

Nightmares

No More

**By Devon Bishop**  
and Toby Abraham-Rhine

## Acknowledgements

The authors wish to thank the Teen Action Team of Salem, Oregon for their generous grant, without which this book for children could not have come into existence. In their efforts to reach out to children, Teen Action Team gifted the West Salem Peer Mentors (O.H.A.N.A.) with the money to publish a mentoring tool to be used by counselors and peer mentors with children in Salem/Keizer Public Schools. The Teen Action Team recognizes that alcohol and other chemical abuse has an enormous impact on children, whether that be adult or child usage, and that early intervention and education is our first line of defense.

**“Nightmares No More”** and **“A New Shell for Tiger”** will be used in libraries, counseling offices, classrooms and individual peer mentoring situations.

Thank you, Teen Action Team!

Devon Bishop  
Toby Abraham-Rhine

## IT'S YOUR TURN

Note to parents, mentors, counselors, teachers: This story is a companion to the illustrated first story, “**A New Shell for Tiger,**” in which Tiger experiences the grief of an absent mother. In this sequel, Tiger and Devon discuss Tiger’s incarcerated father. This story may be used to help a child express feelings about an absent parent, one they may have never met, or a parent who is coming home after an absence. “Nettling” is a safe metaphor for any addiction (drugs, alcohol, gambling) or abusive behavior that has necessitated a parent’s removal from a child’s life, whether temporarily or permanently.

### Suggested uses:

- Ask the child if she/he has ever had a nightmare. Share one of your own that you remember.
- How did you overcome it? How did the child?
- Ask what she/he understands is Tiger’s fear.
- Normalize that sometimes parents do things that can make children afraid.
- Explain that Devon helps Tiger by letting him share his fears.
- Ask the child if she/he has someone like Devon to share feelings. Maybe that someone is you!

Invite the child to illustrate the book.

## ONE STEP FURTHER

When the real Devon scanned my shelves looking for a title relating to his life I said, “Devon, what you need is not on my shelves. How about if we write our own?” “**A New Shell for Tiger**” and “**Nightmares No More**” resulted from a few lunchtime counseling sessions.

Transferring some of life’s frustrations, fears or questions to characters in a story can be a very safe, effective way for a child to cope with situations over which he or she has no control. Like most stories, Devon and I sat and brainstormed the story line, filled in dialogue from his own life and our conversations then edited until we had the finished product.

This process can be healing and satisfying for a child/student. Truly, the finished product is only half as important as the journey of writing it together. Devon and I chose the style of a children’s book. You may also wish to explore poetry, limericks, cartoon strips, a super hero comic book or even short story/novels depending on the age of the child/student with whom you share time.

Peace and thanks for what you do for children,

Toby Abraham-Rhine

Once there was a Hermit crab named Tiger who belonged to a boy named Devon. Devon and Tiger were good friends, but lately Tiger would not come out of his shell.

When Devon asked about it, Tiger either said he was just too tired or too scared. Both reasons surprised Devon. Peering into his shell one day, Devon asked, "But why are you so tired, Tiger?"

"I just don't get enough sleep,"  
Tiger yawned.

"Why don't you get enough sleep?"  
Devon wondered.

"Because I don't GO to sleep,"  
Tiger said sheepishly.

"And why don't you GO to sleep?"  
Devon asked. Tiger paused for a long  
time.

"I'm afraid to."

"You're afraid to go to sleep? No  
wonder you're so tired!" Devon was a  
bit confused and felt sorry for Tiger.  
"Why are you afraid to go to sleep?"

"Because I keep having nightmares," Tiger whispered, as if he didn't want anyone else to hear.

"Ohhh," said Devon, "Now I understand. Do you want to tell me your nightmare? Sometimes that helps to keep them from coming back." Tiger looked around his cage as if he was waiting for someone or something to come after him.

"Tiger, there's no one here but us. Do you want to tell me about the nightmares?"

Tiger stuck out his claw and waved. "Does that mean 'yes' Tiger?" Tiger did it again. "Ok, so that means yes," Devon smiled. "Now we're getting somewhere." Tiger poked his head out of his shell.

"I haven't seen my Crabby Daddy in over two years. He's in jail for nettling." Tiger explained to Devon that Crabby Daddy would brush up against stinging nettle, which is poisonous, and it would make him itch so badly that he went crazy. When Crabby Daddy was nettling he threatened Tiger, saying that he would take off Tiger's shell. Devon gasped. He knew that if a hermit crab has no shell it will dry out and die.

"What did you do, Tiger?" Devon asked, concerned.

"I dug a burrow in the rocks and tried to hide, but when he was nettling he was so mean. He'd come after me yelling and waving his arms in the air." Tiger shivered at the memory.

"I'm so sorry Tiger. I know how that feels. My dad threatened me, too. I haven't seen my dad in two and a half years. I have a lot of problems because of it. Life changes when you haven't seen someone in your family for a very, very, very long time."

"Are you scared?" Tiger asked Devon.

"Not any more, just sad and angry. I only half believe in God because of all the bad stuff that's happened in my life."

"I believe in God," said Tiger. "I have to, it's the only thing that keeps me from being afraid."

"Why are you so afraid if your Crabby Daddy is in jail?" asked Devon.

"Because a week ago I got a snail mail that said he is getting out in two months," Tiger explained. Now it all made sense to Devon. Tiger had been having nightmares ever since the snail mail arrived.

"Tiger, my dad has been in and out of jail four times," Devon said. "And every time he was getting out I was scared, too."

"What did you do?"

"I would stay away from his house for a week and not go visit him," Devon remembered.

"When did you feel it was safe to go see him?" Tiger asked.

"Well, I didn't really," said Devon, "but I would go anyway because I missed him."

"Wow," said Tiger, "it's all so confusing, to love a dad and miss him, but still be afraid to see him."

"Yup," Devon agreed, "that's pretty much the way it works." Tiger was very quiet for a long time. He looked around his cage then back at Devon.

"Will you be here for me when my Crabby Daddy gets out of jail?" Tiger asked.

"I will always be here for you, Tiger. That's what friends are for," said Devon and stretching out his finger toward Tiger, Tiger's claw shook his finger and sealed the deal! Then Tiger crawled into Devon's hand and took a long, peaceful nap. No more nightmares.