

The Unlocked Path

BOOK CLUB KIT

“Eliza never falters from her mission to limit suffering and save lives.”

—Tracey Enerson Wood, Author of International Best Seller, *The Engineer's Wife*

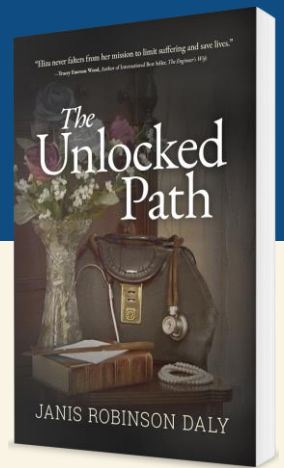


The Unlocked Path

JANIS ROBINSON DALY

The Unlocked Path

BOOK CLUB KIT



Thank You!

*Thank you for choosing **The Unlocked Path** for your book club. I hope you have a great meeting. To help you prepare, this kit includes:*

- **Questions.** *Kick-start and guide your discussion. Feel free to come up with your own, too (and share with me so I can add to the list).*
- **Recipes.** *A few yummy treats mentioned in the book. If you serve wine at your meetings, I highly recommend Scout & Cellar's Bookbinder's Apprentice available in red, white and rosé. Shoot me an email for information on how to order.*
- **Meet the Characters.** *Interested in the inspiration for some of the main characters? Even though each one is fictionalized, I leaned on archival research and family history to develop six characters, including Eliza.*

I love to hear from clubs about their meetings. Feel free to post to my Facebook page or email me photos or comments you'd like to share. Who knows? Maybe there will be an extra special thank you coming your way.

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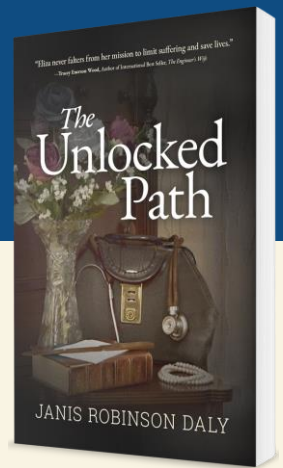
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JANIS ROBINSON DALY

The Unlocked Path BOOK CLUB KIT

Reading Group Guide



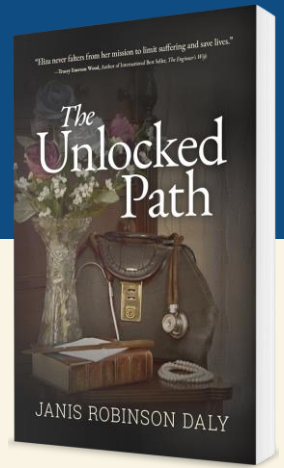
Discussion Questions

1. The Female Medical College of Pennsylvania opened in 1850 (changed to Woman's Medical in 1867) to become the first medical school to award accredited degrees to women. Over the next forty years, the Seven Sisters schools (Mount Holyoke, Wellesley, Bryn Mawr, Barnard, Smith, Vassar, Radcliffe) and many other colleges opened their doors to provide women with access to higher learning. By the 1960s there were 281 women's colleges. Because of societal and financial demands, by 2018, most had closed their doors or merged into co-educational institutions. The Woman's Medical College (WMC) merged with Drexel University in 2001. Today, approximately thirty-one active women's colleges remain. Are single-sex schools still relevant today? What can women gain from a woman exclusive learning experience?
2. When Eliza and her classmates graduated from WMC in 1901, only five percent of doctors were female. Nearly 120 years later, women comprise 36% of all U.S. physicians with an expectation that number will continue to rise as 2019 marked the first time the majority of U.S. medical school students (50.5%) were women.⁽¹⁾ In Pediatrics and OB/GYN, the numbers of women surpass men. Beyond those traditionally female fields, have you been treated by a woman physician? For women readers, do you seek a woman physician? ⁽¹⁾ Nation's physician workforce evolves. Association of American Medical Colleges, 2019.
3. Eliza's Aunt Maria claims male doctors could never understand her motherly grief. Laura Edwards, Eliza's mother, admits her modesty of baring her breasts to a man other than her husband postponed a breast examination. Teenage mother, Adrienne, declares she won't have a man (Dr. Callaghan) care for her while in labor and exposure of her private parts to his eyes. At WMC, Eliza and her classmates trained within the frameworks of sympathy and science. Do women bring a more sympathetic approach to medical practice, regardless of the field? If you have been attended to by doctors of both genders, have you found a difference in their bedside manner?
4. From *Gray's Anatomy* to *Alice in Wonderland* to *The Awakening*, books and their stories influence Eliza's journey. Are there books from your childhood which informed your decisions in life or that you turn to for comfort?
5. Eliza and Florence share special times, reading *Alice in Wonderland*. Eliza wishes to instill a love of shared reading with her patients, starting by giving books to Salvatore Silvestri. Do you have a memory of someone reading to you? Which children's book is your go-to as a favorite to read with children or gift to them?

JANIS ROBINSON DALY

The Unlocked Path BOOK CLUB KIT

Reading Group Guide



Discussion Questions, continued

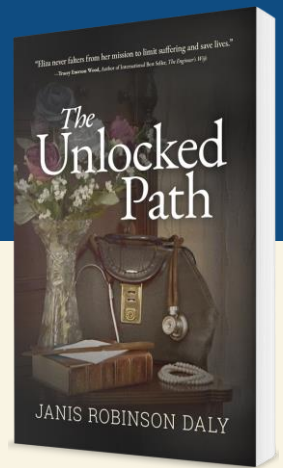
6. Inspired by her Aunt Florence, Eliza marches forward into the 20th Century as a New Woman. She embraces her need for independence and self-fulfillment. By attending medical college and pursuing her profession as a doctor, she challenges the feminine ideal of the times. The concept of a New Woman first appeared in Henrik Ibsen's 1879 stage production of *The Dollhouse*, where the main character, Nora, asserts: *"I must first try to educate myself. In that you are not the man to help me. I must set to work alone...I must try to gain experience...I must be thrown entirely upon myself if I am to come to an understanding as to what I am and what the things around me are."* In 2017, the Fearless Girl statue appeared on Wall Street as a symbol to empower women to speak up and strive for justice and equality in boardrooms. Since then, women expanded its meaning to include resilience, self-confidence, and hope for change. How are a New Woman of the early 20th Century and Fearless Girl of the early 21st Century the same in their concepts? How are they different? How far have women come in the past one hundred years in advancements for independence and self-fulfillment?
7. The author chose a span of twenty-three years for the novel's setting. Her grandparents, who were born in the late 1800s and passed as late as 1989, lived through an incredible period of history, including the early years of their life, 1897-1920. The invention of the telephone and automobile crept into the households of the masses. War sent them, their brothers, and husbands overseas to fight for world democracy. Suffragists won their battle for the passage of the 19th Amendment. A global pandemic descended on their families, stole lives and instilled fear of the unknown menace of germs. The Titanic sank, shattering beliefs the mighty and strong were unsinkable. Did you learn anything new about this time period?
8. Identify a slice of twenty-three years in your life, your parents', or grandparents'. What were the significant inventions and global events of that slice of history?
9. Meeting Anandi and reading her application letter moves Eliza and motivates her decision to attend medical college. Anandi's words also launched the author's further research into WMC and directed the writing of *The Unlocked Path*. Is there one person, or one piece of writing, that impacted and directed your career and subsequent life choice?

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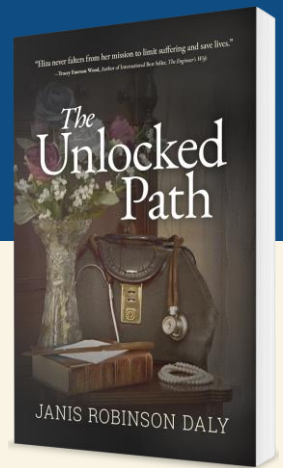
Discussion Questions, continued

10. Eliza and her friends lament the existence of the Comstock Laws, which prohibited the dissemination of birth control. The laws denied access to any form of birth control, including to married women who needed their husband's consent to secure a device for therapeutic needs. Eliza asserts, "Does anyone think for a minute, if women could vote, the Comstock Laws would exist? Those politicians would have gotten an earful from thousands of women, each with the power to unseat them from their chair in Congress." Today, women can vote, can run for and secure seats in Congress, and serve on the Supreme Court. Yet, discussions about women's rights for choice continue. What can we learn from the past on this issue to guide thoughtful current discussions?



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Recipe: Molly's Gingersnaps



I found this recipe on Allrecipes.com and modified it to claim it as Molly's, the Irish maid in *The Unlocked Path*. The recipe submitter mentioned it had been enjoyed in her family since 1899, spot-on for Eliza's story which opens in 1897. I also updated Molly's secret ingredient for today's bakers, but Molly probably had a bottle of Jameson stashed in the back of the pantry.

Ingredients

- 2 C sifted all-purpose flour
- 1 Tbsp ground ginger
- 2 tsp baking soda
- 1 tsp ground cinnamon
- ½ tsp salt
- ¾ C shortening
- 1 C white sugar
- 1 egg
- ¼ C dark molasses
- ⅓ C cinnamon sugar

Molly's Secret Ingredient

- Fireball® Cinnamon Whisky – decrease the molasses by 1-2 Tbsp to taste and replace with whisky.

Directions

Preheat oven to 350 degrees Fahrenheit.

Sift together the flour, ginger, baking soda, cinnamon, and salt. Stir the mixture to blend evenly and sift a second time into another bowl. Place the shortening into a mixing bowl, beat until creamy. Gradually beat in the white sugar. Beat in the egg, dark molasses and whisky. Sift 1/3 of flour mixture into the shortening mixture; stir to thoroughly blend. Sift in the remaining flour mixture; mix together until a soft dough forms.

Pinch off small amounts of dough and roll into 1" diameter. Roll each ball in cinnamon sugar; place 2" apart on an ungreased baking sheet.

Bake in preheated oven until the tops are rounded and slightly cracked, about 10 minutes.

Cool cookies on a wire rack. Store in an airtight container.

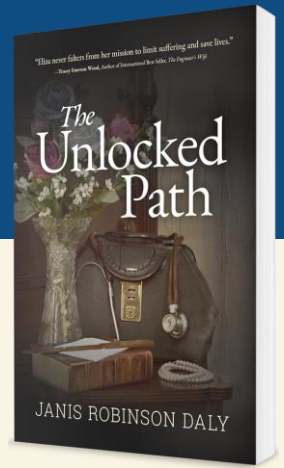
Bonus Reading Material – Deleted Scene from Manuscript

The "Market brats," boys employed by the vendors to deliver orders for in-town customers at no charge, carried their baskets. Most of the brats knew a delivery to Race Street meant a penny and a cookie from Molly in the kitchen. They rated her gingersnaps the best in the city, a rich chestnut brown, chewy and coated in sugar crystals, never a burnt edge. An eager showing of raised hands vied for the delivery job when Mrs. Edwards stopped by the vendor stalls.

JANIS ROBINSON DALY

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Recipe: Cranberry, or *Crabbyberry*, Scones



As a born-and-bred Bostonian, Harrison is well familiar with delicacies from his native Massachusetts, so of course he would suggest cranberry scones as the perfect tea-time treat. A part of New England history, cranberries were used by Native Americans as a wintertime staple and now are cultivated from bogs across the region, adding their rich, red color to Thanksgiving tables far and wide.

Ingredients

- 2 C sifted all-purpose flour
- 1 tablespoon baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 3 tablespoons sugar, divided
- 1 tablespoon orange zest
- 1 stick (8 Tbsp) cold unsalted butter
- 2/3 C buttermilk
- 1 C dried cranberries
- 1 tablespoon milk

Directions

Preheat oven to 425 degrees Fahrenheit.

In a large bowl, combine flour, baking powder, baking soda, salt, 2 tablespoons sugar, and orange zest. Cut butter into mixture. Stir in buttermilk and dried cranberries, mixing just until moistened. Turn dough out onto a lightly floured surface. Knead 5 or 6 times. Pat into an 8-inch circle. Cut into 8 wedges.

Arrange wedges 1 inch apart on a lightly greased baking sheet. Brush with milk and sprinkle with remaining 1 tablespoon sugar.

Bake 15 minutes, or until golden-brown. Remove from pan and cool on wire racks.

[Cranberry-Orange Scones - New England Today](#)

Stay Tuned for More on Grown-Up Bessie in Book 2

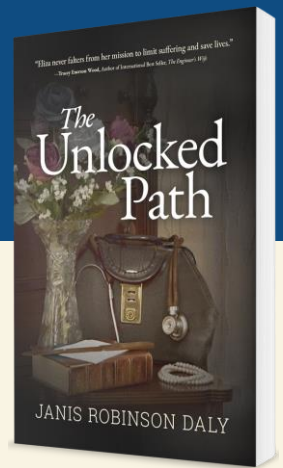
Bessie tugged on Eliza's skirt. "Auntie, have you had a crabbyberry? I have tried strawberries and raspberries and blueberries, but I don't think I've ever tried a crabbyberry. Can we ask Bridget to make us scones with crabbyberries?"

Harrison rapped the cane on the floor and roared with laughter, "Crabbyberries! How precious. You're precious, and what is your name, my dear?"

JANIS ROBINSON DALY

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Recipe: The Unlocked Dream (Signature Cocktail)



I had fun with a mixology session over the Fourth of July weekend with the younger members of my family visiting. I knew there were a few must-have ingredients which we used as a start: Campari (see excerpt below for relevance) and cranberries – or crabbyberries as Bessie calls them. A tad bitter, a tad sweet. Just right for Eliza’s story.

Ingredients

- ½ shot of Campari
- 3 shots Prosecco
- ½ shot ginger ale
- Ice cubes
- Mini-sliced orange wedge
- Dried cranberries

Directions

Place liquids in a cocktail shaker with a couple of ice cubes. Shake. Pour into glass (no ice). Squeeze juice of a small orange wedge in, garnish with wedge and add a couple of dried cranberries.

For added fun, I found these plastic glasses on Amazon.
[24 Plastic Champagne Flutes Disposable | Gold Rim Gold Glitter Plastic Champagne Glasses for \\$16.99 and free PRIME shipping.](#)
Less than \$.75 per glass.



Here’s to unlocking dreams. Cheers!!

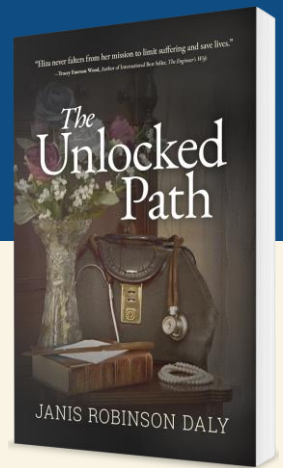
A Trip to Savannah ...

“C’mon. The music is infectious, and you look so beautiful I want to show you off. There’s a light in your face brighter than the glinting moonlight on Newport waves.” Eliza shook her head and blushed again, the earlier red of embarrassment fading. Her glow had nothing to do with the candles on their table, nor the Campari in her glass.

JANIS ROBINSON DALY

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Recipe: Boston Cream Pie



Boston, 1856: First created and served at the Parker House Hotel. Today, the Boston Cream Pie stacks up against other Massachusetts favorites, like Toll House chocolate chip cookies and Fig Newtons.

Ingredients

Sponge Cake

- 7 eggs
- 1 C sugar
- 1 C flour
- 1 oz. melted butter

Pastry Cream

- 1 Tbsp butter
- 2 C milk
- 2 C light cream
- 1/2 C sugar
- 3 1/2 Tbsp cornstarch
- 6 eggs
- 1 tsp dark rum

Chocolate Icing

- 6 oz. semi-sweet chocolate, melted
- 2 oz. warm water

White Icing

- 1 C confectioner's sugar
- 1 tsp corn syrup
- 1 tsp water

Toasted Almond Slivers

Directions

CAKE

Preheat oven to 350 degrees Fahrenheit.

Separate egg yolks and whites into separate bowls. Add ½ cup sugar to each bowl. Beat both until peaked. When stiff, fold the whites into the yolk mixture. Gradually add flour, mixing with a wooden spatula. Mix in butter. Pour into a 10-inch greased cake pan. Bake at 350 degrees for about 20 minutes, or until spongy and golden. Remove from the oven and cool fully.

PASTRY CREAM

Bring butter, milk and light cream to a boil. While this mixture is cooking, combine the sugar, cornstarch and eggs in a bowl and whip until ribbons form. When the cream, milk, and butter mixture reaches the boiling point, whisk in the egg mixture and cook to boiling. Boil for one minute. Pour into a bowl and cover the surface with plastic wrap. Chill overnight if possible. When chilled, whisk to smooth out and flavor with 1 tsp. dark rum.

ASSEMBLE

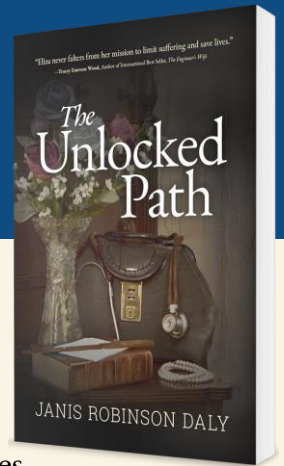
Level the sponge cake off at the top using a slicing knife. Cut the cake into two layers. Spread the flavored pastry cream over one layer. Top with the second cake layer. Reserve a small amount of the pastry cream to spread on the sides to adhere to the almonds.

More on next page.

JANIS ROBINSON DALY

The Unlocked Path BOOK CLUB KIT

Recipe: Boston Cream Pie



Directions, continued

ICING

Melt the chocolate. Combine with warm water.

Combine the white icing ingredients and warm to approximately 105 degrees. Adjust the consistency with water. It should flow freely from a pastry bag with a 1/8" tip.

FINISHING TOUCHES

Spread a thin layer of chocolate icing on the top of the cake. With the white icing in the pastry bag, immediately pipe spiral lines starting from the center of the cake outward. Score the white lines with the point of a paring knife, starting at the center and pulling outward to the edge. Spread sides of cake with a thin coating of the reserved pastry cream. Press on toasted almonds.

[The Original Boston Cream Pie Recipe | Omni Hotels Blog](#)

Parker House Hotel and dining room circa 1910



www.thevintagenews.com/2017/01/27

Visiting Boston? Stop into the Omni Parker House at 60 School Street and try a slice of Boston Cream Pie for yourself. Then work off the calories with a stroll through the nearby Boston Public Garden and Common and up and down Beacon Hill, just like Eliza and Harrison did.

I order only a cupful (of chowder) to save room for dessert at the Parker House, where they serve a scrumptious Boston Cream Pie. Thank goodness we walk back to Freddy's house and climb the South Slope sidewalks of Beacon Hill after these lavish dinners; otherwise, I would need a whole other wardrobe to accommodate a thickening waistline! Speaking of dresses...

JANIS ROBINSON DALY

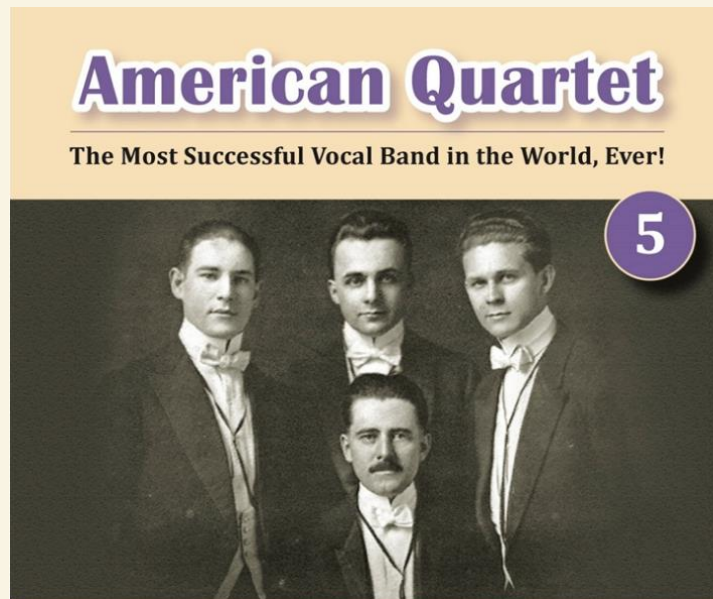
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Audio Entertainment, too



In case you want to add a musical selection to your meeting, check out a hit tune of 1912 from a popular boy-band of the era, American Quartet. It's a toe-tapper!

“Everybody Two-Step” The dance craze of 1912! This song entered the charts on November 9, 1912, and peaked at #1, with an unusually long 10-week run on the charts.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aC5fhcXFFWw>

A Trip to Savannah ...

A tinkling of keys started American Quartet's newest favorite, Everybody Two-Step. Eliza's Italian boot tapped beneath the white skirted table. Such frivolity. She had never kept the beat to music with X. XX felt her foot move and stood up. He spun around on his heel in front of her, the tails of his dinner jacket swinging in a wide arc as the song rounded into its second refrain of the chorus,

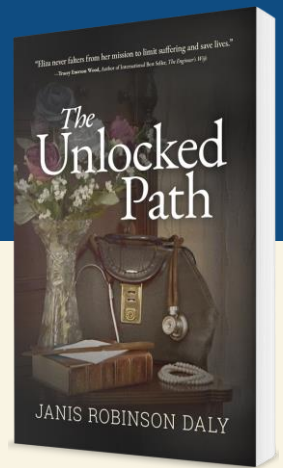
...Let's two-step and dance in old Havana style Just act like you were made of rubber, chile. Slide along the floor and slide your feet a little bit MMM, MMM,...MMM...that's it! Everybody two step and grab a girly-girl, Everybody two-step and do the twirly-twirl...

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The Unlocked Path

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Meet The Characters



Inspiration for Eliza's Grandfather

William Shannon Peirce, Esquire

1815 - 1887



The author's cousin gave her this framed portrait. It's believed to be a copy, or original, of the one commissioned for the 1876 Exposition, celebrating the 100th anniversary of the American Revolution and commemorating prominent men of Philadelphia. A copy, or original, hung in the Hollis Law Library at Harvard and remains in their archives.

William S. Peirce is the author's great-great-grandfather. Originally from Delaware, he attended high school in Philadelphia and settled there to study law. He was an earnest advocate of emancipation, serving as counsel for the slave in nearly every case that occurred in Philadelphia under the Fugitive Slave Act. His most noteworthy case was the defense of Daniel Dangerfield, a runaway slave from Virginia. On the last day of the trial, Peirce and his associates argued from the session opening in the morning until sunrise the next day. With a group of other forward-thinking men of Philadelphia, he co-founded the Woman's Medical College of Pennsylvania in 1850 and joined the board of directors for several years as the board secretary. In 1866, he became a judge of the court of common pleas and sat on the bench until his death. He and his wife, Elizabeth (Irwin) had ten children. Seven survived to adulthood, one son and six daughters, including Laura, Estelle, Maria, and Florence. The Peirce family obelisk grave marker in Laurel Hill Cemetery bears the inscription: *Until the day dawns and the shadows flee away.*

FamousAmericans.net

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Meet The Characters

Inspiration for Eliza's Decision

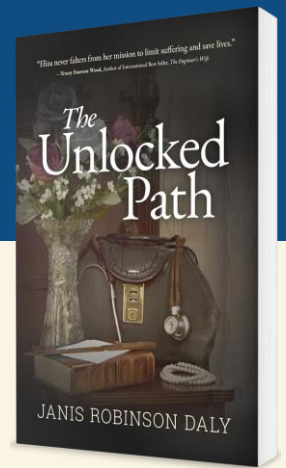
Anandi Gopal Joshi, M.D.
1865 - 1887



Dr. Joshi, in an 1886 photo posing for a Dean's Reception at the Woman's Medical College. Upon her graduation, she received a congratulatory message from Queen Victoria, Queen of England and Empress of India.

Anandi Gopal Joshi was the first woman from India to graduate with a degree in western medicine, attending the Woman's Medical College of Pennsylvania. Within her caste, her family followed the tradition of child marriage. She was married at the age of nine to a widower who was about twenty years older. At the age of fourteen, Anandi bore a son who died ten days after birth. Her child's death, due to the lack of medical care, as well as her husband's obsession with her education, inspired her to become a physician. Their research led them to discovering Woman's Med. Her moving application letter includes the line: *The voice of humanity is with me, and I must not fail. My soul is moved to help the many who cannot help themselves.* She returned to India after completing a two-year program at Woman's Med and died from tuberculosis before turning twenty-two. She asked that her ashes be returned to America.

[Anandi Gopal Joshi - Bio, Facts, Family Life, Achievements \(thefamouspeople.com\)](#)



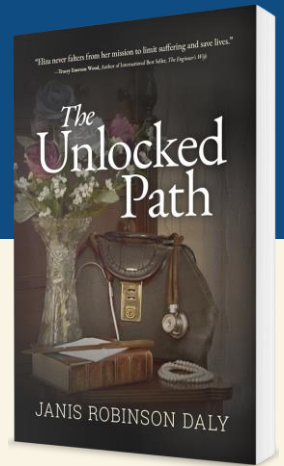
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Meet The Characters

Inspiration for Eliza's Best Friend

Olga Povitzky, M.D.
1877 - 1948



Dr. Olga Povitzky in uniform for her service with the American Women's Hospital during WWI.

Olga Raissa Povitzky came to Philadelphia from Marijampole, Lithuania (Russia) as a 16-year-old girl, speaking only Russian. Two years later, she entered Woman's Medical College and graduated in 1901. She managed to overcome the language barrier, but later recalled an incident in which she was asked what she thought of a lecture on Darwin and replied—without meaning to make a pun—*“I did not understand it very well but there seemed to be a lot of monkey business in it.”* Povitzky was politically active, donating to the socialist magazine *The New Review* and advocating for women's suffrage. After her war service with the American Women's Hospital, Povitzky returned to her position with the New York City Department of Health, where she oversaw the manufacture of a diphtheria antitoxin. She also studied *H. influenzae*, experimenting with a serum that could cure meningitis. In the 1930s, Povitzky designed a rectangular two-liter Pyrex culture bottle that was later adopted as the standard vessel for the Salk polio vaccine. She remained active in the laboratory until just two years before her death in 1948.

[The American Association of Immunologists:
Five Women Pioneers in Immunology](#)

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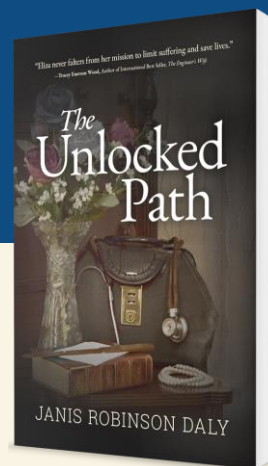
Meet The Characters

Inspiration for Eliza's Classmate

Charlotte Fairbanks, M.D.
1871 - 1932



Photo from the Library of Congress. Dr. Fairbanks in her uniform as part of the American Women's Hospital unit. The U.S. military would not accept women physicians in its Medical Corps but allowed them to serve as contract surgeons. Dr. Fairbanks was one of eleven women assigned overseas.



Charlotte Fairbanks, M.D. earned a B.A. from Smith College in 1894, a Ph.D. in chemistry from Yale in 1896, and her medical degree from the Woman's Medical College in 1902. At the beginning of WWI, Fairbanks joined the American Women's Hospital unit in France and was stationed in Luzancy, where she spent a year as the chief surgeon at the hospital. For her efforts, she was awarded a medal of French gratitude and was awarded French citizenship. After WWI, Fairbanks returned to her home in St. Johnsbury, Vermont and continued to work until her death in 1932.

Compiled Sources

The Unlocked Path

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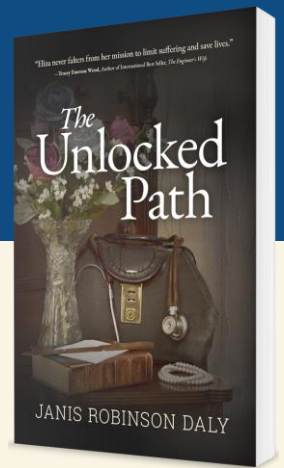
Meet The Characters

Inspiration for Eliza's Husband

Eliot Harlow Robinson, Sr.
1885 - 1942



Eliot Robinson, Sr. circa 1918 upon his departure to France to serve as a Field Secretary with the American Expeditionary Services.



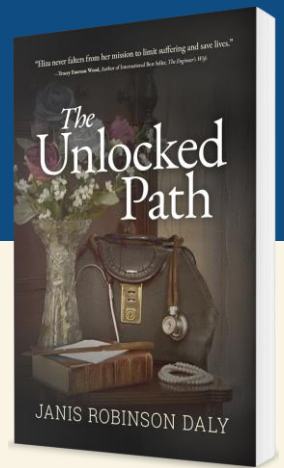
Boston Sunday Post, September 1916: “He’s a writer, a composer, a painter, a playwright, an illustrator, a planner of houses, a choir leader, an editor, a Harvard-educated lawyer and several other things. When in need of recreation he demonstrates his prowess as a tennis player, a golfer, a swimmer, yachtsman or a ballplayer.” Eliot Robinson Sr., was a jack of all trades, and the author’s grandfather. He was a prolific novelist and is the assumed ghost writer of *Go Get ‘Em* for William Wellman, a WWI flying ace and Hollywood director. His romance novel, *Man Proposes*, set in Newport around Tennis Week, is purported to be semi-autobiographical. He married Elizabeth Elliott in 1912, had two sons and separated from his family shortly after his return from France. As a secretary to Representative Charles Gifford of MA, he discovered Cotuit on Cape Cod where he met Helen West Bradlee, a prominent Boston lawyer. They married in 1937 and settled in Cotuit where they lived until his death in 1942 from cirrhosis of the liver.

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The Unlocked Path

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Meet The Characters



Inspiration for Eliza

Elizabeth Peirce Elliott Robinson 1879 - 1957



Elizabeth Peirce Elliott, circa 1897,
her debutante portrait?

Janis Elizabeth Robinson Daly never knew her paternal grandmother. Elizabeth was raised in Philadelphia by her mother, Laura Peirce Elliott after her father, Aldophus Elliott, died suddenly at age 30, while on a business trip to England when Laura was five months pregnant with Elizabeth. With her two older brothers, Albert and Fredrick, the family lived for a brief time at 1710 Race Street with Laura's parents. At some point around 1910, the family moved to the Boston area. How she met Eliot Robinson, why she waited until the age of 32 to marry, and why she refused to divorce Eliot until her two sons graduated from college remains a mystery.

Circa 1914. Laura P. Elliott with
Albert E. Robinson, age 18 months
and Elizabeth P.E. Robinson with
Eliot H. Robinson, Jr. age 3 months
(the author's father).



JANIS ROBINSON DALY

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Let's Connect

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For other book recommendations within the historical fiction genre, book club tips, and more information on *The Unlocked Path* and future novels by Janis Robinson Daly, visit her website and sign-up for her monthly newsletter: www.janisrdaly.com



Spread the Word

Have friends in a different book club? Suggest they read *The Unlocked Path* and sign-up for an author chat, too.