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James Boswell

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In Boswell's Life of Samuel Johnson, one of the towering figures of English literature is revealed with unparalleled immediacy and originality. While Johnson's Dictionary remains a monument of scholarship, and his essays and criticism command continuing respect, we owe our knowledge of the man himself to this biography. Through a series of wonderfully detailed anecdotes, Johnson emerges as a sociable figure with a huge appetite for life, crossing swords with other great eighteenth-century luminaries, from Garrick and Goldsmith to Burney and Burke, even his long-suffering friend and disciple James Boswell. Yet Johnson had a vulnerable, even tragic, side and anxieties and obsessions haunted his private hours. Boswell?s sensitivity and insight into every facet of his subject?s character ultimately make this biography as moving as it is entertaining.Based on the 1799 edition, Christopher Hibbert's abridgement preserves the integrity of the original, while his fascinating introduction sets Boswell's view of Samuel Johnson against that of others of the time.

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