

The Box Man: A Novel

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Kobo Abe, the internationally acclaimed author of *Woman in the Dunes*, combines wildly imaginative fantasies and naturalistic prose to create narratives reminiscent of the work of Kafka and Beckett.

In this eerie and evocative masterpiece, the nameless protagonist gives up his identity and the trappings of a normal life to live in a large cardboard box he wears over his head. Wandering the streets of Tokyo and scribbling madly on the interior walls of his box, he describes the world outside as he sees or perhaps imagines it, a tenuous reality that seems to include a mysterious rifleman determined to shoot him, a seductive young nurse, and a doctor who wants to become a box man himself. *The Box Man* is a marvel of sheer originality and a bizarrely fascinating fable about the very nature of identity.

Translated from the Japanese by E. Dale Saunders.

The nature of identity itself is the ostensible subject of this bizarrely fascinating existential novel from the great Japanese fiction writer and dramatist Kobo Abe. In the story, a man decides to give up the self that he has been all his life to attain a state of blissful anonymity. He leaves his world behind and moves onto the streets of Tokyo. He puts a large box over his head, cuts a hole for his eyes. It is as strange as it sounds, but Abe's light touch and narrative innovation makes it compelling.

"A spellbinder from beginning to end, an edgy masterpiece."-Chicago Sun-Times

"A stunning addition to the literature of eccentricity...an ontological thriller."-The New York Times

"Brilliant.... Like Kafka's, Abe's work reveals an astonishing ability to create dreamlike events."-Chicago Tribune

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