

A MINI-ARG
BY COME
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THE BOOK

WRITTEN
IN 4/90

INSPIRED BY
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Players take the role of characters living in different times or in parallel realities. They all own the same book, in the margins of which they can communicate: they all see everything any of them writes, without clear explanation how.

Players freely create their characters: they should each have something with another, be attracted to mysteries and regret their loneliness. Players also choose the book which the characters own: it might be a book in the public domain or one all the players have on their shelves. The book is identical to the one in our reality, but its author is more enigmatic. The players can invent why or choose in the following list:

- The author's name is a pseudonym shared by several people
- The author was long dead before the book was published
- The author only exists in the time or reality of one of the characters
- The book owned by the characters doesn't appear on the author's publication list
- The author has the same name as a famous fictional character
- There's no known photo or public declaration of the author
- The author's publisher claims it's the pseudonym of a machine which automatically creates its books
- The author has only written this one book before disappearing with no explanation.

The players can choose a different reason for each character, but the game will take much longer to play in this case.

The book's text can appear to contain clues to solve the mystery surrounding the author: if the players want, characters' names, details in the plot, words or expressions can hide codes which only the brightest minds can crack. This mystery can be the same for all versions of the book, or not.

During play, characters will mainly talk about the mystery surrounding the book's author. A secondary subject of discussion might be the reason why the characters can communicate through their copy of the book. This communication is free-form: players can write at the same time in a shared online document, they can decide on a fixed rhythm, comment each other's messages, send a book through the mail and write inside it... When the characters speak about the book, they can copy passages in a shared document or reference pages or paragraphs each player can easily look up. Anything is possible apart from changing a message that's already written.

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The game ends when all the characters have solved the mystery surrounding the book's author, or when all the characters decide to stop opening the book, or to give it to somebody else.

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