

The **M** **O** **N** **S** **T** **E** **R** Within!

1

When I was young my dad sat me on his knee, like he always did, and asked me a question:

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

I shook my head.

'My pocket money?'

2

'No.'

'Our dog Spot?'

'No. The worst thing you can lose is your temper. A bad temper is a terrible thing. It's a kind of monster who scares people away and nobody loves. It has sharp claws and sharper teeth and scratches and snarls at anyone who comes near. It lives all alone in a cold, dark place with nobody to talk to and nobody to laugh with. It can make something sweet taste like bitter lemons and can turn a beautiful drawing 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'll make lots of trouble for you. The key you can use to keep it locked away is to count to ten.'

'Take a deep breath and count:

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

4

'Now breathe out, and if that doesn't work, count again. That way your monster will never be free to scare away your happiness.'

I remember uncrossing my arms to give him a big hug and putting my head on his shoulder.

5

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



6

7

8

9

10