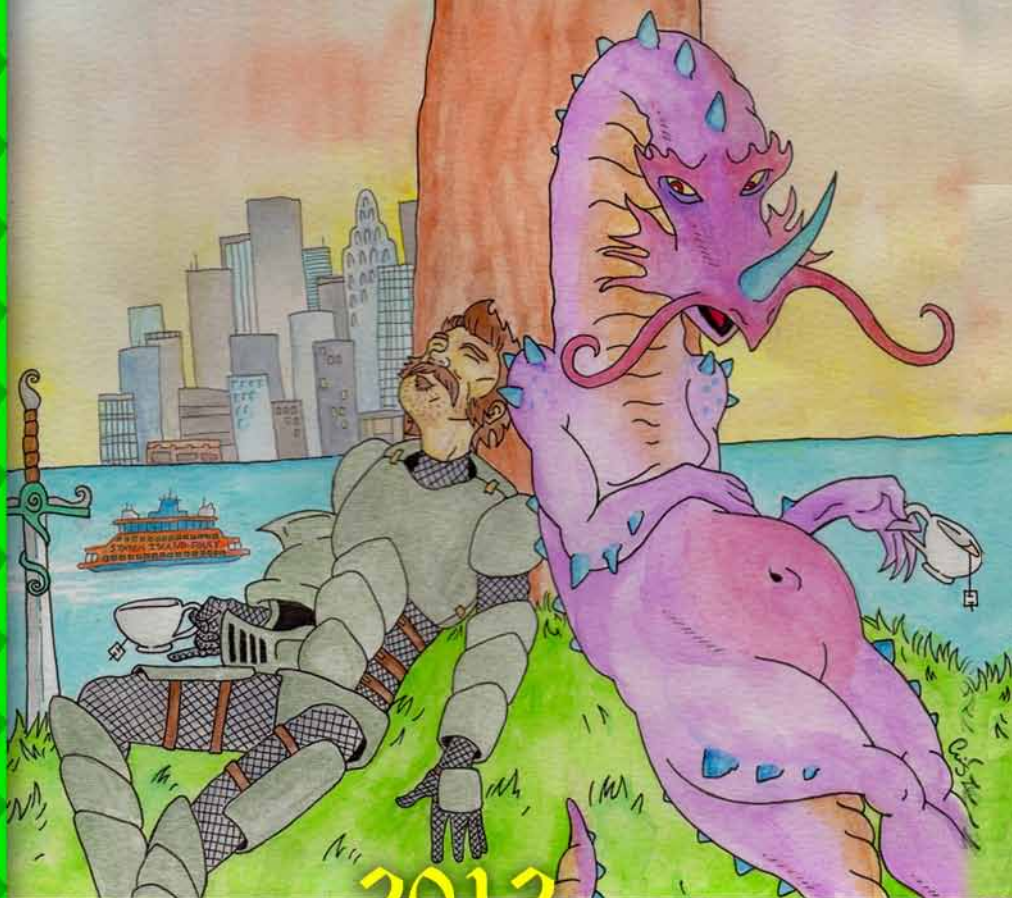


St. George Day STORY BOOK

CAN YOU IMAGINE?



2012

TOMPKINSVILLE PARK, STATEN ISLAND, PLANET EARTH

A New Legend

IT'S TIME for all of us to replace the old legends of St. George *slaying* the Dragon with new models of cooperation, problem-solving and human ingenuity, bringing creativity to difficult situations.

A New World...
if you want it!



ST GEORGE DAY STORYBOOK was produced at EVERY THING GOES BOOK CAFE AND NEIGHBORHOOD STAGE by Steve Jones Daughs, Jenny Lytton-Hirsch and Katie McCarthy. Printed at MCKEE HIGH SCHOOL by Leo Gordon and students using some great machines they have there. Proofreading by Richard Wonder. This festival was made possible in part by a DCA Art Fund Grant from the Council on the Arts and Humanities for Staten Island, with public funding from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs and major help from GrownNYC, NYC Parks and Recreation, Every Thing Goes Stores, and CATPAW, the Community Association of Tompkinsville Park Promoting Arts and Whimsy.

Yay! all the contributors who donated creativity for its pages. Yay! the local businesses and world-changers who bought ads in this book to support this volunteer grassy-roots community project.

image: from a painting by Sheryl Humphrey

Front Cover image: Chris Sorentino



St. George Day Festival

AN EARTH DAY AND ARTS FESTIVAL
CELEBRATING COMMUNITY AND DRAGONS

April 21st, 2012 in Tompkinsville Park

Dragon Parade 2:00

St George and the Dragon Giant Puppet Show 2:30

Plaza Stage - Live Music and Dance:

Allergic to B's, John Sarrantos, Peter Zumo, Jim Indell, Joan Caddell and the Midnight Choir, the Pink Diamond Steppers, Jajerin Jones, Donna Maxon, Christine Dixon, Elena Salazar, Gypsy Flutes, Bobaloo Basey, Neesa Sunar, Doug Grim, Audiometry, Wafoo, Cadre of Two, Lou Russo, Gigaherb and Community Drumming Circle

Kid Stage: Hiroko Otani's Japanese Dragon Myth; Zero Boy the Human Cartoon; Whose Garden is It? a participatory children's play; Clown Watson Kaweck; and Liam Mehlich

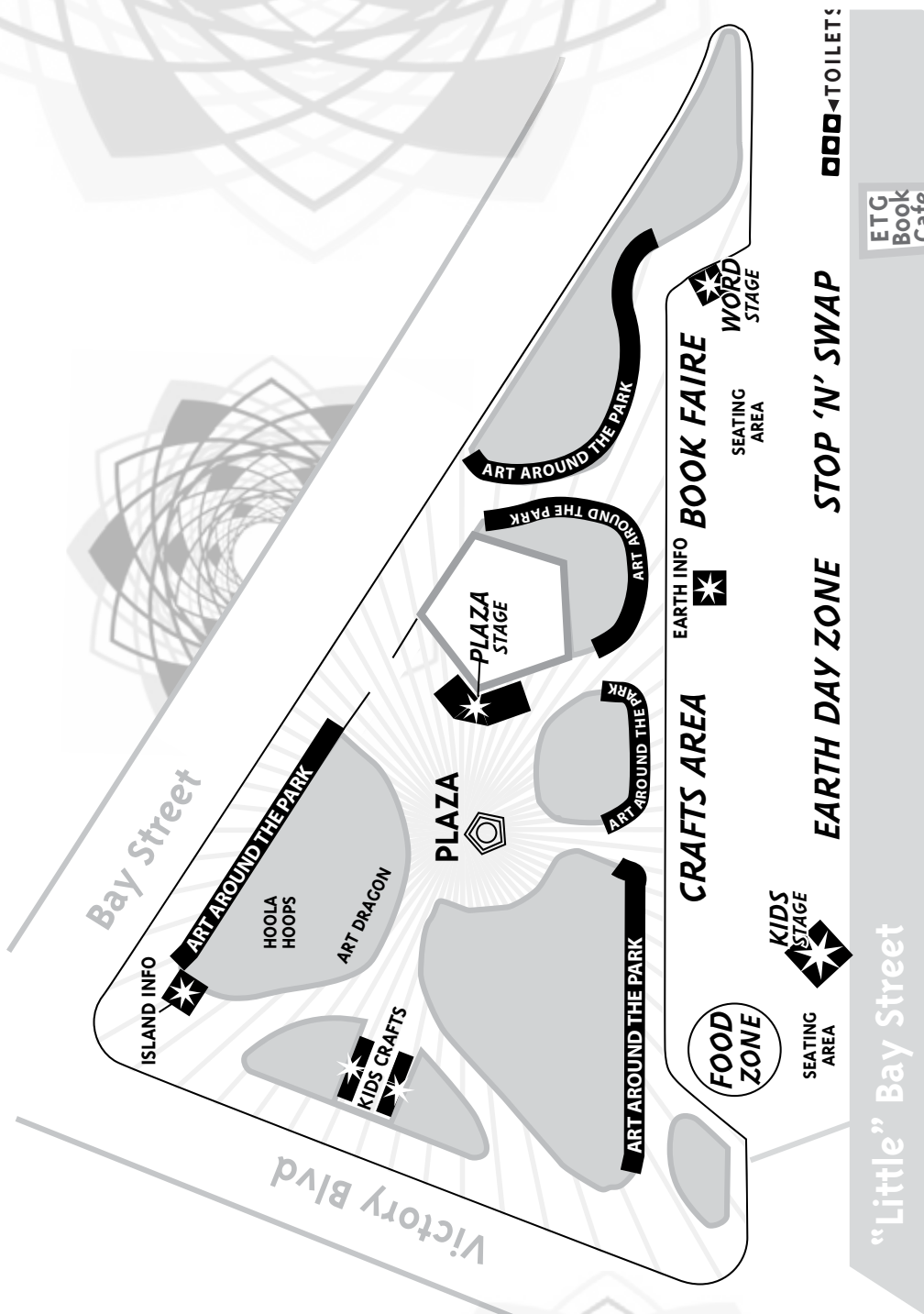
Lion Puppet Dance 1:00 performance by Xiaolin Martial Arts

Kid's Zone Crafts led by Bridgette Francis, Janice Patrignani, Hiroko Otani, and Kate Howard (Unitarian Church of SI)

Book Faire Spoken Word Stage with SI OutLoud, SHiNG (Shoot Hoops Not Guns), Kaleidoscope (Curtis HS), Spanish Language Readings, Sun's Skeleton, Creative Hub, Poetry Slam with Christina Morales and local authors: Ed Weiss, Shell Lewis, Victoris Hallerman, Kim Pinto, Avi Gvili, Sue-Ann Commissiong, Frank Cangro, Jessica Maria Tuccelli and Malachi McCormick

Pet Dragon Costume Contest 3:30

and MORE!



Art Around the Park includes 16 Local Artists, Craft Demonstrations, a Paint-By-Numbers Dragon Mural and Live Painting, Face Painting by Phyllis Alden and Jocelyn Oglivie, Henna Hands by Stephanie Gough, The Answer Men with Ken and Bob Wagner

Earth Day Zone includes:

Composting with the NYC Compost Project
 A **Stop 'N' Swap** hosted by Grow NYC
 A Great Tree Walk with John Kilcullen
 Cooking demonstrations by City Harvest
 MillionTrees tree giveaway
 Street Trees of New York City author Leslie Day
 Topiary dragon project courtesy of Snug Harbor.
 Recycling Trash Dragon by the Green Teens of NYC Parks.
 Live Animals from the Staten Island Zoo
 Nature Journaling and Plant Identification with Cheri Brunault.
 Seed Ball Making with Jay Weichun.
 E-Waste recycling site by the Lower East Side Ecology Center
 Staten Island Herb Society
 Federated Garden Clubs of Staten Island
 The Greenmarket people
 Water-on-the-Go
 New Yorkers for Clean Water
 Protectors of Pine Oak Woods
 Natural Resources Protective Association
 Staten Island Museum

Bicycle Area includes:

Bicycle-Powered Rainwater Harvesting by Greening NYC
 Transportation Alternatives Dragon Map Coloring Book
 Solar Bicycle from PS57
 Free Bike Repair by Steve Messina and friends
 Learn to make Bike Art with Recycle a Bicycle!

AND MORE!

Core Management Team: Jenny Lytton-Hirsch, Katie McCarthy, Steve Jones Daughs, Jackie Junttonen, Hiroko Otani, Tanya Acevedo, Francisco Osorio, Michael Reiser, Andrew Blancero, Gary Moore, Richard Wonder, Julie Greve, Marina Tsaplina, Kris Johnson, Florence Poulain, Mike Schnall, Frank Gessner, Brett Copp, Gabrielle Kennedy, Eric Alter, John Kilcullen.



THE TRUE STORY OF ST GEORGE AND THE DRAGON

by St. George

"I approached the Dragon as she drank, cautious, trembling, ever careful to keep out of her line of sight.

When I finally got close enough to poke her, I thrust out the elm twig and caught her just under the ribs. She looked at me lazily, and I could swear she smiled as she snorted. The twig went up in flames. I shrieked, the other six-year-old boys who had dared me to do it shrieked, and it was complete pandemonium. I ran, and I ran, and I have been running ever since."

—From the Diary of St. George

I love a good Myth like everyone else, but I would like to share with you the *real* story of me and the Dragon, which is not about heroes and villains but about simple people with kind hearts who perhaps let their fears get the best of them.

It was quite a long time ago. Our village was small but friendly, a dozen gray stone houses arranged haphazardly around an unpaved village square. As dingy as the village looked, it was nevertheless home to one of the great jewels of our region, the Tompkins Fountain, a sparkling watering hole at the center of the square. On a typical day at the fountain you might have seen squirrels and deer, muskrats and bear, the swinging water pails of the peasant women, the children cooling off in the hot summer, everyone sharing the fountain peacefully and cheerfully.

And the magnificent Dragon from Fresh Kills as well, who came one day each April to quench her enormous thirst for the entire year. She bothered no one, and, save the occasional schoolboy prank, no one bothered her.

But the watering hole started attracting more and more people and our village became a boom town. Everyone was making money. Caught up in the fervor, my brother Charles and I opened a small souvenir shop on the square. Wary of people and commotion, I kept to the back handling the stock while Charles attended to customers. We sold bottles of Magical Tompkins Fountain

Water, clumsy handcarved wooden dragons, that sort of thing. At some point there was some sort of trouble with the Dragon over sharing the fountain, and after

that we began to stock clubs and throwing-stones as well.



image: Scott Wegener

I was the sort that liked to keep to myself and mind my own business, but something about the way the village was going just didn't feel quite right to me. Though I couldn't put my finger on it, I knew that something was deeply wrong. So I left the shop and moved into the woods. The move caught Charles off guard. Because the village had grown so large, many of the villagers wanted to prevent the Dragon, with her enormous thirst, from drinking at the fountain. The conflict had gotten very ugly. People were saying that she had even scorched a few stone throwers. It was springtime and the clubs and stones were moving like never before, and Charles had to handle it all himself.

How it came about that some months into my solitude the villagers began to think of me as "wise," I can't say. Perhaps I wasn't the only one who was concerned with the way things were going with the village. Perhaps we all felt it, and somehow my leaving for the woods spoke to people deep down in their hearts. People may have thought I was making some kind of statement by leaving, but really I was just running away again. In any case, sometime toward the end of April I returned to my forest home from picking mushrooms to find Charles on my doorstep, looking sullen and defeated.

"George," he muttered, "we need your help. The townspeople have become so afraid of the Dragon that many are in favor of killing her. We didn't know where else to turn, so we've turned to you." To this day, I don't know whether Charles meant that people were looking

for help in killing the dragon, or help in preventing the killing of the Dragon. I suppose it doesn't matter. It seemed almost an accident that I was chosen. But the truth was that I was done running. I told George that I would face the Dragon on behalf of the townspeople.

When I entered the Dragon cave two days later, I was not unarmed. I carried with me a twig from that old elm tree in the hopes that the Dragon might remember our encounter so many years ago and smile at me again for being so foolish. I was very afraid, as I had always been, but I was not there to do any harm to the Dragon and I hoped that she would sense this.

The encounter itself was anything but mythical. If she remembered me she didn't show it. She was friendly and straightforward. She suggested that if the townspeople were willing to conserve water there would probably be enough for everyone. I was not surprised when the people of the town happily agreed. They knew what was right in their hearts, and they knew they didn't need to run from fear. For many years after that it was an awesome sight to behold the Dragon every April on what back then was called Dragon Day.

I loosened up a little after that, moved back to town and went to work in a library. I handled visitors fine but sometimes disappeared into the stacks for solitude. I wasn't a saint or hero, but I did sometimes enjoy reading about myself and my "exploits" in the books that claimed I was.



The Dragon's Reply to an Island Nymph

Spring's life-water quenches my desire
for thrust, flight, and complacent pale virgins.

On this green, I build potent rock circles
around me to shut out the sainted man
charging blindly with lance and sword aloft.

Bands forged in a winter furnace of fear
are of no use on this echoing green
where strong daisy chains and serpentine rocks
gird 'round a true heart and arm a pure soul.



The once mighty and powerful dragon
stood against the bleak sky

“How green this Earth used to be
Now ridden with darkness and lies
All turned against one another,
filled with hatred and contempt
Isolated and caring only about ourselves
We must come together and work as one,
no longer resent

Put the feelings behind and look ahead
Tend to the gardens and care for the creatures
If we do not act soon we will reach the day of the dead

Our resources are slim we must replenish them fast
Mend the mistakes of our past brothers and sisters
We must make this Earth last

The Earth is our home, our hostess, our mother
Treat it with respect and care.

The love that we give it
shall compare to no other
so our lives will not be ridden
with guilt and sorrow.

We cannot trample this Earth's precious grounds!
Conserve today for a better tomorrow.”



Dragon Day Parade

On the Dragon Day Parade
Strong in every way
Unrestricted by any fixed condition
The Dragon Day Parade

The spark that cannot fade
Absolution made

The breath of fire that stirs all hearts
On the Dragon Day Parade

Join our escapade
BHA STRIKA PRANAYAMA
On the Dragon Day Parade

On The Dragon Day Parade
Promises were made
10,000 scales fell just like rain
On The Dragon Day

Join our escapade
BHA STRIKA PRANAYAMA
On the Dragon Day Parade

The Breath of fire
Stirs All Hearts

On the Dragon Day Parade



image: Brendan Coyle

Ridges Gets A Sister

"R-I-D-D-G-E-S-S!" His mother was looking for him A-G-A-I-N.

She sprouted her frustrations in curlicues as she waddled her big belly through the swamp flickering the fuzzy tip of her long purple and orange tail against the flowers there. "Hey!" squawked the Booglybuzz, but Momma Dragon did not hear. "R-I-D-D-G-E-S-S!"

Ridges felt the wobble of the ground that told him something was coming through the swamp. The snakevines jiggled their sweat-drops in rhythm. Golden flashes sharply glistened between the elephantleaves over there and Ridges recognized his mother's signals before he heard her calling.

"R-I-D-G--" goink! Ridges' big fat face popped out of the bloomers right into her nose. "Hiya, Momma!"

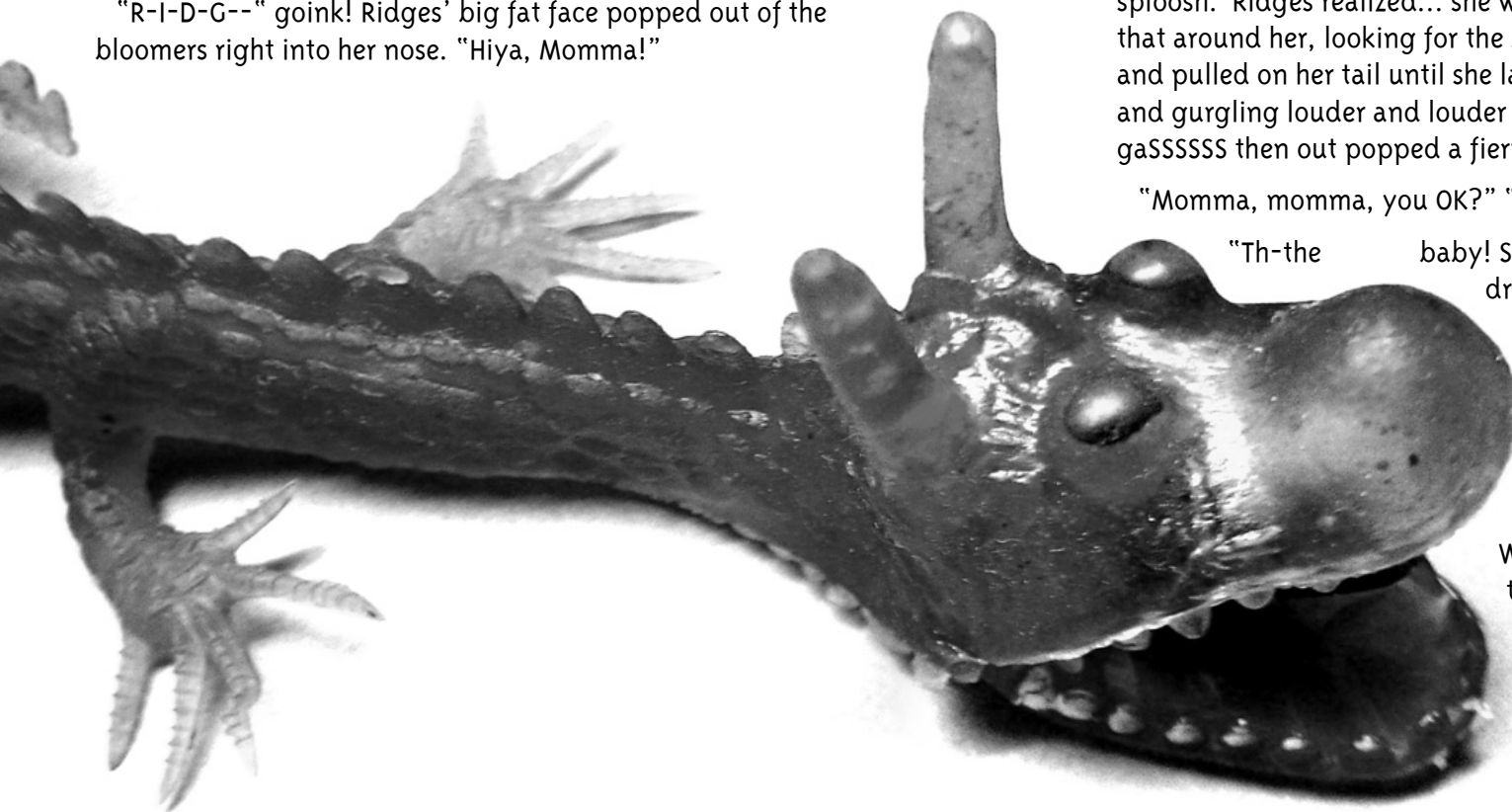
"Playing near the swamp AGAIN? You fell into it last time and had to be rescued! Don't you know the BABY IS COMING?"

Ridges looked down and dropped his tail. "Oh, yeahhhhh." a thought cloud came out of his noggin and inside was a playmate, a friend bouncing on the rubber plants under the waterfall and --" "R-I-D-D-G-E-S-S! Your dad is away and I need your help!" She slowly waddled away, and as Ridges followed behind he watched something rolling around under Mommas bellys skin. "Gosh..!"

Suddenly his mother snorted loudly S-S-S-S-oooOOOooo AAAaaaAAEeeeEEEEEE S-S-S-S-sss, slumping to the earth with a loud sploosh. Ridges realized... she was ready! He jumped this way and that around her, looking for the best way to help. He turned her over and pulled on her tail until she laid on her back. She kept snorting and gurgling louder and louder oooOOOooooeeeEEEEeagagagagaga-gaSSSSSS then out popped a fiery orange-red... baby dragon!

"Momma, momma, you OK?" "Aaaahhhh... " she smiled.

"Th-the baby! She looks like fire! Hiya little fire dragon." "gwaffak blubblubeee fiizz-ziii POP" said the new shiney wet little wiggler. Momma's dreamy face was shining like the moon, her smile spreading everywhere as her body let go. "Momma?" said Ridges, "Let's call her FLAME..." With a great calm cuddling sigh, all the nostrils billowed pink spirals in the shadows of the jungle moon.



They were the dragons that survived the killing

They were the dragons that survived the killing. They learnt to control their fire and thus saved themselves from the fury of men.

When a new dragon was born they clipped the fire sting in its throat through a ritual they called "Enlightenment" and explained to their young that this action ensured their survival by not provoking humans.

One mother schemed for her offspring to retain its fire sting. She gave birth surrounded by dragons that had no fire sting but itched for revenge.

The little new dragon learnt from his mother and her friends about the wickedness of men. How they eliminated his ancestors and made accessories out of sacred dragon skins.

He vowed to retaliate and burn them to ashes.

He honed his skills of killing and burning until he could pass for a professional soldier.

Then they sent him to quench their thirst for revenge and his for blood by devouring men in a village.

When he got there, George the Mayor confronted him and asked what business brought him there.

The dragon said: "I am a survivor of your violence. You killed my people and now you are going to die."

George said: "Son, I know a lot of crimes were done to your people, and you have many reasons to ask for our blood, but that won't give you the satisfaction you are thirsty for. When you kill one you will want to kill many, and that will drive you as insane as the people who caused your people harm. I am so sorry for your loss my young friend, but blood will not quench the fire in your guts."

The young dragon looked at George with a confused and interested gaze. He always sensed that there was something twisted in the way he was brought up, but until now he could not find the fault in his upbringing. Listening to George he heard a song that resonated with his heart. He realized that he wanted freedom from

fear embracing diversity. He nodded his head in agreement and said respectfully: "What would you suggest?"

George beamed with love and compassion towards the young dragon and said:

"There is a well in the middle of the village. Drink from it as much as you need, and when you have enough I will instruct you how to refill it, so the villagers have water to drink".

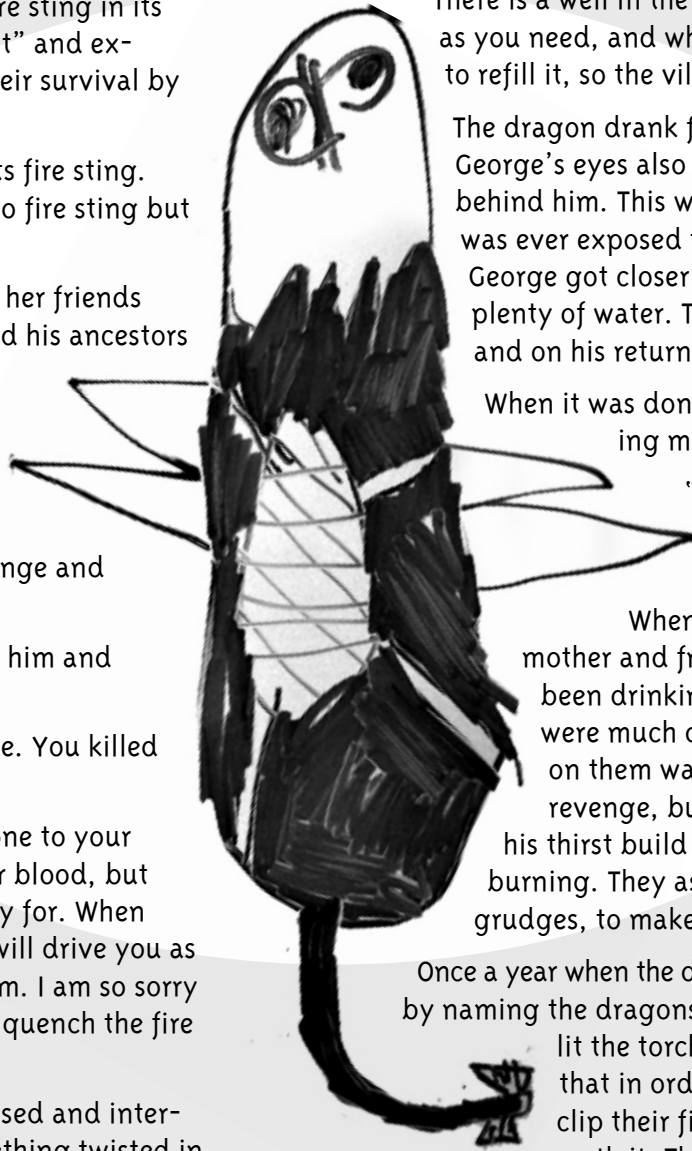
The dragon drank from the well, and tears filled his eyes. George's eyes also teared up and so did the eyes of the villagers behind him. This was the sweetest experience the young dragon was ever exposed to. He drank and drank until he had his fill. George got closer and whispered a location where there was plenty of water. The dragon flew there carrying a container and on his return filled the well.

When it was done he asked George: "What will I tell my loving mother and friends?"

"Tell them you don't want to kill. Lead them to a well, maybe their heart will soften by drinking water."

When the young dragon told his story to his mother and friends they wept with remorse. They had been drinking water for quite awhile, but since they were much older when they started drinking, its effect on them was mild in comparison. They felt the need for revenge, but did not have the fire to do it. By letting his thirst build up, they nurtured his wild fire and kept it burning. They asked for his forgiveness and he let go of old grudges, to make room in his heart for love and appreciation.

Once a year when the dragons commemorated all victims of violence by naming the dragons that died in the killing, the young dragon lit the torch with his breath. This act reminded them that in order to keep the peace they had agreed to clip their fire sting. There were no more killings. It was worth it. The next day they celebrated peace by flying, playing, and validating life by being especially tender with those they loved and appreciated.



How Dragon Saved Humanity

Dragon was a king because she cared and could see. But most of all, she had the knack for Communication. This gift, her mission to share.

"Now I know! why they struggle so perplexed and crazy. It's their instrument! their magic muscle transmission link tool, is crippled! They cannot see, except what's right in front of their eyes. They cannot communicate, in the normal way, they cannot share, in the normal way, at all! They are stuck!"

"They can sound and gesture and blink their faces, whisper and dance and spin and shout, they have their bodies to hear, see, touch, taste and smell, but their ability to do basic mind connection is almost entirely turned off. They are slaves of proximity, which holds them down and stops them cold."

The shiny glow as she pondered throbbed and flickered her eyes and quivered the sound of her thought, hisssss so pretty. Then the enormous glistening cackling eyelid of eternal contemplation curled and cracked at the edge to smile as she received another refinement of *Idea*.

"Aha! Symbols! Physical symbols they could draw! Messages to each other. Simple shapes, to story with each other, and that could pass the distance for them. It would be a start, until they arise their telephthic normalcy again."

She danced the wand and the crystal glowed with purpose of delivery, and she Dreamed appearance there before her... gathering the essentials.

"OK," she squinted, "the symbols they need... they need: divergent yet wormhole connected, direct path match round about way, open circle welcome..." As she named them each symbol appeared in front of her, hanging on the air. The dragon snorted steam from her nostrils and then continued. "doubling curves, a third way to reach," She rubbed her lip with the glowing wand as she imagined what was needed. "...return to help, sudden shortcut..." and so on, until the essential set was complete.

And so she designed a set of tools for the humans that she hoped would set them free. "If they will listen. *You can lead a soul to wonder but you can't make them think!*" Flap flap. Snort snort.

By Ezair & Alex



IRA GOLDSTEIN

A fierce dragon, in a bad mood
was looking for some kind of food:
a human or two would do,

Ambling by, a man with a guitar headed down Bay
Not far from Everything Goes Cafe
was caught off guard;

Brave and cool, he shouted: WAIT!
I'M NOT DRAGON BAIT!

That stopped the dragon cold
How Bold!!

The dragon stopped, looked kind of stiff
while the man offered a guitar blues riff

The dragon lost his need for food
and got into a groovy mood

moved his head to the beat
laid down and clapped his monster feet.

When the music stopped, he was tame
Man, I feel great, that anger's lame
Can I go with you to hear you play
and in they went to the Book cafe.

Guitar man told everyone
no need to run
my friend is here to have some fun.

So they sat down resumed their tea
made room for dragon
who now was free.



image: Duskenwolf



STEVE JONES

Figment 'Magination

Tweedledum and Tweedledee, ha ha ha, ho ho ho
jumping jumping up and down, hee hee hee, hee hee hee.

"Hello there" they sang as one, "Would you, could you
look at this?"

Opening fingers curling flat, big round eyes above them,
kissing lips blew ever so, a mist that sparkled, shaping...
There between the giant eyes and above the round fat fingers
a tiny dragon flapping wings and, floating, laughed at me!

"Funny little dragon, how is it you there?
Figment 'magination? Or do you have a life like me?"

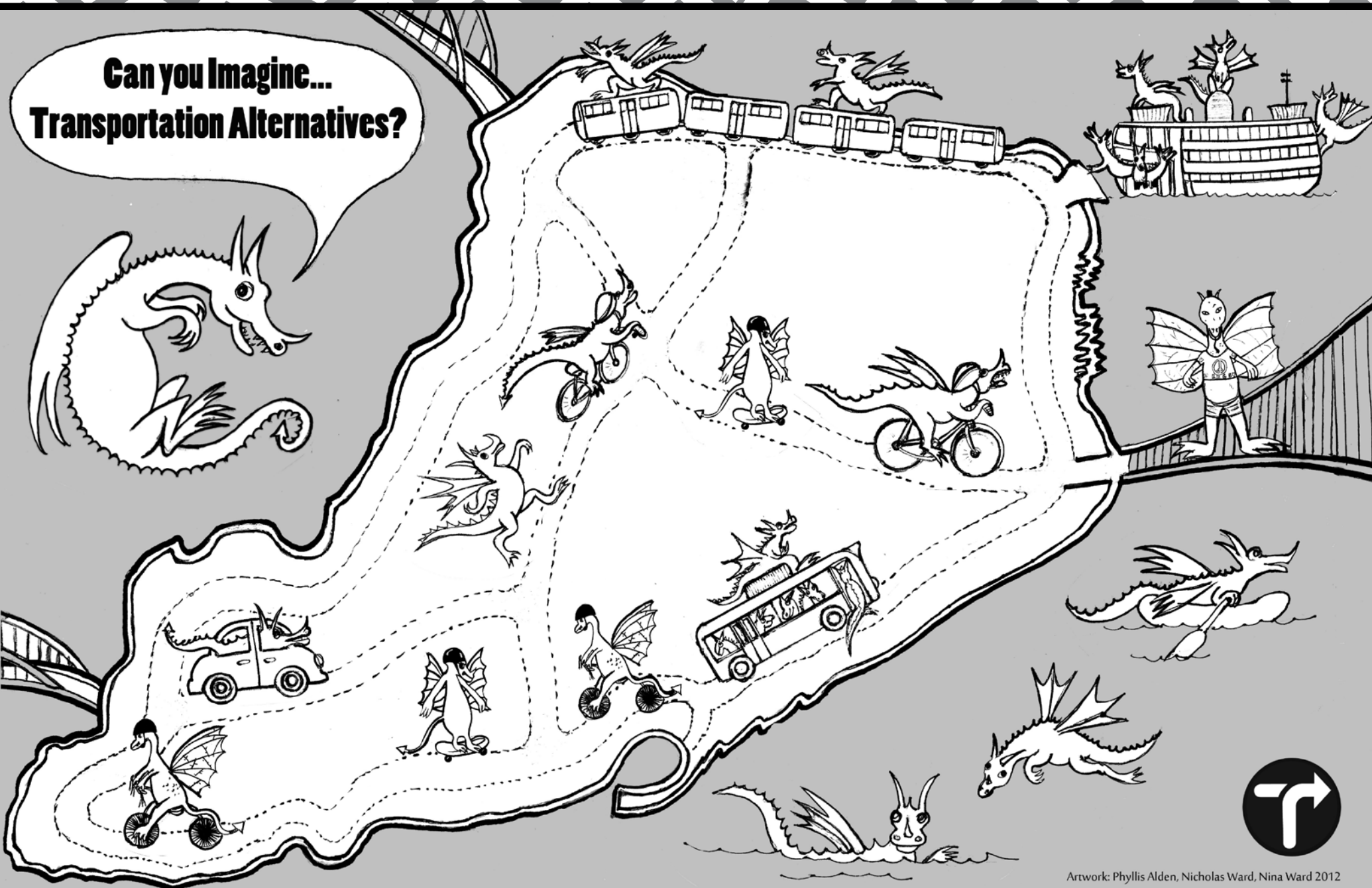
Staring back into me the dragon's nostrils flared
like twirling little spirals with crimson yellow hair.
His creaking wings were grabbing and pushing out the air.
His eyes explored me thinking, with liquid on his lips
then RAWR GAFOOM they opened and red shot forth
and balled before him, churning...

Within that ball, I see this story, just as I do now,
'bout Tweedledee and Tweedledum with secrets in their mouths
And here comes me, but looking like and sounding like
no other I've seen—
"Is that me? Is that me or Figment 'magination?
"Is that me? Is that me or Figment 'magination?"



image: Lou Russo

**Can you Imagine...
Transportation Alternatives?**



ALEXANDER COHEN

Last night I dreamed

I was in the medieval forest of a dragon, a unicorn dragon named Dragonfly. Unicorn dragons exist only in the world of St. George, the one city in the universe where people live forever. St. George was anointed to kill the dragon whose oil was more expensive than even the oils of gargantuan blue-white whales.

St. George dressed himself in blue-steel armor and with a 10 foot, porcupine-tipped sword he attacked the dragon with such ferocity that the dragon snorted smoke from his nostrils that would have annihilated any normal warrior.

image: Nicholas Ward

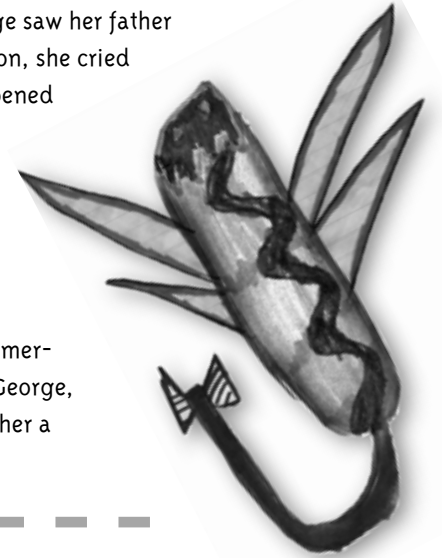


Dragon in a kayak off the shore of Staten Island.

When the 8-year-old daughter of St. George saw her father trying to kill her favorite pet unicorn dragon, she cried for 15 days and 15 nights. Her pure tears opened all the clouds in the St. George universe.

Unicorn dragons, as ferocious as they may seem, are terrified of rain. So Dragonfly flew back to the petrified forest for another 100 years.

St. George was happy. But his daughter, Esmeralda, wanted a new pet, so her father, St. George, went out to the pet sanctuary and bought her a puppy she called Dragon.



Scales and lances clash
fire breathed but no harm is done
dream forms shape new friends

JOANNE R. GLEICH

St. George's adventure
dragons' fire never reached
they talked peacefully

GARY SERJE

History astounds
St George, Staten Island's town
Culture can be found

BRIANNE MALIK

St. George is famous for
killing dragons. worry not, there be
no dragons here, friend

ALEX TRONOLONE



flying dragon image: Nina Gross

Special Delivery

Using a special way to pay attention and breathing, George charges up his aura. His finger held the energy, pulsing brightly.

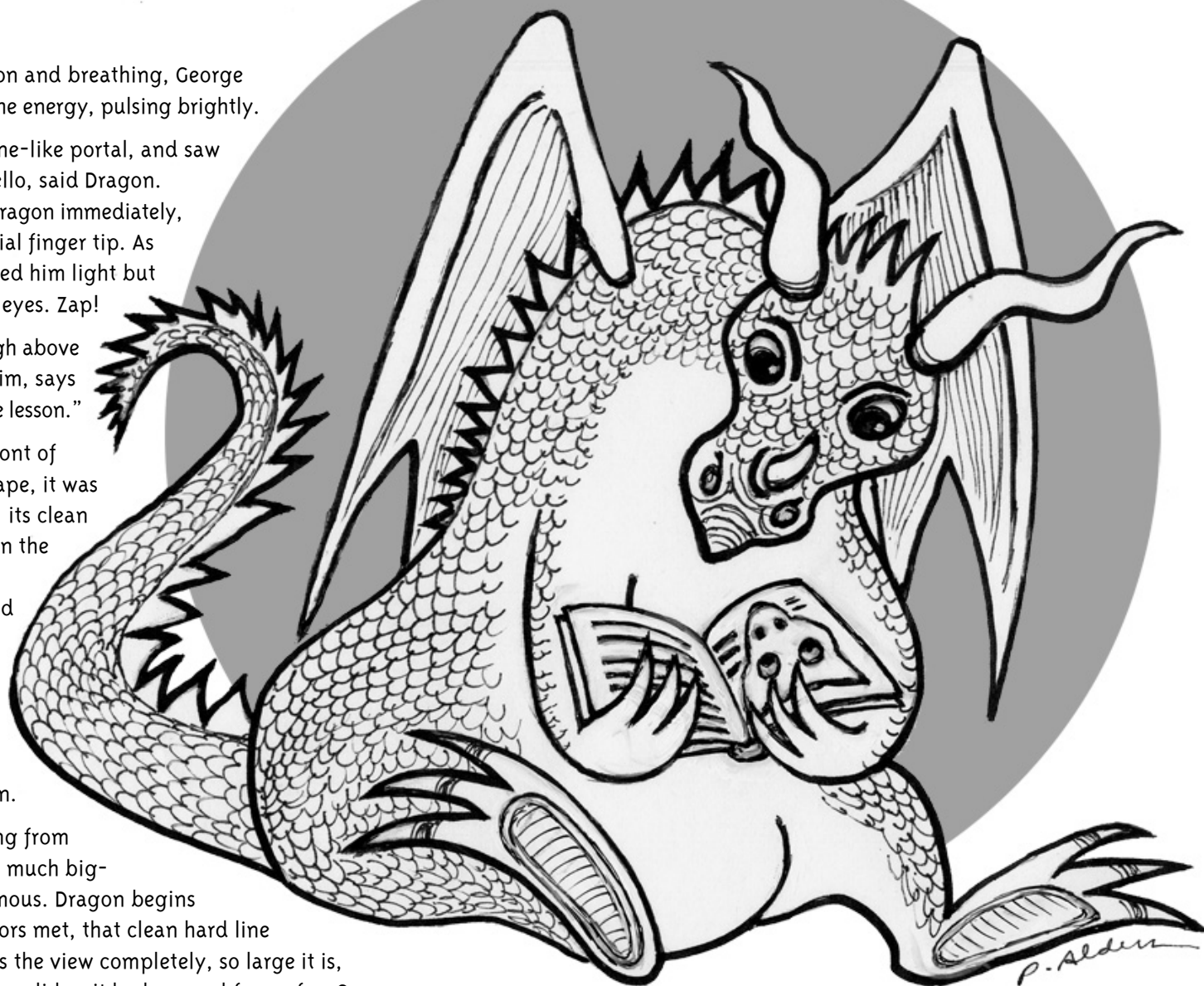
Dragon passed through a membrane-like portal, and saw that George was there, as agreed. Hello, said Dragon. George, now all aglow, approached Dragon immediately, glidingly, and reaching out his special finger tip. As Dragon closed his eye, George touched him light but firmly, on his forehead, between his eyes. Zap!

Now! Dragon is flying in clouds, high above the planet. An unseen entity joins him, says "Don't be amazed, or you will miss the lesson."

Dragon sees there! way below in front of them, a distant object, a familiar shape, it was a Yin Yang symbol in the landscape, its clean sharp edges perfectly formed there in the distant landscape. As Dragon approached he could see the two curved teardrop shapes of opposite colors nestled in each other's embrace, or struggle! But at the very heart of the largest fullest expression of each opposite, was a living pearl of the other, fully present yet hidden within.

As they fly nearer, now approaching from above, Dragon sees that the shape is much bigger than she had thought, it is enormous. Dragon begins to be aware of the line where the colors met, that clean hard line of contact. But now the Yin Yang fills the view completely, so large it is, and she can see that the line is not so solid as it had seemed from afar. Coming closer still, she can see that this place between the opposites is fuzzy and vague, closer and closer, it is in fact a churning, frothy place that could barely be called a line at all. The interaction of the two opposites in a wild dance of swirling chaos!

"Here" said the guide pointing to the interplay, "is where the world is created."



BING! Dragon opened her eyes when the apple fell on her head. There was George beside her, eyes closed, under the tree where they had been sipping tea by the bay.

"Whoa!" said Dragon.



image: Phyllis Alden

The Green Dragon Affair

Solo went through the little green door into the tailor's shop, which was, of course, a front for UNCLE Headquarters. He had done it thousands of times, but this time seemed different, somehow. Soon, he was standing in front of Mr. Waverly's desk. Waverly swiveled around to greet him.

"Ah, George...so good of you to come so soon! Nasty bit of business here!"

"Yes, sir."

"A man-eating dragon. Needless to say, we thought we had gotten rid of the last one years ago. Apparently not."

"No, sir."

"You'll get on the first boat to Bulvania."

"Bulvania, sir? Pardon, but...never heard of it!"

"Of course not, George! It's a fictitious name for a real place. We're not allowed to call places by their real names, or the censors would have a fit, not to mention the government."

"Sir?"

"But, I digress...0800 hours, Solo. That's all. see yourself out, would you?"

Solo did as instructed. Waverly turned around in his seat, adjusted his earpiece and continued on with his conversation.

"Now, where were we, Natasha? So, you're alone? Boris has disappeared? What are you wearing?"

Part Two

lateral wipe

George Solo found himself in Bulvania, and whether it was really called that or not, the problem he faced was real enough. A giant, green dragon, towering over his head, a good thirty to forty feet, was bellowing fire and smoke at anything or anyone who came near. How Solo wished he had had time to bring Kuryakin on this mission. At least they could have enjoyed the local cuisine together!

Solo pushed the contact button on his shoulder walkie-talkie. The gruff voice of Commander Vincent Rodgers replied.

"I need those bombs, s.t.a.t.!", said Solo.

"No can do, good buddy," came the reply. "Too many villagers. Can you talk this guy down?"

Hmmmm, thought Solo.

"I'll try," he said. But he didn't place much hope in that. If only he had some back-ground on the beast, some clue as to his inner workings, some... wait a minute...Waverly said they thought they had killed the last ones years ago. An orphan? It was worth a shot!

The dragon spied George, alone, defenseless.

"Ahhh...a light snack," the dragon smirked, smacking its lips.

"Hold on!", said George. The dragon stopped, confused.

"You wouldn't eat a fellow orphan, would you?"

"The dragon stopped in mid-stride, stared hard at George.

Part Three "Or...orphan...what makes you think I'm....."

"Do you see any other dragons around here? Besides, I read your file!"

"File?"

"Oh, yes....we keep files on all alien beings..."

"Alien? What do you mean 'alien'?" I was born right here here in [actual name of country redacted]."

"Really," said George, with a skeptical tone in his voice. "And you're killing your own countrymen? Sounds alien to me!"

"My countrymen?? Why, these people run in terror from me! They throw spears and other objects in my direction constantly! They shout and yell and leave their daughters at my door, who then run screaming when I release them! Why, these people treat me like...."

"You're an alien, I know. Yes, very sad. Of course, Superman had the same problem."

"Superman???? That fictional character?"

"Fictional, eh? You think he's make-believe? Maybe. Anyway, you two have a lot in common."

"We do?"

"Yes. You both have great powers, you both are aliens and you both are orphans. And we all know orphans just want to establish a family based community that they feel comfortable in!"

The dragon looked like he was about to pass out with either great sorrow or great joy."

Part Four

"You..you," the dragon stammered. George thought he saw a giant tear welling up in the dragon's eye. "You...understand!", whispered the dragon.

"Well, yes...." said George. Then, something strange happened. George was accustomed to staying emotionally remote on a case. But now, he suddenly felt curiously connected to the giant green animal in front of him. And, he actually felt sorry for the dragon. And for himself.

"After all," said George, sorrowfully, "I'm an orphan, too. And, it hurts."

"Tell me about it," said the dragon.

For the next hour, George and the dragon conversed back and forth about how lonely they felt, their feelings of abandonment and fear of being able to connect with people. It was a good talk all around.

"Well, now...will you stop killing your fellow countryman and try and work things out?," asked George.

With a twinkle in its eye, the dragon responded "Yes, I will! Shake on it!"

And, as George did, he noticed that the dragon's scales were turned up and out instead of flat against its skin. Why, that could only mean that the dragon.....Hmmmmmm....

George felt peckish.

"Care for a bite, dragon?," he asked his new friend.

"Call me Sam," said the dragon.

"For Samuel?," asked George.

The dragon giggled. "No silly...for Samantha!" And, off they went to have lunch.



MICHAEL CARPENTER

There once was a boy named George
who lived right next door to his friend
and he was glad, glad, glad

then one day a big blue truck came
and his friend moved far away
and George was sad, sad, sad

He thought and he thought
and then he thought some more

I need a new friend
who will be a friend to the end.

I have always liked cats
and that is that

I like a dog with big ears
he could stay with me for years

with a horse by my side
we could go for a ride

who will be my new friend?
who will be a friend to the end?

I could fight the dragon
and save the princess fair

I could help out my friend
and meet her half way there

we could all do a little
and all together it's more

and I need a new friend
who will be a friend to the end.

Oh... wait a minute, now I see
my new friend is right in front of me. ★

image: Nina Gross



George the Brave

George the brave, a fighter born,
rose to carry out each morn,
His dragon slaying aimed at good,
doing all he thought he could
Any time he tried to slow,
a new catastrophe would show
And George would ride toward the fight,
thinking he was doing right

Friends would say, "George, you'll wear out, always facing the next bout"
And some of what they said was true, each week his cheek showed paler hue
He grew to dread the next appeal, wondering if the fight were real
If slaying all these unique beasts truly was the way to peace

Now for each villager who cheered,
the small voice in his mind would sneer:
"Look here the mighty dragon-fighter!
How can you think the world is brighter?
You take our world's amazing creature,
and treat it like an endless feature
Dragons won't survive ten years —
unless we can surpass our fears!"

George now thought, and doubted too, and wondered just what he could do
To find the path of valiance, without his shining battle lance
Somehow, he thought, I must decide; "I'll go to where the beast resides
There I'll find if peace can be; or flames will be the end of me"

The dragon waited, curled on stone;
seeing George approach alone
On the high and windswept peak,
she did not wait for George to speak
"What, no weapon?" The dragon asked
"Isn't my demise your task?"
George replied, with steady calm:
"I've come to talk, not to give harm"



"All the years I've hunted you, I believed one thing as true:
That fields and farms cannot be spared; if the land a dragon shared
I've come to see this thought must change; that attitude is just deranged
Human folk and dragon kind, are just the same in life and mind"

Each has great value, each must live;
and so I have this thought to give:
If we can reach some compromise,
would you respect our human lives?"
The dragon raised her fearsome head;
George thought soon he might be dead
But though her golden eyes looked stern,
She said "Maybe...if you will learn"

"My dragon kin must hunt to thrive; on vegetables we can't survive!
All fighting, too, will have to stop. No violence on our mountaintop!
We'll have to talk — it will take time, perhaps beyond your life and mine
But we would both be known for might, if we can bring this peace to light."

And so they spoke, and shared their views;
planning what they each would choose
For the future of their kind,
to share and put the past behind
Through many steps and many flights,
man and dragon won their rights
George was brave: he changed his thought,
and peace is the result it brought!



THE HEART OF THE



EDWARD P. WALSH 1967 - 2012

Waking up
slowly seeing
a miracle is taking place
the Sun is rising
a new day is on the way
wish new dreams
May you always feel the sunshine

Remember me with laughter, if not I'll understand
Remember me with a smile, If not I'll understand
Remember me with that voice inside the heart
If not... I will understand.

DRAGON

image: Abraham Fenton

UPCOMING 2012 STATEN ISLAND FESTIVALS

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FRI JUNE 8 WEEKEND	ART BY THE FERRY in St George
SAT JUNE 23rd	LUMEN FESTIVAL Atlantic Salt Waterfront
SAT JULY 14, JULY 21	VAN DUZER DAYS Van Duzer St and Beach St
SAT JULY 14	RARITAN BAY at Conference House Park
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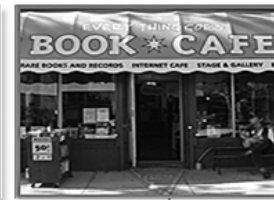


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* a community dialogue and performance project

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Staten Island OutLOUD also offers events for youth and teens - to nurture a new generation of readers & writers.

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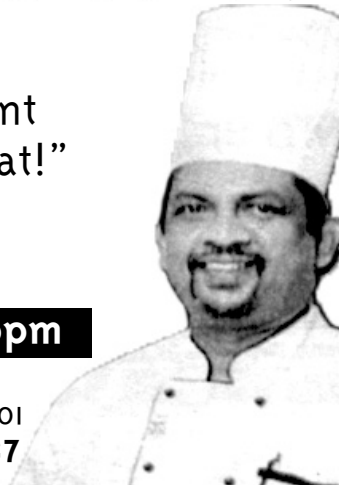
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