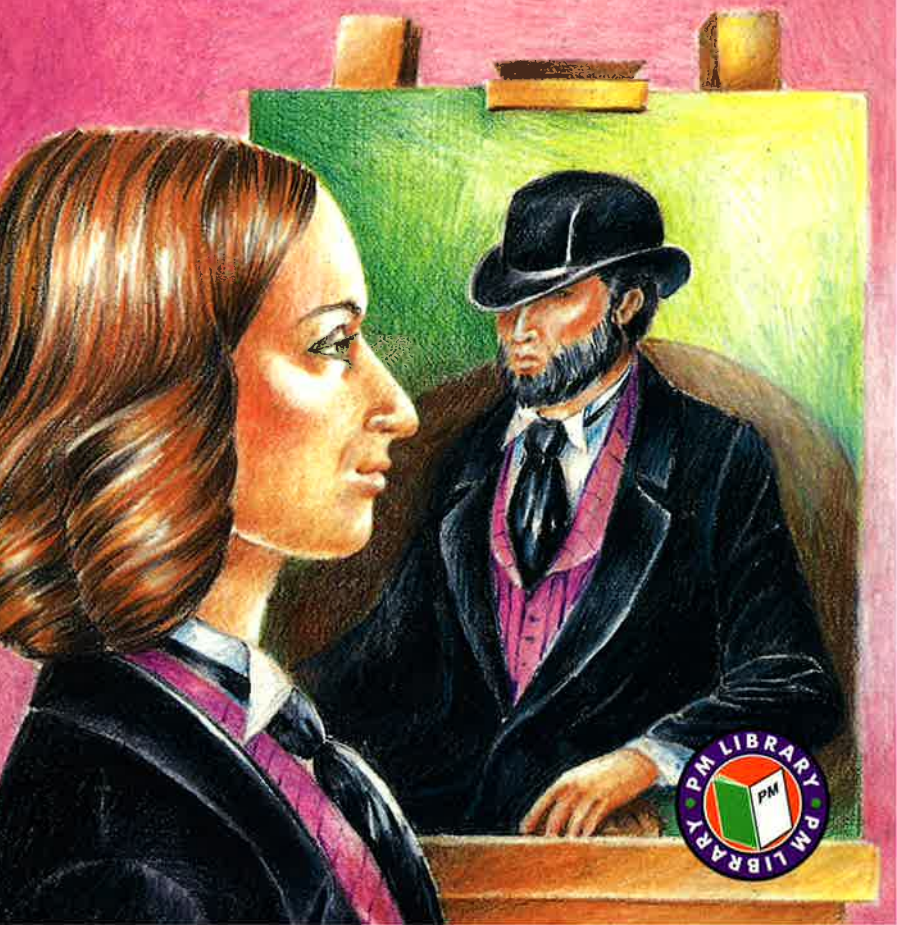
What's in a Name?

A Story about George Eliot

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Marian Evans (George Eliot)
1819-1880

Mary Ann Evans was born in England and grew up in an era that is often considered old-fashioned today. Hard work was valued, and society rules were strict. Women were mostly expected to stay at home and raise a family. But, unlike many women of her time, Mary Ann was educated and became known for her strong intellect.

Mary Ann moved to London and worked as an assistant editor for a magazine. She changed her name to Marian and wrote articles and book reviews. At age 37, Marian began writing fiction, under the name *George Eliot*. She met George Henry Lewes, possibly her greatest friend, around this time.

During her lifetime, Marian *George Eliot* Evans was considered one of the world's greatest novelists. She died at the age of 61.

Novels by George Eliot:
Adam Bede (1859)
The Mill on the Floss (1860)
Silas Marner (1861)
Middlemarch (1871)
Daniel Deronda (1876)

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Contents



Chapter 1	The Secret	4
Chapter 2	A Woman's Work	6
Chapter 3	The False Name	8
Chapter 4	The Letter	10
Chapter 5	The Decision	12
Chapter 6	The Disguise	14
Chapter 7	The Fateful Day	19
Chapter 8	The Explanation	22
Chapter 9	The Clergyman	27
Chapter 10	The Plan	30

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Chapter 1

The Secret



My name is George Eliot... and Marian Evans. As an author, I am a man, but in real life, I am a woman. Not many people know this, so you must promise to keep it a secret.

As George Eliot, I am famous. As Marian Evans, I do not have many friends. My life is one of contrasts.

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If you met me at my home in England, you would simply see a 40-year-old woman. You would probably find me plain to look at, but interesting to talk with. If you talked to some of my neighbours, you might even hear some unpleasant gossip about me and how I live.

You see, I am not exactly 'normal' for a woman of my time. I do not have many friends. I do not belong to the gardening club or anything like that. I do not have children. I am not even married. In fact, if it weren't for my great friend, George Henry Lewes, I would almost be alone in the world.



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Chapter 2

A Woman's Work



Our society tells me that, as a woman, I cannot do and cannot be certain things. I am told that my proper place in the world is at home. If I want to work, then I must work at home, and only after all the household chores are done.

I find these chores dreary and boring. I have always wanted more from life. I enjoy learning, reading and writing—more than most people realise. You see, I am a published writer.

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Writing is one thing that I can do at home to use my brain. When I am writing, I feel free. Well, almost. Because I am a woman, there are still some things I cannot write about if I want to be published. As a 'normal' woman, I would be expected to write about issues such as ladies' manners and other homely topics.

I knew that being a female writer would be difficult. I had already seen the fate of my female writing peers, some of whom had been published, all of whom had been harshly received due to their 'female' writing.

But, to date, I have managed to be very productive on a range of topics. As a writer, I have pretended to be a man.

