



Being Written

By William Conescu
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Introduction

You're the only one who knows, the only one who can hear it—the sound of his pencil scratching out the world you inhabit. To make matters worse, you are not even the protagonist. Now, after years of bit parts as 'Man in Bar' or 'Second Subway Passenger', the author seems to be interested in people you know; the sound of his scribbling pencil is loudest and most focused when they're around. They must be the key. But they all talk so much and never seem to do anything. Maybe that's where you come in; maybe you can spur them to action. Maybe you're just the spark they need.

In this masterful debut, William Conescu thrusts the reader into the unenviable role of Daniel Fischer as he attempts to navigate personal difficulties both mundane (love, work, friendship) and extraordinary (fate, identity, free-will, sanity) in his attempt to become both author and subject, creator and created.

Questions for Discussion

1. Daniel's discovery of the author's scratching pencil greatly complicates his life. What questions must Daniel face as a result of this discovery? How are Daniel's struggles similar to more familiar struggles that people face?
2. How do Daniel's beliefs evolve over the course of the novel? Is Daniel a reliable interpreter of the author's intentions?
3. What was your reaction to Daniel's trip to Winchester and its aftermath? Were you surprised by Daniel's actions? Why or why not? To what extent is Daniel a sympathetic character?
4. Daniel is not the only character whose actions are informed by a personal system of beliefs. What beliefs influence the way Graham lives his life? What about Delia? In what ways do Graham and Delia use their beliefs to justify questionable choices?
5. Why is Delia drawn to Daniel? What factors influence Graham's attitude toward Daniel?
6. What do you think happens in the minutes after the last paragraph of the novel? Where do you think each of the main characters will be five years after the novel's close – Daniel, Delia, Graham, Monty, and Jon?
7. What role does Corrone play in the novel? What role does Broadway Lady play?
8. Daniel's point-of-view sections are written in the second person, while the other characters' sections are written in the third person. What was your reaction to reading second person narration? Why might Conescu have chosen the second person for Daniel's sections? Have you read other stories or novels written in the second person?

About the Author

William Conescu's short stories have appeared in *The Gettysburg Review*, *New Letters*, *Green Mountains Review*, and other publications. He lives in Chapel Hill, North Carolina. *Being Written* is his first novel.