

# The Silver Dragon

A Mind Wandering by Lisa Hering

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<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fb4XPUolXek>

There's a new born baby boy rocking in a cradle near a stream. He and his parents live in a beautiful Asian village with big trees, meadows, and mountains in the background. Their home is simple but tidy. The baby is sound asleep. The simple wooden cradle is hanging from a hook on a rattan tripod. Mother watches over the baby while he sleeps peacefully. She keeps her eyes on him as it moves slightly and yawns, and continues to sleep.

Time passes and the baby grows. He's four years old now. The toddler is playing on rocks near the stream. The water is clear and cool. The mother is nearby. He throws rocks into the water and laughs in surprise at the water that shoots up. Mother comes to the child smiling. She kisses her son and tells him he will grow strong and brave.

"You will be a big rock thrower someday!" says the mother. He lets out a big laugh. When it's time for bed, she reads him a story about a fierce dragon that breathes fire. The boy pretends to roar and breathe fire like the dragon. He loves this dragon story.

Time continues to pass and he grows. He is eight now. He stands much taller. The boy loves to play near the stream. He runs and laughs with several other children his age. His prize is his new kite. They go to a meadow nearby, but he can't make it fly. Mother comes over and takes the kite. The mother finds just the right breeze and the kite takes off. Mother hands the kite strings to her son and he runs with the kite excitedly. The mother and child laugh together. But then, the boy falls and loses the kite string. The kite flies way away and crashes into the stream. He cries. Mother tells him, "We will get another kite, no worries for you, my child. I think it's time to read the dragon story. You need to put your name in it so everyone will know that he's your dragon." And the child feels better.

The boy grows more. Now he is twelve and plays ball at school. He is having a great time with his other mates. Soon, there is a match with two teams. His mother is in the crowd watching. She claps her hands when her child does well. When the game is over, the kids come to the bleachers. The mother welcomes her child. The team didn't win. Mother says, "You did real good, no matter if you win. We'll go have ice cream." And the mother smiles. The child feels better. They go to an ice cream shop with a few of the other boys and each have a cone. On the way home, they talk about things. Nothing important. Just talk. It doesn't matter what they talk about. They spend time together.

The child grows. He is now 15. He is in high school. He is with friends in the school hallway near their lockers. They are all talking and laughing. He has a crush on a girl. She walks by. He tries not to be obvious about looking at her. He is shy. She passes by without noticing him and walks away. He is heart broken. He is afraid of his own feelings and if she could ever love him. He is quiet when he is at home that day. Mother doesn't know why. She asks, "Why are you so quiet? You are sad?"

"No, mom. Just quiet tonight," he replies.

She watches him. She says, "Let's do something!"

"No, mom," he replies, "I'm tired. I just want to read and go to bed."

She says, "Remember the story I used to tell you about the dragon and the fair maiden?"

He says, "You mean the one where the dragon falls in love with the maiden?"

"Yes, that one," she says.

"What about it?" he asks.

"Dragon was big and strong, he could breath fire! But when he was with maiden, he was so weak, he couldn't even talk," she said.

"Yes, I remember," he said. "When the maiden was around, he just had smoke coming out of his mouth!" And mom and son laughed at the memory.

And then mom said, "I see some smoke coming out of your mouth."

Her son became quiet. Then he says, "Maybe I'm a little sad. How do I not be sad?"

Mom says, "Laughter is the best medicine. You close your eyes and listen to me."

So the boy closed his eyes, and the mother got out the old child's book and read it to him page by page. They laughed at some of the silly parts, and cried over the heart breaking parts. And he realized that he was not the only one who ever went through this stage in life.

And the boy grew. He was leaving for college a very long way away. His car was packed. His room was half empty. His bed was unmade. It was time to say good bye to his mother. "I'm sorry I'm leaving everything in such a mess, mom. Everything is on the floor."

"You leave it like that, I will clean it. In the mean time, your little niece will enjoy it!" said the mother.

"Oh no! You can't let her..." he started. Then they both laughed for a moment. He gave his mother and father a hug. Then the boy gave his mother a tiny box wrapped in tissue paper and tied with a shoe lace, and then he got into the car, and rolled down the window for mom's last advice.

"You breath fire all day long, and at night, you put out fire and let off a little smoke, and you remember your mother," was her advice.

"I promise!" he said as he waved and drove off. She watched his car as it got further and further away. When it was out of sight, her gaze moved to the little package. She gently unknotted the shoe lace and removed the tissue paper. She opened a white box, and inside was a silver dragon charm. She put it in her hand, and held her hand to her heart.

And the child grew. He got married and bought a home in a far away land. His mother and father went to the wedding. It was their only trip to this distant place. He and his wife had a child, and they came to his parent's home for a visit. When they arrived, his parents saw the baby for the first time.

"I am a grandmother!" said the mother. "Suddenly, I am an old woman!" She took the baby in her arms and held it close to her and rocked it back and forth. "Looks just like you!"

She took the wife's hand and they went into the house. The entire family had old times to tell the wife, funny stories, big meals, and chats by the fireplace. When the visit was over, the grown up boy said to his mother, "I'm being transferred far away. I won't be able to come home again for a while."

She put her hand on his face and said, "No matter, you make a good life for yourself. You make good money. And you remember your mother." He smiled and kissed her on the forehead. He and his small family got in the car and drove away. And when the car got out of sight, the mother squeezed her hand around a very special object of silver she kept on a long silver chain, out of sight, but near her breast.

Some years later, the mother heard the phone ring. She answered, and it was her son.

"Hi mom! I know it's summer there, but it's winter here!" he said. The mother smiled and laughed. She was very glad to get to talk to her son. "You remembered your mother on Mother's day! But you aren't here." she said.

"No, mom, I can't be there, but yes, I remembered you. And I just wanted to see how you were doing," he said. "Are you good?"

"Oh," she said, "I'm good. But I'm better now." They chatted on the phone for a good long time, and then he had to go. But before he hung up, he asked, "Do you remember that dragon I gave you, mom?" he asked.

"What dragon?" she teased.

"You know, the silver one, when I left for college? Do you still have it, mom?" he asked.

"Yes, I have it," she said, as she curled her hand around it dangling from a silver chain around her neck.

"I'm teaching my little Jenna about the dragon in the story, and she just loves it. I told her it was our story, yours and mine, and now it could be hers too. I'm sure the old book is long gone, but I thought if you still had that old dragon and if you don't wear it much, she would love to have it." he said.

"I think I might be able to find it," said the mother. "I'll see."

A few weeks later, the son's phone rang. He answered. It was his dad on the other end. "I have some bad news for you, son. Your mother died last night. I'm sorry. She lived a good life, and she loved you always."

The son and his family went back for the funeral. After the funeral, the son said, "I gave mom a silver dragon charm once. Do you know where she might have kept it?"

The father asked, "You mean the one she wore around her neck every day? She took it off a few weeks ago. Don't know what she did with it. But she did have this envelope addressed to you before she got sick." The dad handed a large envelope to the son with his name and address on it. The son took it and gently opened it. There were three things inside. One was a tiny white box wrapped in tissue paper and tied with an old shoelace. He opened it to reveal the silver dragon with her silver chain.

There was also a note. He opened it and began to read.

"My dear son," she wrote, "I have had this old dragon with me every single day since the moment you gave it to me. It has kept you at my side all this time. Now it's time for you to have the same relationship with your daughter. So I gladly send this to you. Tell her how special it is, and put it on her neck and please, send me a photo so I can see how beautiful she looks with it. Love, as always, mom."

Then he pulled out the last item. It was a very old child's story book, with pages worn and torn. It had the boy's name written inside in his own childish handwriting of ages gone past. It was called, "A Dragon's Breath".

"My old book!" the son exclaimed. He eagerly opened it and sat down with his little girl and read it to her. On the very last page, there was an inscription which read: "Little Jenna, please look after the silver dragon for me. He needs a new person who is very strong to protect him! Love, grandma."

The son took the charm and placed it around Jenna's small neck. He borrowed his father's phone and using the camera, he snapped a photo of his child wearing the silver dragon around her neck.

"But we can't send it to grandma anymore," little Jenna said.

"I know," said the son, "but grandpa can look at it every day. Then he'll have a part of all of us, including your grandmother, with him at the time." And the three of them

talked outside for a long time, and finally, the young man, his wife, and baby got in the car and drove away. And when he got out of sight, the dad looked at the photo and admired it. He tucked it into his shirt pocket where he could keep it near his heart. Then he went inside.

Thank you and good night.