

## Through Locked Doors

John 20:19

On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jewish leaders, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!"

Recently, Jesus got through one of my locked doors. It only took six years! The final breaking through the barricade came through my spiritual director reading me part of a children's book called, *There's No Such Thing as a Dragon*.

Six years ago, my husband had a medulla stroke in the night beside me and I didn't even know it. That sure reminds a girl that she can't control life. It was horrible and yet wonderful because he learned to walk again in a miraculous amount of time. The whole family felt that God gave him back to us. But something shifted in me. I was unnerved. If he coughed and lost his breath, I held mine and was ready to rush to the phone. If I woke up in the night and he seemed rather quiet, I would stare until it was light enough to see if he was still breathing. Every once in a while, I would say to God, "Don't take him from me." You get the picture. Constricted, attached to fake control, keeping the door shut to any kind of surrender.

Just awhile ago, I was sewing and ironing the seams and God so gently asked, "Would you like to surrender R?" My reply was, "I wasn't thinking of it." And then I busied myself.

In my spiritual direction session, I was able to cry and talk about this freely. Oh, such beautiful space just to hold the heart as it is. Then after, my spiritual director mentioned this book and I asked her to read it to me. It's about this little boy who woke up and there was a little dragon on his bed. He patted the dragon's head and the dragon wagged his little tail. But when the little boy went downstairs and told his mother about the dragon, she said, "There is no such thing as a dragon." So, when the little boy saw the dragon, he didn't pet him, he didn't acknowledge him, because he thought, "If there is no such thing as a dragon, then there is no use noticing him." (These are my paraphrasing words from what I remember.) Every time his mother said there was no such thing as a dragon and every time the boy ignored the dragon, the dragon got bigger and bigger until he filled the whole house. I don't think I need to explain this to you.

The next morning, I said to Jesus, "I need to spend time with my dragon with you." Jesus walked through my locked door. I told him how afraid I've been, how avoiding I have been when my little dragon of fear shows up. I asked for his help

and I said that, for my part, I wasn't going to ask him not to take my R from me again. By His grace I wouldn't try to ignore fear by locking the door.

Now you know, that dragon will show up again. We aren't living in a fairy tale. But my door is unlocked and I can acknowledge that the way to peace is through honesty about my fears and letting Jesus be there with me.