



Like A Fiery Elephant: The Story of B.S.Johnson

Jonathan Coe

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In his heyday, during the 1960s and early 1970s, B. S. Johnson was one of the best-known young novelists in Britain. A passionate advocate for the avant-garde in both literature and film, he became famous - not to say notorious - both for his forthright views on the future of the novel and for his idiosyncratic ways of putting them into practice. But in November 1973 Johnson's lifelong depression got the better of him, and he was found dead at his north London home. He had taken his own life at the age of forty. Jonathan Coe's biography is based upon unique access to the vast collection of papers Johnson left behind after his death, and upon dozens of interviews with those who knew him best. As unconventional in form as one of its subject's own novels, it paints a remarkable picture - sometimes hilarious, often overwhelmingly sad - of a tortured personality; a man whose writing tragically failed to keep at bay the demons that pursued him.

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