THE NIGHTMARE PIG

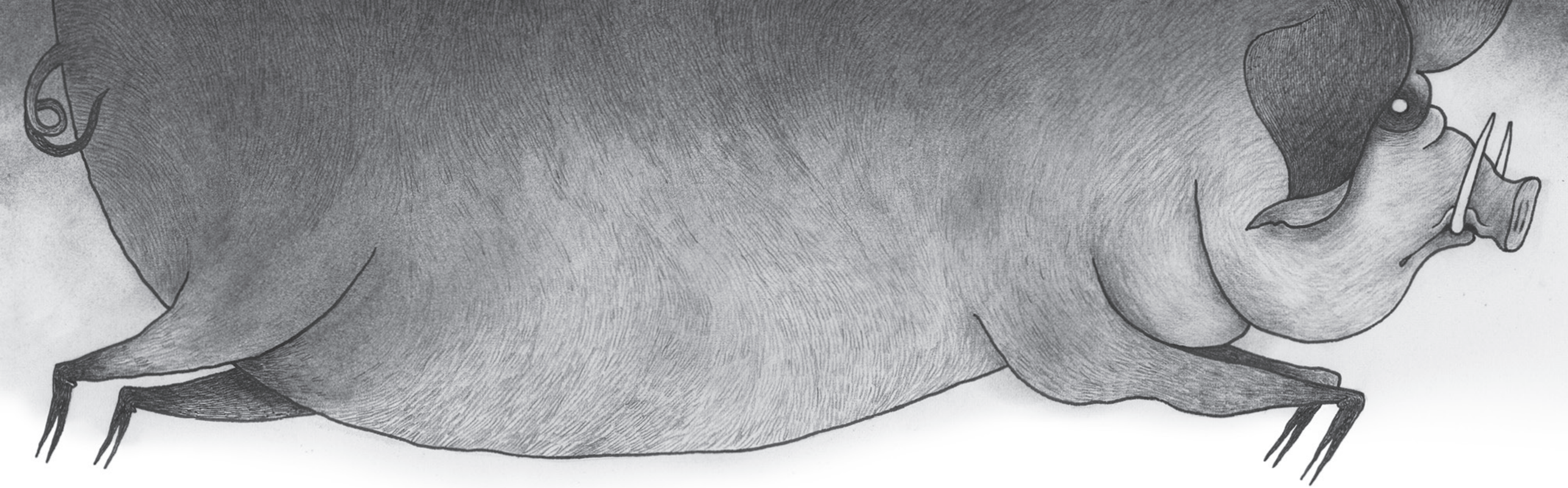
Ralf Robinson was an ordinary boy
With a head of red hair and a box full of toys.
Two feet, oddly socked, and a scab on his knee
From the time he fell out of his favourite tree.
Not too short or too tall, neither tubby nor lean
He was generally kind (and occasionally mean).
There was Mother, and Father, a brother called Dwayne
And an auntie, who'd moved to a villa in Spain.

But one thing about Ralf was most unexpected.
He kept teeth in his pockets (you can't have suspected).

To understand why, we'll go back a whole year
To a time when Ralf's life was abundant with fear.
For when Ralf closed his eyes, all he could see
Was The Nightmare Pig, in authentic 3D!

This hog was horrendous, it came from the skies
With ear-piercing squeals and fiery eyes.
It was blacker than night, with ivory tusks
And a tail that coiled the day into dusk
Its hellish hooves sliced clean through the air
And its smoke-filled snout sorely snorted, "Beware!"

It must have been bred on some terrible farm
Where the livestock is trained to do nothing but harm.



Each horrible “oink” was an omen of doom,
The pig planned to eat Ralf – he could only assume.

But it seemed only he could hear the pig squeal
Or spy it, up there, looking realer than real.

“But why can’t you see it?” cried Ralf in dismay.
“It’s here! In the sky! Quick, run away!”

His heart filled with dread, but to his surprise
The pig disappeared when he opened his eyes,
Its squeals and smells and fearsome glare,
Suddenly – seemingly – vanished in air.

But then, when again Ralf closed his eyes tight,
The nightmare returned, both vivid and bright.

Soon doctors came, with words and with pills
To try and cure Ralf of his baffling ills.
They gathered around like circling birds,
Trying to ensure their opinion was heard.

"Take a tablet at bedtime!" "Take two after meals!"
"Take three – then you'll see that your fears are unreal!"

Ralf's mother just sighed, and said in confusion,
"Are you sure all these pills are the only solution?"

"You can trust us, we're doctors," the medics replied,
"Only some of our patients have tragically died."

"No!" cried Ralf's dad. "Have you other ideas?
Is there something more natural to banish his fears?"
"An ice bath or seven!" the doctors suggested.
"Or lock him away 'til he's properly rested."

"Take the child jogging! Some brisk exercise!"
"Withhold the boy's meals 'til he stops telling lies."

But whatever the treatment, whatever they tried,
Ralf still saw the pig when he screwed up his eyes.
It was when Auntie Em came to stay from abroad,
That Ralf closed his eyes and once again roared

"The Nightmare Pig! It's coming for me!
It's up in the sky – in authentic 3D!"

Ralf's eyes were shut and his voice was raw
As he called out in fear at the horrors he saw.

"You see?" said Ralf's father. "We've had this all week."
"He's weird," said his brother. "Not to mention a freak."
"The pig!" Ralf hollered, in anguish and pain.
"What a shame," said Ralf's aunt. "It's happened again."

"Again?" Ralf repeated, "But, what do you mean?"

Auntie Em peered at Ralf. "I've seen what you've seen.
Nightmares abound, when I sleep, when I wake,
Monsters and beasts, to make anyone shake.
And, now and then, *that* pig shows it snout
A nightmare? Oh, yes! No question, no doubt."

"You can see it? The pig?" uttered Ralf, quite amazed.

Auntie Em closed her eyes but didn't seem phased.
"Ah, yes – there she is, as plain as can be,
The Nightmare Pig, in authentic 3D."

"But why aren't you scared?" asked a terrified Ralf.
"Can't you see that the pig wants to bite us in half?"

"She could," said his aunt. "She may … and she might…
But let's try to find something else that she likes."

She reached in her handbag, slow, steady and calm,
Then drew out her hand and opened her palm.

"What are they?" asked Ralf, though he knew what he saw
A handful of teeth. Could it be? Was he sure?

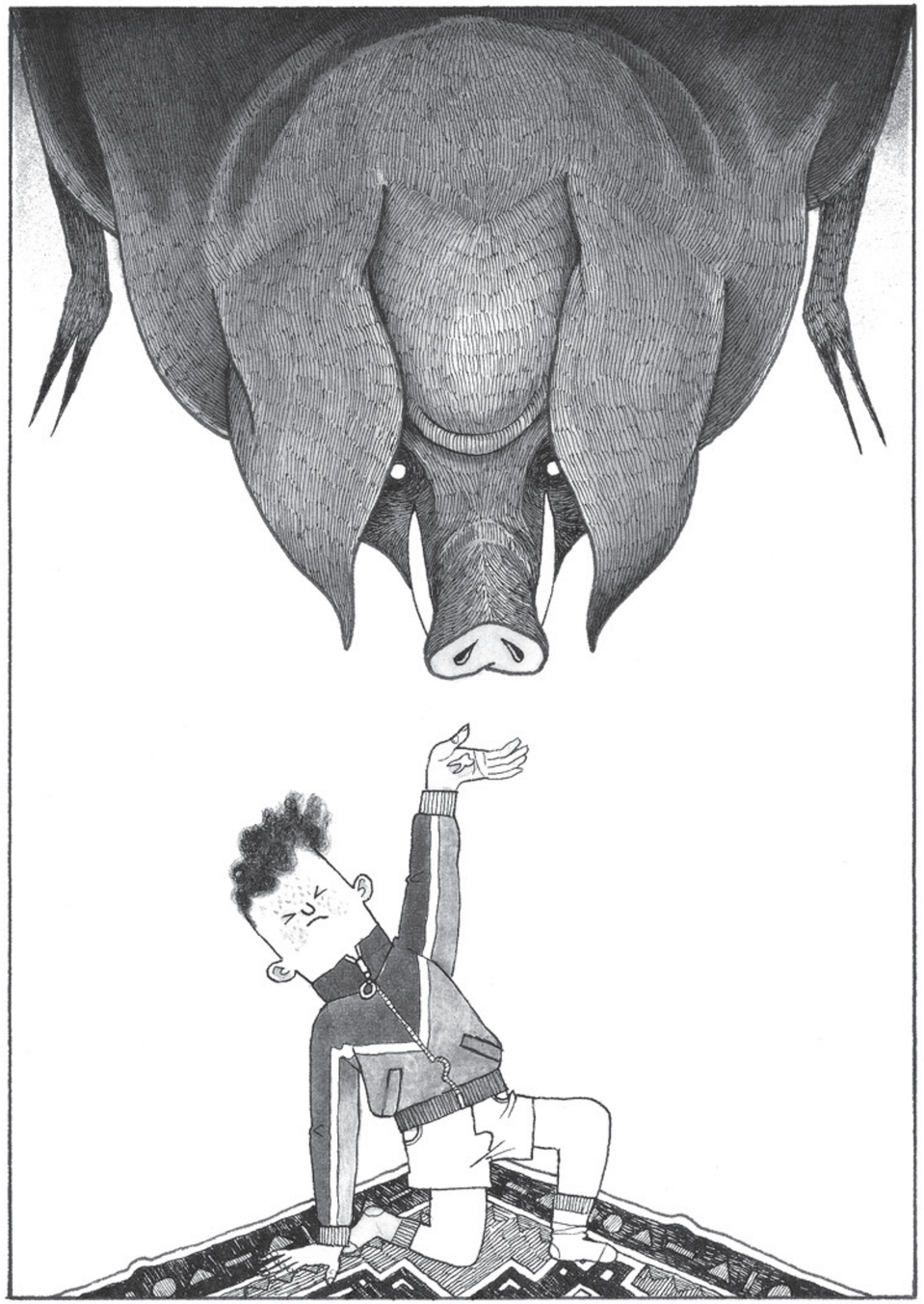
"Is that…?" he began, and his aunt nodded twice.

"Human teeth," she replied. "To pay the pig's price.
Unless you'd prefer the nightmares to stay,
You'll feed this pig teeth, and she'll be on her way."

She emptied the teeth into Ralf's sweaty palm
And said, "Hold it out, she should do you no harm."

"F-feed it?" Ralf gasped, "Won't it bite off my finger?"

"Just be quick," said his aunt. "You'd do well not to linger."



Ralf held out his hand, and waited with fear,
As the sinister swine floated frightfully near.

Ralf held his breath … found himself freeze
As the pig sniffed his hand – and then snatched up the teeth.
She squealed with delight and took to the sky,
Then flew through the ceiling and oinked a goodbye.
Auntie Em smiled and said, "I knew all would be fine!
Now she's fed, she will leave you alone for a time."

With the pig fed and gone, when Ralf now closed his eyes,
He saw nothing at all, to his joy and surprise.

"Auntie Em…" whispered Ralf. "You did it – she's gone!"

"Have faith, my dear Ralf! For I knew all along."

She patted her bag with an odd little smile
That Ralf hadn't seen for a very long while.
Not since he was three, and was wetting the bed
'Cause he dreamed that a monster had sat on his head.

"Tooth," Ralf recalled, "Yes! You pulled out your tooth!"

"It was all I could think of, to tell you the truth,"
said his aunt, "And the monster, it swallowed it whole…"

"Then vanished!" cried Ralf. "I remember it all!"

"Nightmares abound," said his aunt with a wink.
"But feed your fears teeth and they might just rethink."

"Nightmares eat teeth? But that doesn't make sense,"
Ralf said aloud, looking suddenly tense.

"Nor, dear, does fear," said his aunt with a shrug.
Then she ruffled Ralf's hair and gave him a hug.
As his aunt squeezed him tightly, Ralf was uneasy,
A thought had occurred that made him feel queasy.

"The teeth … where'd you get them?" he nervously asked.

Auntie Em gave a shrug. "What's done is now past.
But soon we'll need more – of that there's no doubt,
And, as you can see, I've completely run out."

She opened her mouth with a strange, wide-lipped pout
But Ralf saw no teeth, 'cause she'd pulled them all out.





For Jane Harris

LITTLE TIGER
LONDON

LITTLE TIGER
An imprint of Little Tiger Press Limited
1 Coda Studios, 189 Munster Road, London SW6 6AW
www.littletiger.co.uk

Imported into the EEA by Penguin Random House Ireland,
Morrison Chambers, 32 Nassau Street, Dublin D02 YH68
www.littletigerpress.com

A hardback original First published in Great Britain in 2026

Text copyright © Guy Bass, 2026

Illustration copyright © David Roberts, 2026

ISBN: 978-1-78895-419-8
e-ISBN: 9781788957816

The right of Guy Bass and David Roberts to be identified as the
author and illustrator of this work respectively has been asserted by them
in accordance with the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act, 1988.

All rights reserved.

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, resold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form of binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed upon the subsequent purchaser.

A CIP catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

Printed and bound in Poland.

STP/3400/0754/0726

1 3 5 7 9 10 8 6 4 2



The Forest Stewardship Council® (FSC®) is a global, not-for-profit organisation dedicated to the promotion of responsible forest management worldwide. FSC® defines standards based on agreed principles for responsible forest stewardship that are supported by environmental, social, and economic stakeholders. To learn more, visit www.fsc.org