

EPILOGUE

THE ELEMENTS

Emma, Lucy, Diana, Connie and Margaret had woven themselves together into a lasting union. Each time they got together again, they brought something creative that they had been working on to share with the group. And, while they were together, they collaborated on projects of painting, writing, weaving, and dancing—whatever they were inspired at that moment to create. They invented opportunities to read “Elemental Time” and to perform other creations, especially at Halloween, when they invariably scheduled a reading in alternating countries every year.

EMMA (SPACE)

Emma returned home feeling as spacious as the sky. She arrived home in an awakened and enlivened state, ready for any direction. She was more assertive, knowing what she wanted and how to get it. Taking Brigid’s words to heart, she worried less about the future and did not strain to see around the next curve. She practiced living in the now.

At first Ralph couldn’t help but wonder how much of what Emma reported to him could be true. While he was surprised by her profound changes, he knew better than to object to them or to demand that things go back to “normal.” Besides, he benefited greatly from Emma’s newfound joy and spontaneity; he, too, recovered a forgotten part of himself. They both found themselves letting go of the pressures of doing too much and instead took the time to see the beauty around them in their home built by their ancestors—in the trees and the murmuring of the Grand River.

Luckily, because of his practice in nursing Phyllis, Ralph had changed, too. For one thing, he had honed his nurturing skills (empathy, anticipating the needs of another, listening). But, even more surprising, was that he had come to understand that nurturing was not just one-way, that much could be learned and gained by being the nurturer.

They both made adjustments to their lifestyles, creatively re-shaping their patterns to share both the responsibilities and the opportunities to nurture each other. Emma laughed, sang and played the piano whenever she got the chance, and Ralph sang along.

In 1997, the year after the workshop, Emma was appointed to the board of directors of the Peace Weavers. She traveled to many countries,

both attending meetings and participating in hands-on workshops. Two years after the class, Olivia hosted a reunion in Philadelphia. Ralph went along and met all of Emma's friends. Pilar couldn't look at him without giggling, thinking of him sprawled on the floor, having fallen (or was he pushed?) out of his Lazy Boy chair.

Sometimes Ralph accompanied Emma on her many trips and sometimes he stayed home. Phyllis moved to their town and was happy to check in on Ralph when Emma was gone. Three years after Emma returned from Ireland, Ralph died a sudden but peaceful death. She sorely missed him, but she went on with her activities.

Emma never reported hearing more voices from the dead, though sometimes when it was windy or rainy, she felt close to Alice or Hallie, knowing the storms they had survived and remembering what they had given her. And she wrote down her dreams faithfully, aware now that Hallie, Alice and Ralph were contributors to them; there she saw messages and felt the love they sent her.

LUCY (FIRE)

The fire they left smoldering on the beach in the Aran Islands continued to burn in Lucy as she stayed on in Spiddal writing the novel that was to become *Strands*.

Lucy and Emma remained close friends and touched each other's lives at least once a week. As often as she could, Lucy accompanied Emma on her trips. Lucy was so inspired by the events in Ireland that she wove words together to create a philosophical tapestry as her contribution to the Peace Weavers. Ever since that night on the Aran Islands, Lucy was particularly drawn to Halloween. In fact, she entitled her next book *HallowBetween*. Lucy worked on her own and in conjunction with the Peace Weavers to find ways to disseminate these ideas to people all over the world. The philosophy of the between that she had written about before continued to inspire her to write both nonfiction and fiction books. She co-authored several books with her nieces and nephew, published a book on collaborating with kids and was in much demand as a lecturer and workshop leader.

Lucy also stayed in contact with Connie and traveled with her to many places that Connie had only dreamed of before.

DIANA (EARTH)

After the experience at the beach had penetrated every cell in her body, Diana returned to her house in Dublin with a much-heightened appreciation of the power of women, especially groups of women. She had found the grounding for which she had been searching. She gave up writing romance novels and began to write biographies of women's movements. She was particularly interested in groups of rebel women, who became eddies in the currents of their time. She wrote a book called *Peace in Progress* which chronicled the history and philosophy of the Peace Weavers, including the brief biographies of the founders. Mick, Emma's son, volunteered to take pictures of the weavings and other artworks produced in the workshops; those photos added weight to Diana's words. *Peace in Progress* came to the attention of Mary Robinson, the former president of the Republic of Ireland who then held a top post at the United Nations. She called in the Peace Weavers as consultants and to lead workshops in troubled areas of the world.

MARGARET (AIR)

Margaret returned to New Zealand, as a breath of fresh air from the Aran Islands with her mother in her heart. While Stella and she continued to raise sheep, Margaret used the techniques she had learned in the workshop and the daring she had found on the beach to become a renowned weaver of experimental tapestries and clothing. She told Stella soon after she returned from Ireland that she no longer considered herself an orphan, but a child of the world; she was related to everyone.

Once Emma was on the Peace Weavers' board, she convinced Margaret that, with her beautiful singing voice, she could help expand the Peace Weavers into the arena of music. This Margaret did as often as she had the time and the energy.

CONNIE (WATER)

Connie managed to set boundaries around her care of her parents, bringing in help from her brother and friends. She found ways to get away from Ireland and visit Lucy on a least one occasion. Emma stimulated her interest in the Peace Weavers and she took the weaving class the year after Emma did.

THE PEACE WEAVERS

Emma's graduating class of weavers catapulted the Peace Weavers into greater recognition throughout the world. Over the next few years, the organization grew both in size and scope. They expanded from weaving into all other art forms, including painting, music, drawing, movement, improvisation, sculpture, theater and performance art. They collaborated with artists of all kinds. After the class, Victoria invited everyone to South Africa, saying that there was more interest in this project there than teachers to teach it. Within a year after the class, the Peace Weavers put together a teachers' training in South Africa. Victoria, Emma and Margaret taught that workshop, along with Rhiannon.

Because Emma's classmate, Olivia, already had contacts with youth groups near Philadelphia, she and another classmate, Kathleen, team-taught a weekend youth workshop there. A hip-hop performance piece was created that later became the theme song of the Peace Weavers called "Peace it, Peace it—Together."

Maeve, a graphic artist joined the team who taught a month-long workshop in Belfast, Northern Ireland in 1999. The participants in that workshop painted murals on streets that divided Catholic and Protestant neighborhoods. Small businesses in this area often had their windows shot out when troubles began. When one young fighter, Kevin, saw in a mural the image of a four-year-old girl who looked just like his sister, except that one of her eyes had been shot out, he was so moved that he put down his gun. The Peace Weavers later found Kevin and invited him to attend their next workshop. He agreed and became the first man on the board of directors. Lea and Pilar made a tour of Central America, sowing seeds for future workshops. In Nicaragua, they tapped into a network of women who offered to put them up for the month if they would come and teach. That workshop was very successful.

People worldwide were increasingly exhausted from endless war-mongering, from battlefields to courtrooms. They yearned for a new way to resolve conflict and to just be and let be. When people heard that the Peace Weavers made alchemy by weaving together practical skills-based learning with non-linear, synchronistic wisdom, word about their work for peace spread. The Peace Weavers, along with the many other groups who had been practicing a different way to be in the world, were poised and ready to change the world.

And in elemental time, the world was.