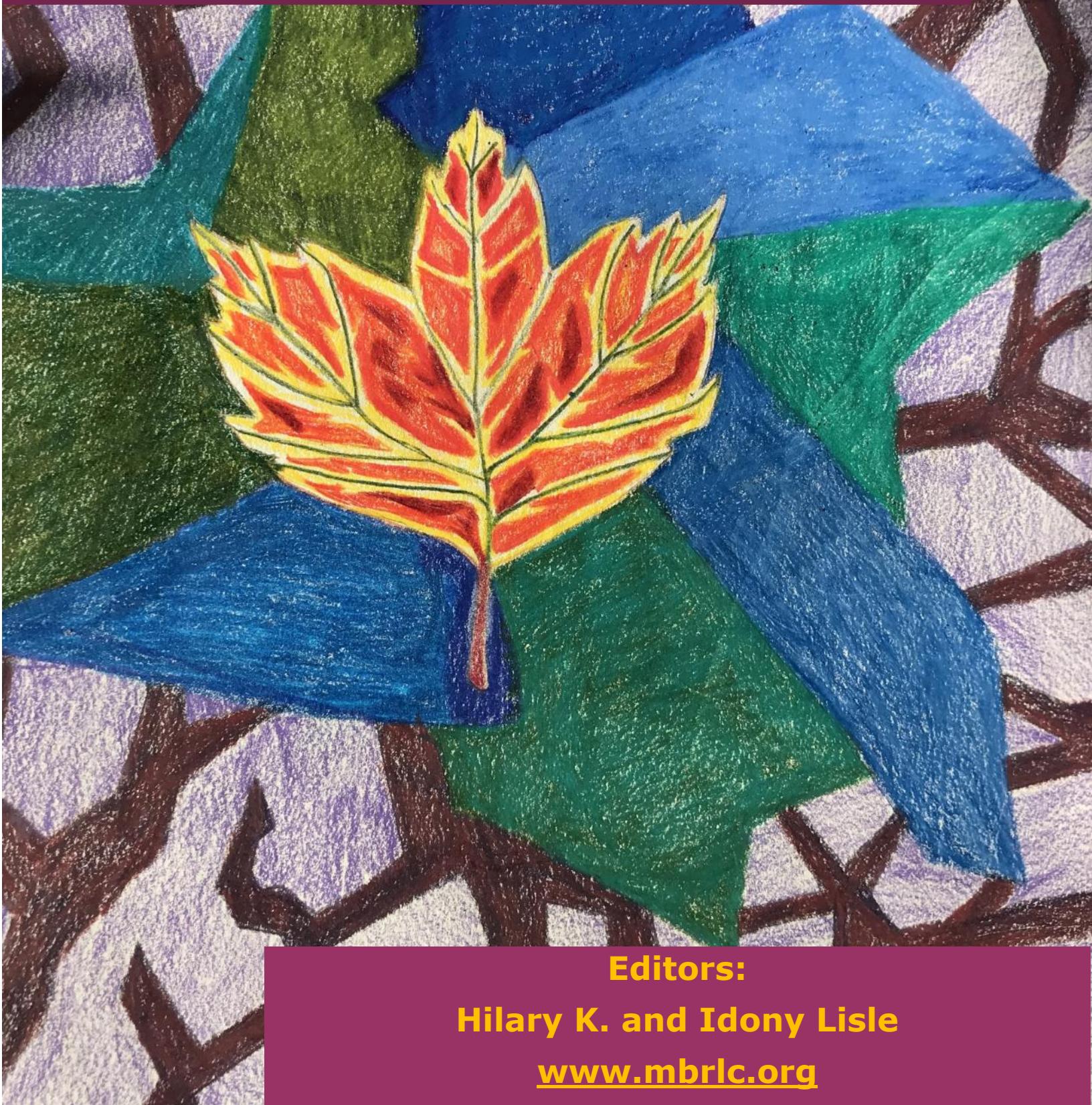


MBRLC NEWSLETTER

AUTUMN 2021



Editors:

Hilary K. and Idony Lisle

www.mbrlc.org



Trip Woodward

Hope this issue of the newsletter finds you just as relaxed and refreshed by the summer as Cloud the kitty! Despite being out of school for decades, for many of us the year starts over in the fall. Stop by a center and say hello!

ART CREDITS

PAGE 2—TRIP WOODWARD

PAGES 3–4—CONTRIBUTED BY AUTHOR

PAGE 5, 13, 14, 15—ANDROMEDA LISLE

PAGE 7—KIM COLLINS

PAGE 8—SHEILA KENNEDY

PAGE 12—CONTRIBUTED BY AUTHOR

COVERS AND MISCELLANEOUS—IDONY LISLE

This quarter we have a number of goodies for you, including an invitation to play a role-playing game of the Dungeons and Dragons genre, some nifty poetry, and a fascinating look into the background of the writer's recovery story!

To submit, email
idony.lisle@bmc.org

A REVELATION

BY

YUKA GORDON



I have spoken of my recovery story on many occasions. However, the more often I shared it, the more I felt my recovery story was incomplete, because I never included in it my first episode. In order to talk about the episode, it is necessary to bring up one of the causes. So, I have decided to disclose that part.

When I was a college student, I became a stunt woman for the original Pink Power Ranger. My brother had been the Green Power Ranger and persuaded me to be part of it. We belonged to the Toei Movie Co., the same company that produced Godzilla. I never told anyone other than family members about the job because I thought people would not believe me. Who knows who was inside the costume? Could be anyone.

There were 5 Pink Power Ranger stuntmen including myself, the only female. My role was to take close shots for the TV program or event shows, because the Pink Power Ranger should not have a male "bulge". The other 4 stunt men's roles were for shots with physically demanding actions such as jumping from 3 stories high amid explosions.

I was pressured to keep slim (100 pounds maximum) because in general people look bigger on screen. The pressure created an eating disorder (anorexia) and depression. When another stunt coworker playing Godzilla



was killed by pyrotechnics, I feared continuing. I was concerned about my future and my depression got worse. I could not concentrate on studies and barely graduated from college.

In my country (Japan) people think seeing a mental health professional is an embarrassment and shame. People do not talk about it openly but hide it. My parents were disgusted with me and called me a lazy loser. That is the missing part.

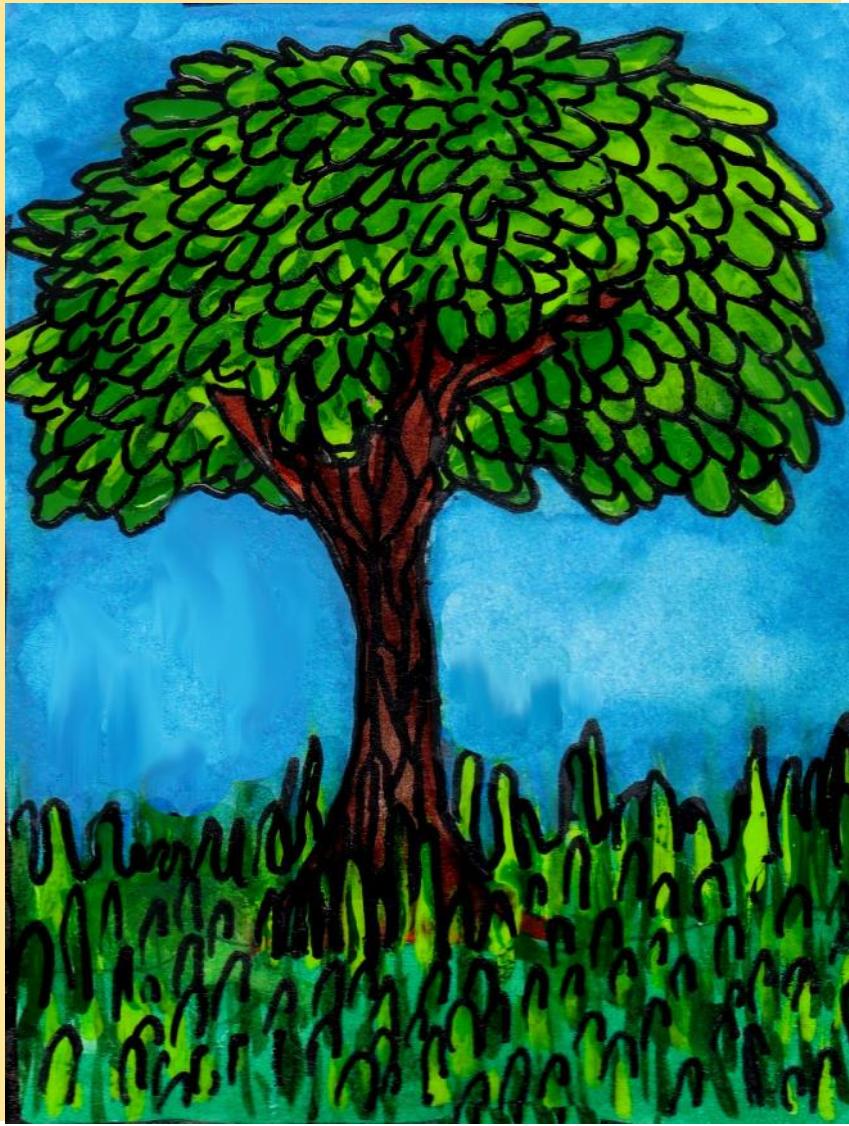


A LAMENT
A COVID SOUND OF MUSIC
BY MARY PHILLIPS

Why I cry
Hate pours out
No one is there
To care
And I'll sing once more
Media is the only way
To break the chord
Of death..of life
The cool air
Envelops me
With a lovely view
And no one to claim
The game
Has gone on for
To long
The hate is deep inside
And I'll sing once more
What more will you take from
me
Oh precious Lord
How much longer
Will you mold me
And leave me free
In a false mission
Incomplete
You see my face

What do you know of my mind
And I'll sing once more
So tired of being attached
To my kitchen stove, my sink
And I'll sing once more
When I make it
The day is done
Alone again
I'm sorry Lord
I seek your face, your peace
And I'll sing once more

August 6 21'



AT PEACE AT SEA

BY MICHAEL SIENA

There's nothing here that's not been said before. – Beastie Boys, Bodhi-sattva Vow

As Buddhism teaches, life and everything that composes it is slippery, intangible and difficult to grasp. It's like trying to hold onto water. I may think there is something more substantial to clench. I may fool myself that there is. Yet all the things I value so much – food, shelter, clothing, friends, family, a mate – are fragile and temporary. They're one hurricane, one job loss, one argument, one fire, one pandemic from vanishing. This may sound pessimistic and cynical but there is a silver lining. It is not only the desirable items in my life that are fragile and temporary but also all of the undesirable items. Over time, I will lose things I'd like to keep but whatever is troubling me now will also disappear.

Pondering deep thoughts at breakfast, I recognize that my world is more like jelly or orange juice than like bread or a muffin. Despite that A.M. philosophizing, my habitual tendency is to think of my universe as material. The truth is that my universe and everything in it, including me, are more like liquid than solid.



I drift through life somewhat clueless and confused, nervous and off balance, embarrassed and ashamed, frustrated and let down, trying to find something to hang onto or something to give me direction. There's nothing solid there. If I do find something that appears solid, I won't be able to hold on to it, at least not in its original form. Everything changes and every thing that comes into existence, ceases to exist. Anything I thought was fixed or unshakeable eventually proves itself to be as insubstantial and ephemeral as the last thing that evaded my grasp. I have to ask myself, has there ever been something I could permanently rely upon, that didn't eventually slip through my hands, either fading away or transforming in one fashion or another to elude my possession? In



"Veggis Galaxy" by Kim Collins. Acrylic

examining my life, there are few if any objects that would fit into that category. After all, I and every person I know, our very bodies and minds, are all temporary.

However, there is a silver lining here, too. Once I see the reality of my circumstances, I can start adapting myself to it. As I recognize the fundamental fluidity of my situation, I can begin to learn to appreciate it. Little by slow I can get accustomed to my position, relax into it and learn to enjoy it a bit - like floating on my back in the middle of the sea without a map, relying on nothing, bound by nothing, scary at first but peaceful at last. As J.R. Tolkien famously said: "Not all who wander are lost." Without a map, there is no lost.

Special thanks to Buddhist nun, Pema Chodron, and spiritual scholars, Alan Watts and Robert Luyster, without whom this essay would not exist.



MY PANTHER SALEM

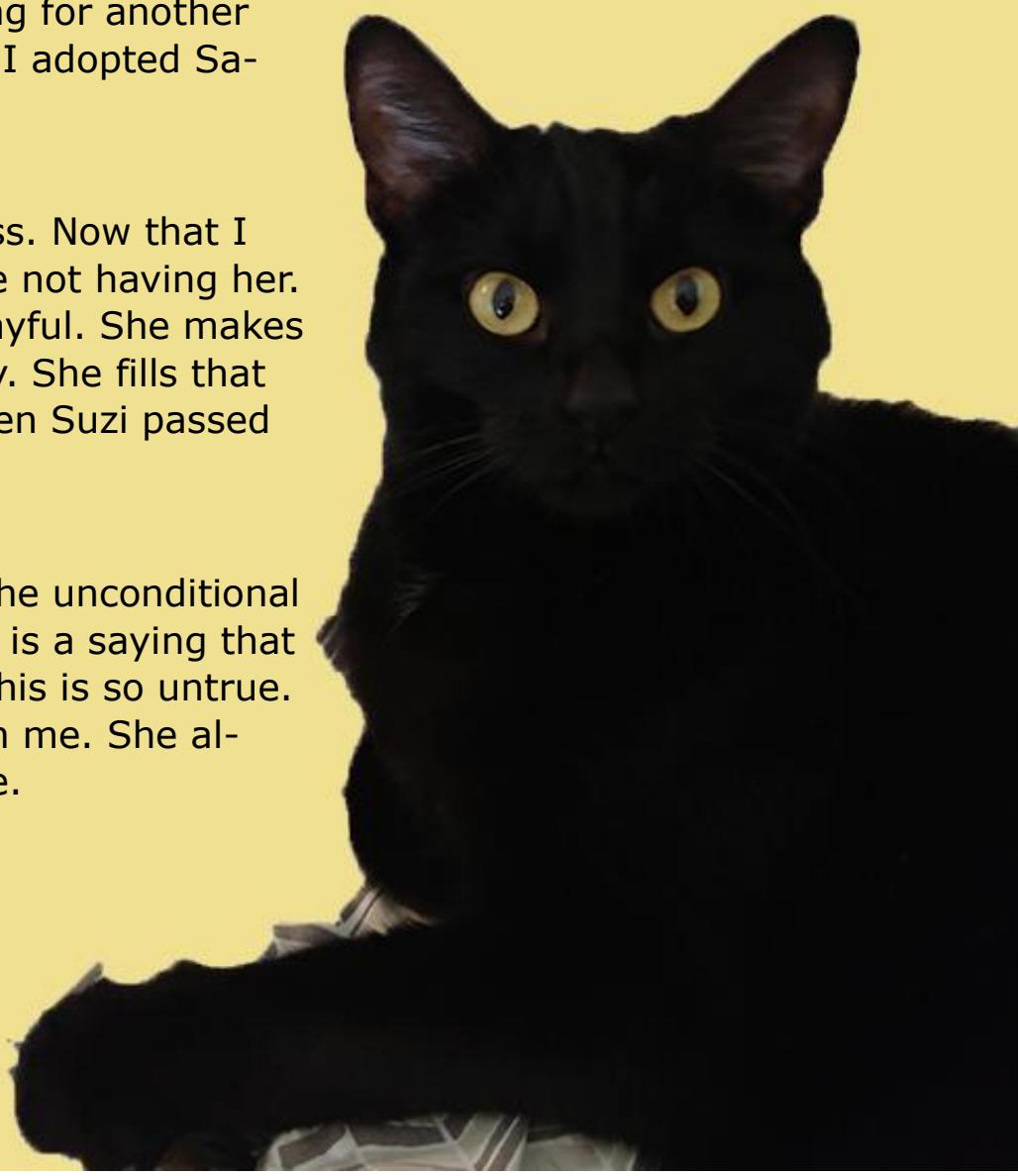
(AKA SALEM MASSACHUSETTS)

BY SHEILA KENNEDY

Salem came into my life about seven months ago. I lost my beloved Suzi about 2 years ago. I wasn't planning on getting another cat. It took some time for me to get over her loss. I have had cats my whole life. Something was missing in my life. I wasn't sure whether I was ready for the responsibility for caring for another animal. I am so glad that I adopted Salem.

She is an amazing princess. Now that I have her I cannot imagine not having her. She is quirky and very playful. She makes me laugh every single day. She fills that void that was so deep when Suzi passed away.

There isn't anything like the unconditional love I get from her. There is a saying that black cats are bad luck. This is so untrue. She is so affectionate with me. She always wants to be near me.



SPICES AND HERBS (SATIRE)

BY: FRANK

Parsley, sage **rosemary** and thyme. Allspice, angelica, anise, bay leaf. **Black pepper**, belgian truffles, brown pepper, boldo. Lavender, lemon grass, Licorice, **nutmeg**. **Sesame**, spearmint, shallots, sumac. White mustard, wasabi, willow herb, winter green. **Paprika**, **oregano**, mace, ginger root, fenugreek, fennel. Chicory, Chives, Cicely, **cilantro**. Lemon balm, lovage, and saffron. **Sea salt**, pink salt, table salt, savory. **Garlic**, Ghost Pepper, Pickle Seed, **poppy seed**. Etc.....

Dear KFC,

As you can see from the list with bold words above, we were able to deduce the 11 secret spices and herbs in your fried chicken using our advanced AI systems in combination with our team of Food Scientists and computer programmers.

Send \$1,000,000 in crypto to this encrypted account. XXX-XX-XXX. Or we will release the secret recipe to the world.

Yours Truly,
Truth Finders.



THIS IS A GUIDED MEDITATION. THIS IS CALLED THE HEART FLOWER
BY MICHAEL STUART

Imagine that your heart is a giant flower bulb.

It is closed and has yet to flower.

Place your hands around it and turn it either to the left or right.

It will open, bloom, and get bigger.

As you do this pull the flower up from your body, so the petals lay on top of chest.
Now take a deep breath and blow cold wind over the petals and blow them all away.
If some petals remain take another deep breath and blow the remaining petals away.

Your chest may feel empty, but I want you to look at the remains of the flower.

You will see there is a stem that extends deep inside you to a flower bush.

On this bush there are an infinite number of little flower bulbs.

Now pick anyone they are all the same.

It is going to be small but place your hands around it and pull it up into your chest.

It will grow slightly as you do this.

Be careful opening the flower bud even though it is small there will be a very bright light when
you open it.

Now close the flower all the way.

We are going to finish by covering it with gold and silver.

First pour molten gold over the flower and cover it completely.

Then pour molten silver over the flower and cover it completely.

Now when you open your heart flower the light will shimmer.

It is up to you whether to keep your heart flower open or closed.

Open or closed it can give and receive love equally.

But when it is open you will shine.

"PROMISES NOTHING BUT FOREVER"

BY JON GOTTLIEB

There is nothing in life that is forever but one thing is for sure that when you find your true companions you never let go.....

so let them know.

Their values are so unreal.

What they possess can truly heal.

They possess a uniqueness that they should never conceal.

You are in the minority of the creme de la creme.

Taste them like you would ice cream.

Open your eyes.

Them being there for you and you for them is no dream.

Your lives will remain supreme.

Whether they are in groups, or a special boy and or girl.

Never any more complaints or problems.

Safe, secure, loving kindnesses will sure to unfurl.



TWIN SUNS
THE LONELY MOON CHRONICLES
STORYBOOK ONE: THE KEEP AT WATERS EDGE
RSVP AT ALIA-JUNE@ARS.GAMES



**Come Join Us in an Adventure Using a Brand-New Rule Set
A Role-Playing Adventure For 2 People
Copyright: Alia June and Maufus**

Uses A.R.S. - Advanced RPG Scripting. An adventure style game for two, a Storyteller and Player. Each is playing their own game. The Player can choose from a list of prompts, or go off script making their own choices, the Storyteller executes ever more complex instructions in order to determine the outcome of a choice. A.R.S. serves as a Trainer for Inexperienced players to Paper and Pencil Role Playing Games but there is so much more than a choose your own adventure style game.

Complex Characters

Abilities: Uses 5 Aspects or overarching abilities describe the character.

Marks: Most actions have consequences, you become Marked by your choices, earn Marks in Cryptic categories which are not explained until the end of the game. Some Marks will not be explained until the sequel stories. What does Faery Dragon Mean?

Knowledge: You are only able to make choices based on the information your character knows, if you don't know about something your choices will become more limited. Learn new things to unlock new sections of the game or perform different actions.

Demeanor: Be careful how you dress. Some people will not speak with you or tell you the whole story depending on what Clothes or Armor and Weapon you have equipped; non-player characters will make comments based



on your Demeanor.

Complex Social System: Choose whether to Charm, Persuade, Bond, or Intimidate someone to convince them to tell you something or do something for you. Every non-player character is only susceptible to certain techniques but not others. Pay close attention to sections describing them to figure out what is their weakness.

Skills: Your rank in a skill determines your Chances of success at a given task. Use Random Die Rolls to determine outcomes.

Inventory: Choose your Equipment carefully it will affect what you can do and how people react to you. Manage your Money wisely. There are limited resources.

Complex Circular Branching Story

Choices: Story Branches out depending on your Marks, Knowledge, Demeanor, Skills, Inventory, and Abilities

Hubs: Certain Areas Serve as hubs that allow the player to travel freely and return to at will and provide feedback on Earned Marks and Demeanor

Endgame: If you reach an Endgame you can return to a bookmark and replay sections, the world may change depending on your actions.

Dynamic: Non-Player Characters Can Move from Location to Location

Omni Sections: Sections that Can be Played at any time, the Player can go off script and the game will respond depending on the type of action taken by the player.

Location and Activities: 420 Blocks of text, 80 Locations and 340 Events

Content: Nearly 50,000 Words

Complex Story: A Sci-Fi/Fantasy Mystery end capped by a Dungeon Crawl. Find Non-Violent Solutions to your problems.



NEWS FROM PEER-RUN PROGRAMS

BY HOWARD D. TRACHTMAN, BS, CPS, CPRP, COAPS METRO BOSTON RECOVERY LEARNING COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP TEAM AND DIRECTOR OF CONSTITUENT AFFAIRS

The Department of Mental Health (DMH) funds five peer-run (all staff identify as having lived experience) Recovery Learning Communities, one for each of their five catchment areas.

Boston Medical Center has the contracts for the Metro Boston and South-east areas. The Northeast Independent Living program operates the Northeast Recovery Learning Community, the Wildflower Alliance is the Western Massachusetts RLC and the Kiva Centers serve the Center Massachusetts area.

See all RLC contact info here: <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/recovery-learning-communities>

The Metro Boston Recovery Learning Community (MBRLC) mission is to help coordinate peer activity in the Metro Boston Area, although we will serve anyone regardless of geography. See our website www.mbrlc.org, email info@mbrlc.org or call Howard at his home/office (781) 642-0368.



One of our offerings is Opening Doors to the Arts. We get free and reduced priced tickets to theater, concerts and more. We have relationships with Boston Symphony Orchestra, Handel and Haydn Society, Boston Philharmonic, Berklee School of Music, SpeakEasy Stage Company, Lyric Stage, Wheellock Family Theater and many more. Our website is www.OpeningDoorsToTheArts.org

To join send an email to info@OpeningDoorsToTheArts.org requesting to be placed on email list.

The MBRLC also operates a peer support line (also called a warmline) 7

days a week from 4pm-7:45pm. A warmline is a compassionate listening and resource line staffed entirely by people with lived experience. The MBRLC peer support line is toll-free 1 877 733-7563 (877 PEER LNE). For a directory of other peer support lines see www.warmline.org Other warmlines that take out of area calls are in red on the website.

Another partner of the MBRLC is the National Alliance on Mental Illness Greater Boston Peer Support and Advocacy Network (PSAN). PSAN promotes the use of NAMI peer programs including NAMI Connection Support Groups, PEER to PEER educational classes and a In Our Own Voice speaker program. PSAN has weekly staff/support meetings, and like the MBRLC mentors people to work in human services. For more details email Howard Trachtman hdt@namiboston.org or call (781) 642-0368.

*If we treat people as they are, we make them worse.
If we treat people as they ought to be, we help them become
what they are capable of becoming.*

--Johann Wolfgang von Goethe



The MBRLC connects several four peer-run recovery centers, each of which has in-person and virtual (Zoom) meetings:

The Boston Resource Center is located at BMC/Solomon Carter Fuller Building, 85 East Newton Street, Ground Floor, Boston, MA 02118. Open Mondays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays: 10 am-2 pm

<https://www.mbrlc.org/boston-resource-center>

contact Yuka Gordon, MA, CPS, Director of Metro Boston RLC, yuka.gordon@bmc.org (617) 875-4997.

Cambridge/Somerville Recovery Learning Center, 61 Innerbelt Road, Somerville, MA 02143

Open Monday through Friday, different hours each day; see website for details <https://www.mbrlc.org/csrlc>

Contact Janel Tan CSRLC director: tanj@vinfen.org or call (617) 863-5388.

Peer Support Network (PSN), 31 Bowker Street Fifth floor, Boston MA 02114

Open Monday through Friday 10am-3pm.

Contact staff at (617) 788-1034 or psn@baycove.org

<https://www.mbrlc.org/peer-support-network>

Hope Center, 25 Staniford Street, Plaza Level, Erich Lindemann Building, Boston, MA 02114

Open Tuesday through Thursday 10am-3pm.

Contact Director Julie Anne Entwistle at (617)454-4621

or jentwistle@northsuffolk.org

<https://www.mbrlc.org/hope-center>

The MBRLC also suggests participating in groups through the Southeast Recovery Learning Community.

Contact director Sandra Whitney-Sarles sandra.whitney-sarles@bmc.org 1 -774-212-4519

<https://www.southeastrlc.org/>

