



Dancing with Mrs. Dalloway: Stories of the Inspiration Behind Great Works of Literature

Celia Blue Johnson

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Every great book begins with an idea, whether it comes to a writer's mind with lightning speed or tugs at the imagination over time. *Dancing with Mrs. Dalloway* offers stories of the inspiration behind fifty classic works, from *The Sound and the Fury*, *Jane Eyre*, and *Frankenstein* to *Anna Karenina*, *The Bell Jar*, and *Winnie-the-Pooh*. Gabriel García Márquez was driving to Acapulco with his family when he slammed on the brakes, turned the car around, and insisted they abandon their trip so he could return home to write. He had good reason to cut the trip short—a childhood memory of touching ice had suddenly sparked the first line to a novel that would become his most famous work, *One Hundred Years of Solitude*. C. S. Lewis, on the other hand, spent decades pondering the scene that inspired *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*. When Lewis was sixteen, he had a peculiar daydream: a faun carried a bundle of parcels and an umbrella through snow-covered woods. Lewis was almost forty when he decided to write a novel that grew around the vision. In *Dancing with Mrs. Dalloway*, you'll discover who Edgar Allan Poe's raven really belonged to, whether Jane Austen's heartthrob Mr. Darcy actually existed, who got into mischief with a young Mark Twain, and what the real Sherlock Holmes did for a living. These delightful stories reveal the often unknown reasons our literary heroes put quill to parchment, pen to paper, or finger to keyboard to write some of the world's best-loved books.

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