



# The Worry Wisp and the Courage Cloud

By Preeti Bajpayee



Elara loved going to her Grandma Nell's house. The house smelled like sunshine and cinnamon. She loved the big, squishy chair and the secret garden path. Today, Elara was going for a whole-night sleepover!



But as she packed her teddy bear, a little flutter started in her tummy. "Wait," whispered a tiny, cloudy creature that suddenly appeared. "Are you sure you want to stay?"



Elara named the creature the Worry Wisp. It followed her all the way to Grandma Nell's front door. "What if you miss your own bed?" it squeaked. "What if the dark is different here?"



Grandma Nell opened the door and gave Elara a big, warm hug. "Welcome, my little Sleepover Star! We have so much fun to squeeze in!" Grandma Nell didn't seem to notice the Worry Wisp at all.



They started with a craft project: building a cardboard castle for Elara's teddy bear. Elara carefully glued the turrets, and the Worry Wisp watched, hovering near the glitter jar.



"I think the Worry Wisp is quiet when we are busy," Elara whispered to Grandma Nell while they stirred cookie batter. "It likes to wait for me to slow down."



"Ah, a Wisp," Grandma Nell chuckled. "The secret is to give it something happy to do. If it fills up with fun memories, it gets heavy and sleepy."



As the cookies baked, they told stories. Grandma Nell used funny voices for all the characters. The Worry Wisp started to change color. The gray edges turned a soft, sunny yellow.



Soon, it was time for bed. Elara was tucked into her special sleepover room. The Worry Wisp, now a beautiful golden Courage Cloud, settled on the nightstand, humming a happy, quiet tune.



Elara closed her eyes. Her bed didn't feel different, and the dark wasn't scary. It was full of cinnamon smells, funny voices, and the quiet comfort of her new Courage Cloud. She knew she would be a Sleepover Star again soon.