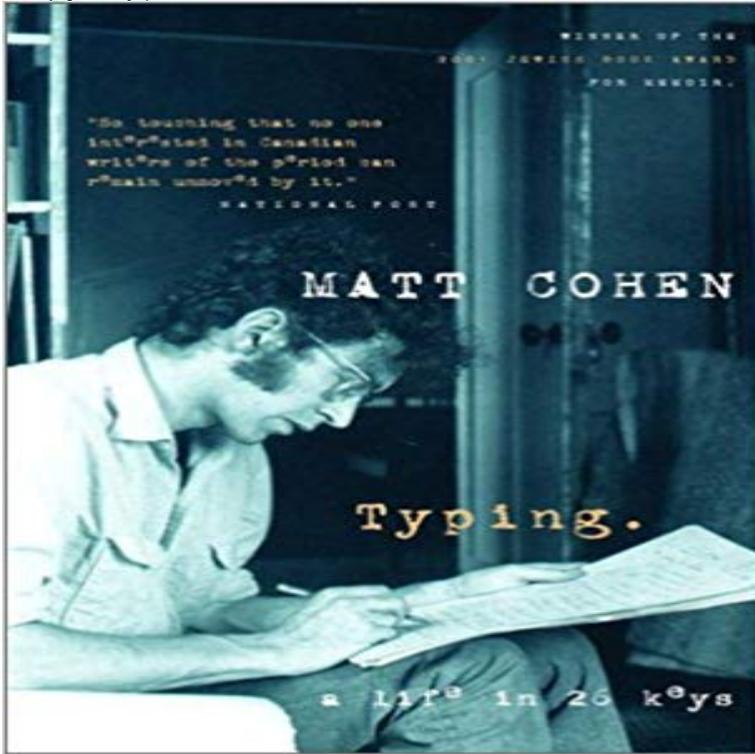


# Typing



Matt Cohen left us all a gift when he decided, in the last six months of his life, to write a memoir. Typing is an invaluable and touching reckoning of the writing life, funny in many places, brilliant in others. It is also the story of the flourishing of writing in Canada: Cohen was at the centre of our country's cultural life for over three decades. He was one of the founders of the Writers Union; he was the brains behind many initiatives, including the successful lobbying for the public lending right; he was a translator of Quebec writers into English. After his death, it became clear that Cohen was a touchstone for many writers and readers in this country, at the same time as he was a dedicated outsider, a Jewish intellectual moving through a WASPish cultural woods. Typing includes rare and wonderful portraits of George Grant, Hugh Garner, Morley Callaghan and Margaret Laurence, writers who came ahead of him and who posed their own puzzles of recognition and success. Cohen's memoir is rich in recollection, from his early days at Rochdale writing hip, stream-of-consciousness novels to his move to a farm near Kingston, Ontario, where the southern Ontario landscape captured his imagination and inspired such novels as *The Disinherited*, *The Sweet Second Summer of Kitty Malone* and, years later, *Elizabeth* and *After*. Through the ebbs and flows of literary fashion and worldly acclaim, Cohen stayed constant to the demands of fiction. This memoir ends in the present tense. Cohen had a novel he wanted to finish, and he was certain he wouldn't die before he was done. He wasn't so lucky, but we, at least, have these last pages in which Matt Cohen's voice is utterly alive.

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Typing is the process of writing or inputting text by pressing keys on a typewriter, computer keyboard, cell phone, or calculator. It can be distinguished from other

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