

## The neglected horse and the undiscovered room

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I have two recurrent dreams, but I have never, until last night, had them in combined form.

One I have talked about before. Briefly: in the dream I have bought, or rented, or somehow acquired a new house and am moving into it. I discover a door—or sometimes it is a staircase—that I haven't known about, and it leads to a wonderful, previously-undiscovered room.

Many people tell me they have had this dream. (I should add, though, that they always women).

No one else I know, though, has had the actual experience, the way I have. When I bought this old farmhouse (I am in Maine as I write this) I had only seen it once. But I hired a painter and sent him paint samples with an outline drawing of the house interior, and instructed him which color to use in each of the ten rooms. He called me to ask what to do about the eleventh room. Gulp. I hadn't known there was an eleventh room.

(The eleventh room is now the studio where I work. The paint color is called "Rain Barrel" by Benjamin Moore).

The Neglected Horse dream has not come true the way the Undiscovered Room dream did. Thank goodness. In this one, I am responsible for a horse. He stands in a pasture. But he is very, very thin because I have forgotten about him and he hasn't been fed for a long time.

(When my kids were growing up, we had horses, and they were in a pasture behind the old house we lived in....or, in bad weather, in the barn. But they were always fed. It was my son Grey's responsibility, and he went out early, early every morning before school bus time, and fed the horses).

Anyway: last night the horse reappeared, and again I had forgotten him, hadn't fed him, felt terrible about it. But in last night's dream I met someone who had a beautiful horse farm, well tended, and who said I could house my horse there and he would be well taken care of. It was a great feeling of relief.

At the same time that I was making arrangements for the horse, in the dream, I was also trying to unload from a vehicle some furniture that I had acquired for a guest room in my house. It was difficult, unwieldy and also disheartening because it was ugly and inappropriate furniture. Then....suddenly, and with the same feeling of relief that I felt about the neglected horse....I realized that it was unnecessary because there were already two beautifully furnished guest rooms that I hadn't known about.

Okay. So what was that all about?

Well, over the years I have come to realize that both the horse and the rooms, in different ways, represent work and creativity. As it happens, I am about to start working on a new book. I have two books finished and awaiting publication but have not yet turned my attention to a new one. It is the horse standing in the pasture, wondering when I will feed him.

It's not surprising to me that when I came to Maine, as I did yesterday, intending to spend a few isolated and uninterrupted days starting a new book.....the dream horse found a clean stable where he would be tended and fed. And that the dream house, too, has well-furnished rooms waiting for guests.

Isn't the sub-conscious an amazing thing?

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