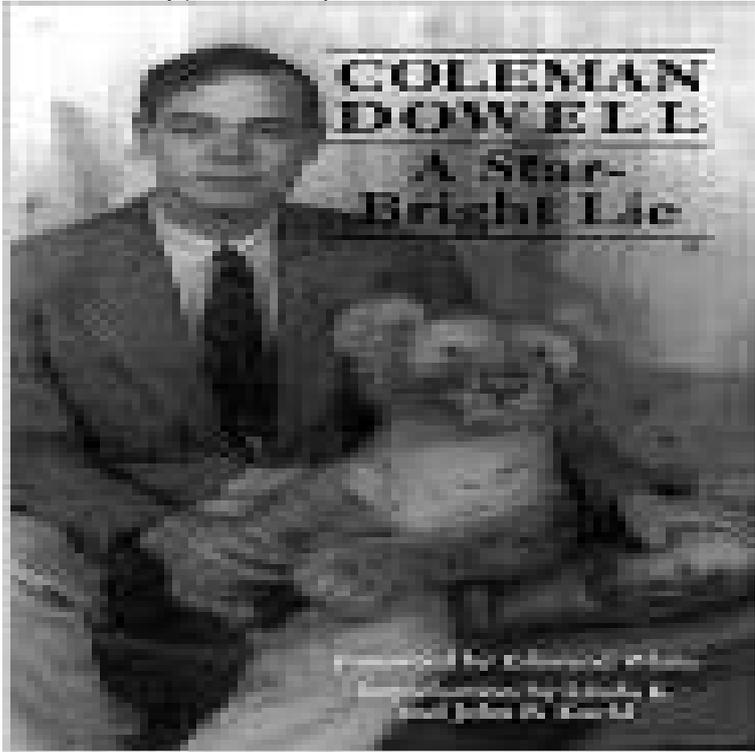


Star-Bright Lie (American Literature Series)



A Star-Bright Lie recounts the age-old story of the young provincial who comes to New York and is dazzled and betrayed by the bright lights of Broadway, but with a few kinks to the story: the provincial in this case was gay and would later develop into one of Americas finest novelists. Coleman Dowell left Kentucky for New York in 1950 and spent the next decade trying to make it in the big city. With the same stylish verve and searching analysis that illuminate his fiction, Dowell recounts his frustrating experiences in show biz: early success as staff composer for a TV show (to which he was recommended by Tennessee Williams); next, touted as David Merricks Golden Boy, a failed attempt to adapt ONeills Ah, Wilderness! as a musical; several other attempts at a hit on Broadway; and finally, a sabotaged venture at making a musical of Carl Van Vechtens novel The Tattooed Countess. Throughout this memoir are unsparing portraits of Williams, Merrick, Van Vechten, Isak Dinesen, and others of the period. But the real star is Dowell himself: his paranoia, his bedeviled fascination with glamour, his lyric response to nature, his nostalgia for a Kentucky hed fled and then reinvented, his Gothic sense of horror, his touchy pride, his passion for black men, his alienation from both heterosexual society and the two forms of gay life hed known (from novelist Edmund Whites foreword). Illustrated with eight pages of photographs (many, including the cover, by Van Vechten).

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