

# BOOKS THAT REFLECT COMMON THEMES OF SURREALISM

## **The Yellow Wallpaper (1892) by Charlotte Perkins Gilman**

In this feminist work of horror, written as a series of diary entries from the perspective of a young woman confined to cure her 'hysteria', Gilman explores the difficulties of postnatal depression.

## **Metamorphosis (1915) by Franz Kafka**

Surreal creatures and frightening dreams come to life in this tale of a young man who wakes one morning to find himself turned into an insect.

## **Mourning for Mourning (1925) by Robert Desnos**

Robert Desnos was one of the most iconic literary Surrealists, and in this collection of writings he explores the use of automatism via the written word.

## **The Master and Margarita (1967) by Mikhail Bulgakov**

In this iconic work, themes of religion and hell are explored in the surreal world of the supernatural where Satan is accompanied by a sassy back-talking cat.

## **Agua Viva (1973) by Clarice Lispector**

Originally written in Portuguese, this book explores the surreal via form, using no other structure other than double paragraph breaks, lacking chapters or sections.

## **Life Is Elsewhere (1973) by Milan Kundera**

Through the story of the young poet Jaromil, Kundera explores themes of childhood and strange dreams by using poetry and Rimbaud to escape the horror of the Communist revolution.

## **The Hearing Trumpet (1974) by Leonora Carrington**

Leonora Carrington was best known as a Surrealist painter, but in this novel she explores the surreal world of 92-year-old Marian Leatherby, who is given the gift of a hearing trumpet only to discover that what her family is saying is that she is to be committed to an institution.

## **Nights At The Circus (1984) by Angela Carter**

The story of Sophie Fevvers, a circus aerialist with the unusual anatomy of a pair of wings, deconstructs the fairy tale genre in adventures that take place across three cities.

## **Kafka On The Shore (2002) by Haruki Murakami**

The story of Kafka Tamura, a runaway, feels just out of reach of the living world in this menagerie of talking cats, falling fish, a woman professing Hegel and eternally youthful soldiers.

## **Autumn (2016) by Ali Smith**

In the first novel of her quartet, Ali Smith explores the surreal by way of the dreams and misty recollections of Daniel Gluck.