



Dr. Johnson & Mr. Savage

Richard Holmes

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Dr. Johnson & Mr. Savage recounts a story of a mysterious eighteenth-century friendship between Richard Savage - poet, playwright, and convicted murderer - and the young Samuel Johnson, an unknown provincial schoolmaster just arrived in London to seek his literary fortune. In a book that the Times Literary Supplement has called "a chiaroscuro masterpiece, as gothic as a ghost story, as heroic as a myth, " Richard Holmes brilliantly reconstructs the puzzling emotional intimacy between the naive Johnson and the seductive, contradictory Savage whose days (when he was not in prison) were spent in taverns, brothels, and society salons. Holmes's spellbinding account shows how their relationship shaped Dr. Johnson's experience of the world and his profound knowledge of human passion, and how it led directly to his early masterpiece, *The Life of Richard Savage*, a book that revolutionized the art of biography and invented the figure of the poet as a romantic outcast. In *Dr. Johnson & Mr. Savage*, Richard Holmes, says Alfred Kazin, "has shown us the young Johnson that Boswell was afraid to portray, " and transformed our understanding of biography itself.

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