

DREAMTIME STORIES

The Calm Bedtime Tonight Kit

A gentle 10-minute routine and an original woodland story
for children ages 3-8

Read it tonight. Narrate it softly. Let the day grow quiet.

Created and narrated by Qasim Adam

No app. No subscription. No screen required.

For the grown-up leading bedtime

You do not need to make bedtime perfect. This kit gives you one calm sequence to follow when everyone is tired and choosing what to do next feels like another job.

Tonight's aim

A predictable, low-pressure transition from the busy part of the evening into quiet listening. This is a routine aid, not a promise that every child will fall asleep within a set time.

How to use the kit tonight

1. Prepare

Choose a comfortable place. Lower the lights and put phones or tablets away before you begin.

2. Settle

Complete the short routine on the next page in the same order. Familiar order matters more than perfect timing.

3. Read or play

Read "Pip and the Lantern Moon" slowly, or play your audio version at a gentle volume.

4. Keep the ending simple

When the story finishes, use the same closing words each night: "The story is finished. Your body can rest now. I am nearby."

If your child asks for one more story

Try: "You would like another story. Tonight we are keeping bedtime small and calm. We can choose another story tomorrow. For now, let us remember the lantern moon."

Tip: repeat the sentence without adding new negotiations. Warmth and consistency can live together.

The 10-minute calm bedtime routine

Keep the order the same, even when the exact timing changes. The story follows immediately after step five.

Time	Step	What to do
0-2 min	Tidy the landing place	Put away one toy together. Do not try to reset the whole room.
2-4 min	Wash and prepare	Teeth, toilet and one small drink of water.
4-5 min	Dim and disconnect	Lower the lights. Put screens away. Choose the story spot.
5-7 min	Two slow lantern breaths	Breathe in gently as if a lantern is glowing brighter; breathe out as if its light is becoming soft.
7-9 min	Name one good thing	Each person names one small thing from the day that felt good, funny or kind.
9-10 min	Begin the story	Say: "The busy day is finished. Now it is story time."

Repeatable closing words

Say softly

"The story is finished. Your body can rest now. I am nearby."

Tonight's routine card

Place this page beside the bed or keep it on your phone for the grown-up to follow.

Step	Tonight	Done
1	Put away one toy	
2	Teeth, toilet and water	
3	Lights low and screens away	
4	Take two lantern breaths	
5	Name one good thing	
6	Begin the story	

Our closing words:

"The story is finished. Your body can rest now. I am nearby."

AN ORIGINAL DREAMTIME STORY

Pip and the Lantern Moon

A slow woodland story for quiet listening

Narration note

Read slowly and warmly. Leave a small pause at each blank line. The full story is approximately 9-11 minutes at a calm pace.

At the edge of Willow Wood, beneath the roots of an old silver birch tree, there was a small, round door painted the colour of warm honey.

Behind that door lived Pip, a young field mouse with soft brown ears, a blue sleeping scarf and a lantern no bigger than an acorn cup.

Every evening, when the sky faded from pale gold to violet, Pip carried his lantern to the little hill behind his home. He would sit beneath the tall grass and watch the moon rise over the trees.

Most nights the moon appeared slowly, as if it had all the time in the world. First came a silver edge. Then a quiet curve. Then a round, gentle light that rested above Willow Wood.

But on this particular evening, the clouds were thick and grey. Pip waited on the hill. He waited while the crickets began their evening song. He waited while the daisies folded their white petals. Still, the moon did not appear.

Pip looked at his tiny lantern. Its flame flickered quickly. He had hurried all day - gathering oat seeds, mending his scarf and chasing three dry leaves that had blown into his kitchen. Even the little flame seemed to be hurrying.

A slow voice came from the grass beside him. 'Your lantern looks busy tonight.'

It was Moss, the old tortoise, walking home along the moon path. Moss never hurried. Even his good evenings arrived slowly.

'The moon is missing,' Pip said. 'I thought I should find it.'

Moss looked up at the clouds and then down at Pip's lantern. 'Perhaps the moon is not missing,' he said. 'Perhaps it is simply resting behind something.'

Pip had not thought of that.

Moss settled beside him. 'When my thoughts feel busy, I make my lantern breath,' he said.

'Lanterns can breathe?' Pip asked.

'Only the imaginary kind,' Moss replied. 'Breathe in slowly and imagine the light growing warm. Breathe out slowly and imagine it becoming soft.'

Pip held the lantern between his paws. He breathed in, gently and quietly. In his imagination, the golden light grew a little brighter.

Then he breathed out, long and slow. The light seemed to soften around the edges.

They tried once more. In - warm light. Out - soft light.

The flame no longer looked as though it were rushing. Neither did Pip.

Together, Pip and Moss followed the path down the hill. They did not search for the moon. They simply noticed the small lights that were already there.

There was the glow from the window of Rabbit's burrow, where a kettle was cooling beside two cups. There were the fireflies drifting above the ferns, blinking without any need to agree on when. There was a line of dew along a spider's web, holding the last light of the evening.

At the stream, a family of ducklings floated close to their mother. One duckling gave a tiny sleepy peep. The others tucked their beaks beneath their wings.

Pip lowered his voice, although nobody had asked him to. 'Goodnight, ducklings,' he whispered.

The path curved through a patch of lavender. Pip could smell its soft, clean scent. He noticed the ground beneath his feet. It was firm and cool. He noticed his scarf resting around his neck. It felt warm and familiar.

Nothing in the wood was trying to finish the night quickly. The trees stood quietly. The stream moved quietly. Even the clouds travelled at their own slow pace.

Soon they reached Pip's honey-coloured door. Moss stopped outside.

'We did not find the moon,' Pip said, but he was no longer worried.

'No,' said Moss. 'We found the evening.'

Pip thanked his friend and went inside. He placed the little lantern on the table. He washed his paws, folded his blue scarf and climbed into his bed beneath the roots of the birch tree.

His room was dim and still. Beyond the round window, the clouds continued on their way.

Pip took one lantern breath. In - warm light. Out - soft light.

He remembered Rabbit's quiet window. He remembered the fireflies above the ferns. He remembered the ducklings with their beaks beneath their wings.

Then something silver touched the floor beside his bed.

The clouds had opened just enough for the moon to shine through.

It had not been missing. It had been there all along, moving slowly behind the clouds, waiting for its clear place in the sky.

Pip smiled and pulled the blanket gently beneath his chin.

'Goodnight, lantern,' he whispered.

The flame became smaller.

'Goodnight, moon.'

The silver light rested on the floor.

'Goodnight, Willow Wood.'

Outside, the tall grass moved once in the night breeze and then became still.

The story was finished. The wood could rest. And beneath the old silver birch tree, Pip rested too.

A quiet ending for the grown-up

When the story ends, leave a short pause. Then say the closing words in the same calm voice:

"The story is finished. Your body can rest now. I am nearby."

Remember

Some children settle quickly and some need more time. The value of the routine is its calm, familiar order. If you have concerns about your child's sleep or wellbeing, seek advice from a qualified health professional.

Make this your familiar bedtime

Use the same story for several nights if your child asks for it. Repetition can make the routine feel known and easy. When you are ready for something new, explore more original children's bedtime stories from Dreamtime Stories.

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Bedtime stories for calmer nights