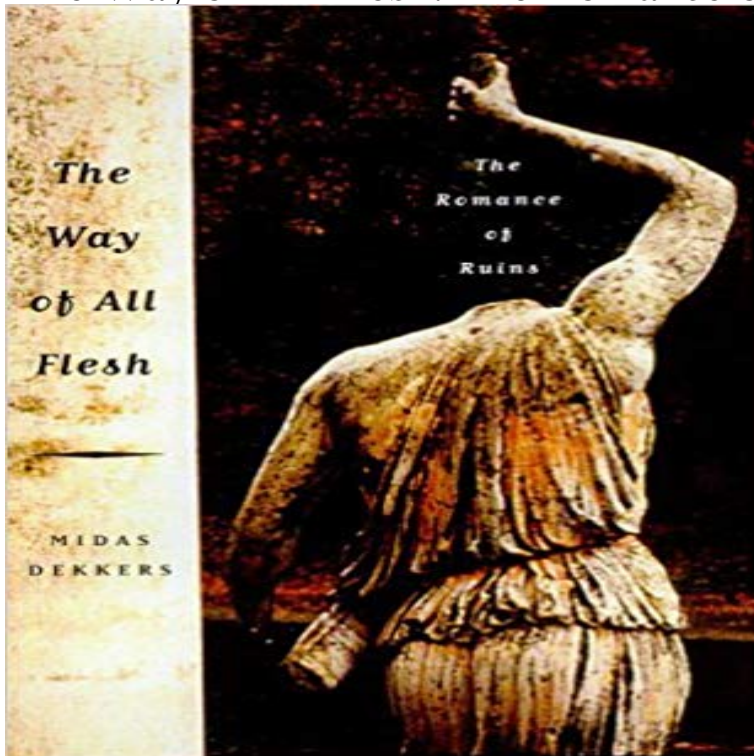


The Way of All Flesh: The Romance of Ruins



A wonderfully witty, erudite, and insightful book about the way things fall apart -- about the inevitable ruin of everything from bodies and works of art to ideals and whole societies. In *The Way of All Flesh*, Midas Dekkers argues that things are at their most beautiful when they decay, provided they are given the chance. Old buildings are usually pulled down or restored. Aging people desperately try to act and look young, because novelty, youth and beauty are equated in our minds with what is desirable. Only mankind is bothered by the realization that life is a way of dying slowly. By ignoring or evading the lure of decay, which has its own attractions, are we simply trying to escape from the truth? With the idiosyncratic erudition of the European intellectual -- Roberto Calasso and Umberto Eco come to mind -- Dekkers stresses that our aversion to decay and mortality makes our lives shallow. This is the meditative essay as written by Fellini; Dekkers that ancient Rome's days of decline were its finest, and *The Way of All Flesh* is a profound and entertaining meditation on what it means to outlive one's usefulness, when the wheel of fortune has gone full circle.

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