



Three Screenplays

E. L. Doctorow

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E. L. Doctorow is one of America's most accomplished and acclaimed living writers. Winner of the National Book Award, the National Book Critics Circle Award (twice), the PEN/Faulkner Award, and the National Humanities Medal, he is the author of nine novels that have explored the drama of American life from the late nineteenth century to the present. Doctorow has also played an active role in transforming his novels into films, writing screenplay adaptations of three of his works -- *The Book of Daniel*, *Ragtime*, and *Loon Lake*. Published here for the first time, his scripts reveal a new aspect of this writer's remarkable talents and offer film students and other cineastes unique insight into the complex relationship of literature and motion pictures.

Each of these screenplays has undergone a different fate. Doctorow's script for *Daniel* was made into a feature film by director Sidney Lumet in 1983. The monumental *Ragtime* screenplay he wrote for director Robert Altman was to have been filmed as either a six-hour feature film or a ten-hour television series. When Altman was replaced on the project by Milos Forman, a shorter, more conventional script was commissioned from another writer. In 1981, Doctorow adapted *Loon Lake*, but this challenging work has yet to be filmed.

For this book, Doctorow has revised his dazzling *Ragtime* screenplay, making clear how different the film might have been, and has written a preface about the art of screenwriting. In addition, editor Paul Levine provides a general introduction to Doctorow's fiction and specific introductions to each screenplay; interviews Lumet about making *Daniel*; and talks with Doctorow about his abiding interest in the art and craft of cinema.

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