

Keeping Fear in Check ✓

A Modern Day Parable inspired by Matthew 14:22-33

After the family had been fed, and the dishes were done, Daddy made the announcement that it was bedtime. The "Good Night Sleep Tight" routine was one of Bobby's favorite times of the day, and at the same time his least favorite. His Daddy was always very patient and careful not to rush this special time with his son. He checked off all the steps to bedtime like a game. Sometimes Daddy pretended to be a drill sergeant, sometimes he was a scientist, or a cowboy, or a clown. Bobby never knew who would be tucking him in — which was exciting.

Daddy ran through the pretend check list: teeth brushed - ✓; pjs on - ✓; toys put away - ✓; boy tucked in tightly under the covers - ✓; bedtime story - ✓; special sleepy time song - ✓; saying our prayers and thanking God for His blessings - ✓; hugs & kisses - ✓; lights out - ✓; good night, sleep tight, don't let the bed bugs bite - ✓✓✓



It was going to be especially hard for Bobby to fall sleep tonight. At suppertime, they had decided Bobby was ready to try out his big boy bike with no training wheels tomorrow. He felt ready to give it a go but had to wait till morning. He was excited, but a little nervous about it. Daddy had given him the details of starting, stopping, and balancing. Tomorrow would be the real deal. Riding on just two wheels! His Daddy knew it would be extra challenging to fall asleep this night. What he didn't know was that Bobby is still a little anxious about sleeping in his big boy room all alone, in the dark. He had been doing it for weeks now and always pretended he was fine, like he had no worries of the boogie-man in the closet, or the tataille under the bed, or the rougarou outside.

But, many nights after his Daddy left the room and walked down the hallway, Bobby would get a little spooked. He would see shadows and hear noises, then cover his ears and squeeze his eyes shut, but never calling out for fear the monsters — or his Daddy — would know he was still awake. This night, Bobby wasn't thinking of the tatailles. He was thinking of flying down the road with no training wheels, keeping up with the older boys down the block. Then, something caught his eye — a shadow at the end of the hall. He rubbed his sleepy eyes. This was not his imagination! Bobby froze in place, unable to move, and not sure what to do. He was so afraid and cried out, "It's a ghost!"

At once his Daddy said, "Don't be scared, Bobby. It's me." Bobby said, "Daddy, if it is you, sing the sleepy time song and I will come to you." Daddy sang the first verse and said, "Come." Bobby ran and jumped into his Daddy's arms. "It's OK, Bobby." his Daddy said. "I left my prayer book on your nightstand and came back for it. You are safe. Go back to bed. Now is my time to go to my bedroom by myself and pray."

Bobby quickly fell asleep and slept all night long. He woke up early, and instantly remembered the plan for the day! He ran to the kitchen where Daddy was making his favorite breakfast — bubbly blueberry pancakes with butter on top! They were as big as Bobby's plate! Today was going to be the best day ever! In less than an hour they were out on the driveway removing the training wheels from Bobby's bike. After only a few tries, he caught on quickly and was able to smoothly ride up and down the driveway on his own. "Are you ready to ride around the block?" his Daddy asked. "Oh yes!" Bobby replied. "Wait till the big boys see me!"

With Daddy following on foot, Bobby checked for the all-clear and turned onto the street. He was smiling with his whole face as he confidently headed, going faster and faster. Daddy had to pick up the pace to a jog in order to keep up. His grin was a perfect match to his son's, as he remembered the feeling of his own first ride on two wheels many years ago. Both of them beamed with pride! Suddenly, a strong wind began to pick up. Bobby became frightened; and beginning to wobble, he cried out, "Daddy, save me!"

Daddy stretched out his hand and caught Bobby, and said to him, "O Bobby. You were doing great, why did you doubt you could keep going?" They stopped for a moment and the wind died down. "See, the wind will come and go. You can ride through it. I will be right here beside you! Truly, you are a big boy now!"

