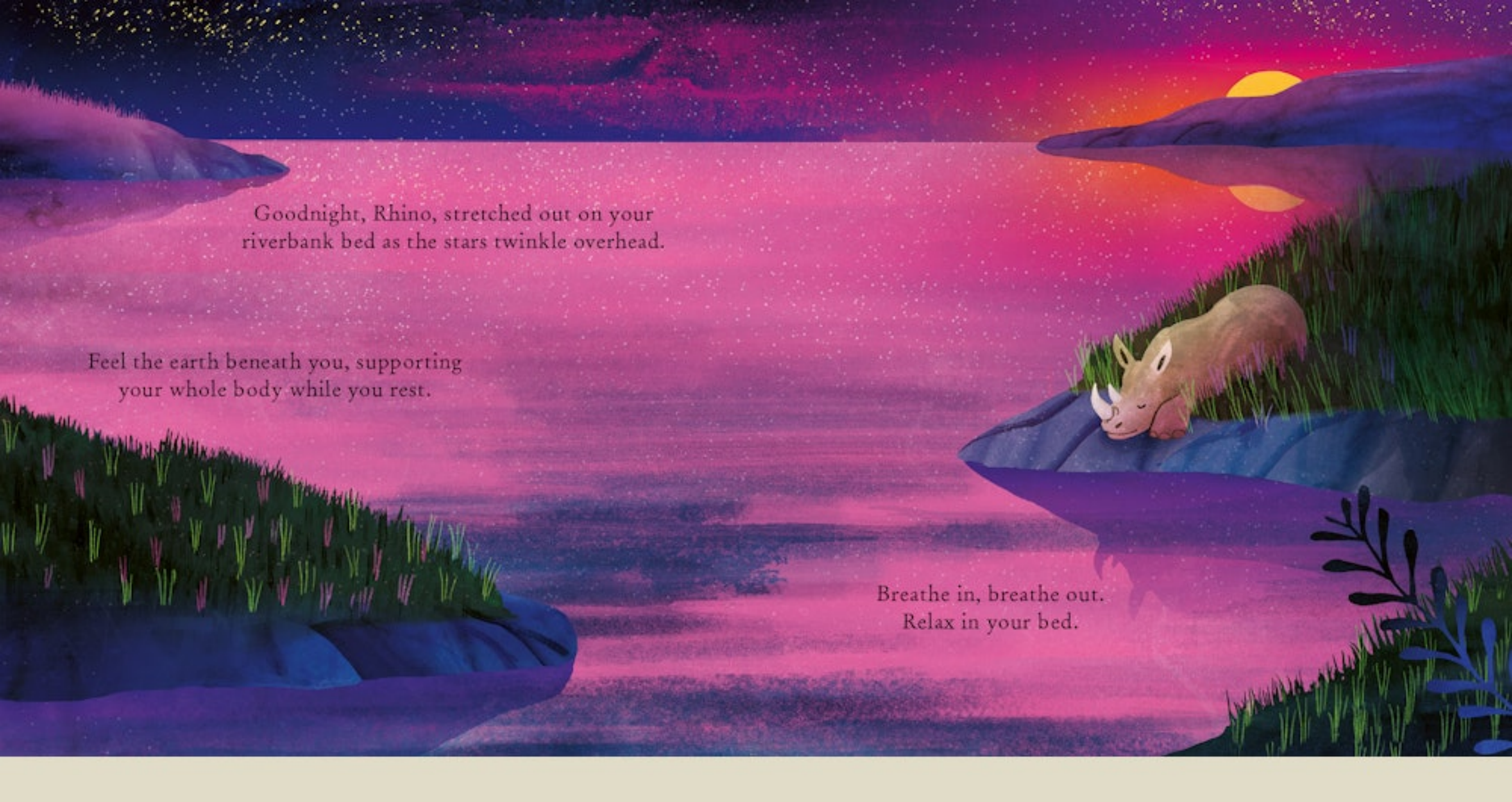
Breathe in, breathe out.  
Feel the coolness on your skin.



Goodnight, giraffes, curled in the  
soft grass as the sky grows dark.

Send loving thoughts to yourselves and  
each other as you settle down for the night.


Breathe in, breathe out.  
Wish yourselves well.

A whimsical illustration of a rhino resting on a rock by a river at night. The rhino is brown with a white horn and is lying down on a large, dark blue rock. The river is a vibrant purple and pink, reflecting the night sky. The sky is a deep blue with many small white stars. A bright yellow sun is visible on the right side of the sky, partially obscured by a dark blue rock. The overall scene is peaceful and serene.

Goodnight, Rhino, stretched out on your  
riverbank bed as the stars twinkle overhead.

Feel the earth beneath you, supporting  
your whole body while you rest.

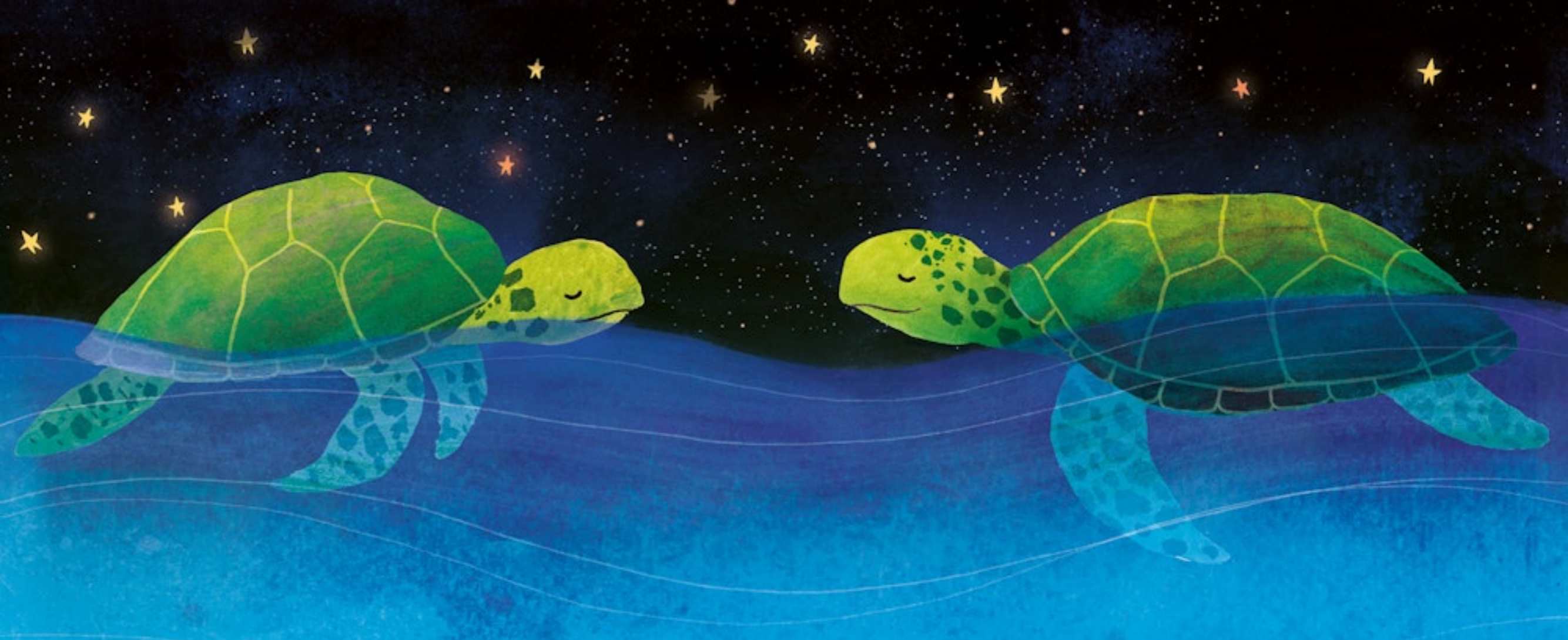
Breathe in, breathe out.  
Relax in your bed.



Goodnight, seals, settling into  
the sand on the moonlit beach.

Your breath rises and falls like the waves,  
gently lapping on the shore.

Breathe in, breathe out.  
Let your chest rise and fall.



Goodnight, sea turtles, gently closing your eyes as you float beneath the starry sky.

Feel your breath rippling like the surface of the ocean.

Breathe in, breathe out. The day is almost done.

Goodnight, whales, in your ocean bed.  
Rest as you float peacefully in the quiet of the night.

Now the day has gone, and the sky is dark,  
allow sleep to wash over you like the gentle waves.



Breathe in, breathe out.  
All is calm tonight.





