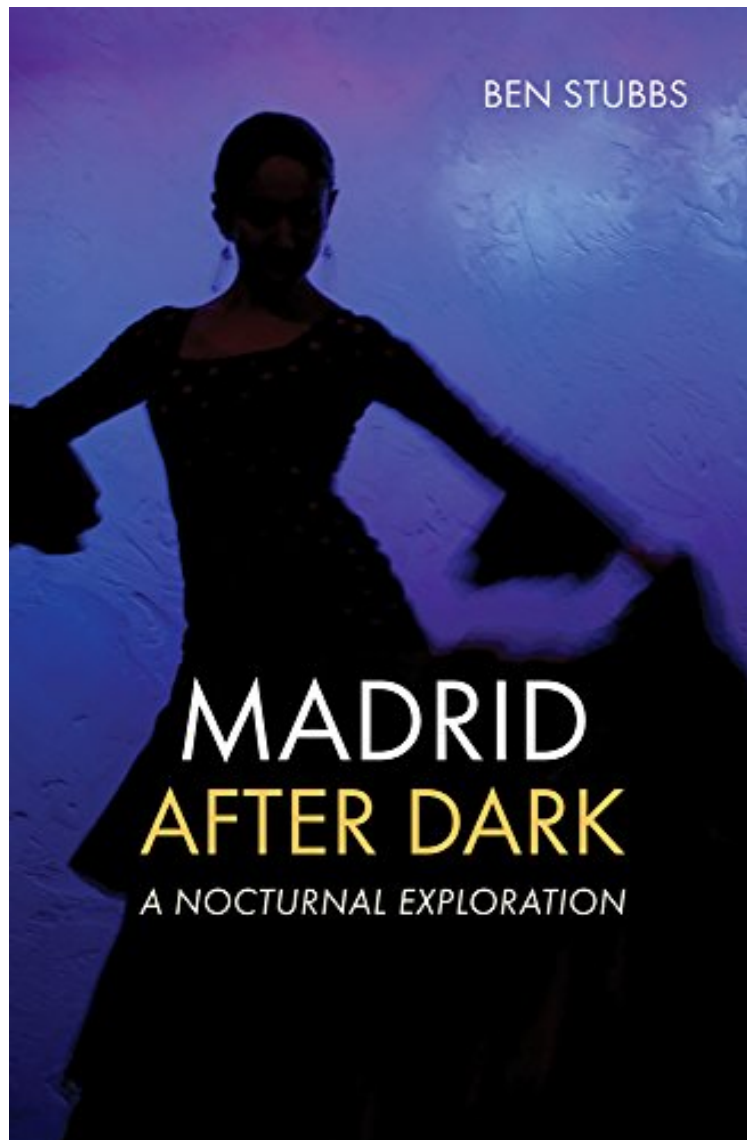


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## Madrid After Dark: A Nocturnal Exploration

*Ben Stubbs*

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**Ben Stubbs : Madrid After Dark: A Nocturnal Exploration** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Madrid After Dark: A Nocturnal Exploration:

In 1762 the philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau observed that we are blind half our lives because of what we miss during the night. Yet there have long been literary walkers, flâneurs, who wander the dark streets of their cities to

uncover the secrets of the night: from Restif de la Bretonne, in his 1789 *Les Nuits de Paris*, labeled both eccentric and pornographic to Charles Dickens, who in his *Night Walks* (1861) evoked the sleeplessness of a man who defied the night, with all its sorrowful thoughts. Writer Ben Stubbs was drawn like the flâneurs of the past to explore the Spanish capital famed for its late hours and exuberant nightlife. He sets out when the sun goes down, and as each hour of the night unfolds, Stubbs uncovers cultural quirks, clandestine stories, and more in a side of Madrid that visitors may not see if they stick to well-trodden guidebook itineraries: Cross-dressing migrants, people who live at the airport, Muslims celebrating Ramadan, hotel workers hidden in the bowels of the Ritz, all-night taxi drivers, party-goers enjoying their nightly marcha from bar to bar, poodle-blessing priests and locals in the poorer barrios who walk the streets with him to share the experience of a *trasmochador* one who lives during the hours of the night. Mixing personal observation with literary and historical references, Stubbs introduces us to a hitherto unknown and fascinating dimension of Madrid. *Madrid After Dark* reveals a multifaceted city, full of surprises and possibilities, and very much awake and alive between dusk and dawn.