



Where All the Ladders Start

A Study of Poems, Poets and the People who Inspired Them

by Julian Lovelock

DESCRIPTION:

Who were Shakespeare's 'Friend' and the 'Dark Lady'? Why did Donne risk his life and ruin his career for a seventeen-year-old girl? Why did Wordsworth's sister retire to her bed on his wedding day?

Writing never takes place in a vacuum and much of the finest poetry in the English language has been inspired by particular people - patrons, spouses, lovers, friends, or just casual acquaintances. Whether relegated to an obscurity they do not deserve or thrust into prominence they did not seek, their importance to the creative process is inescapable.

In *Where All the Ladders Start*, Julian Lovelock discusses with characteristic incisiveness and enthusiasm nine major British poets and the real lives behind some of their most personal and significant works. Along the way he shows how poetry has developed over the past four hundred years and provides suggestions for further reading, while for convenience all of the relevant poems and extracts are reproduced in full. Written for both the seasoned reader and the student encountering these poems for the first time, Lovelock's analysis will inspire and entertain in equal measure.

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His most recent publications with The Lutterworth Press are *From Morality to Mayhem: The Fall and Rise of the English School Story* (2018) and *The Business of Reading: A Hundred Years of the English Novel* (2022).