

"Part science, part celebration, The Way of All Flesh is a free-range meditation on all that is corruptible and beautiful—our bodies, our buildings, our lives and times—all that perishes and putrefies. For readers too curious to whistle past the graveyard, Dekkers proffers a wry and welcome look within."

—Thomas Lynch, author of The Undertaking

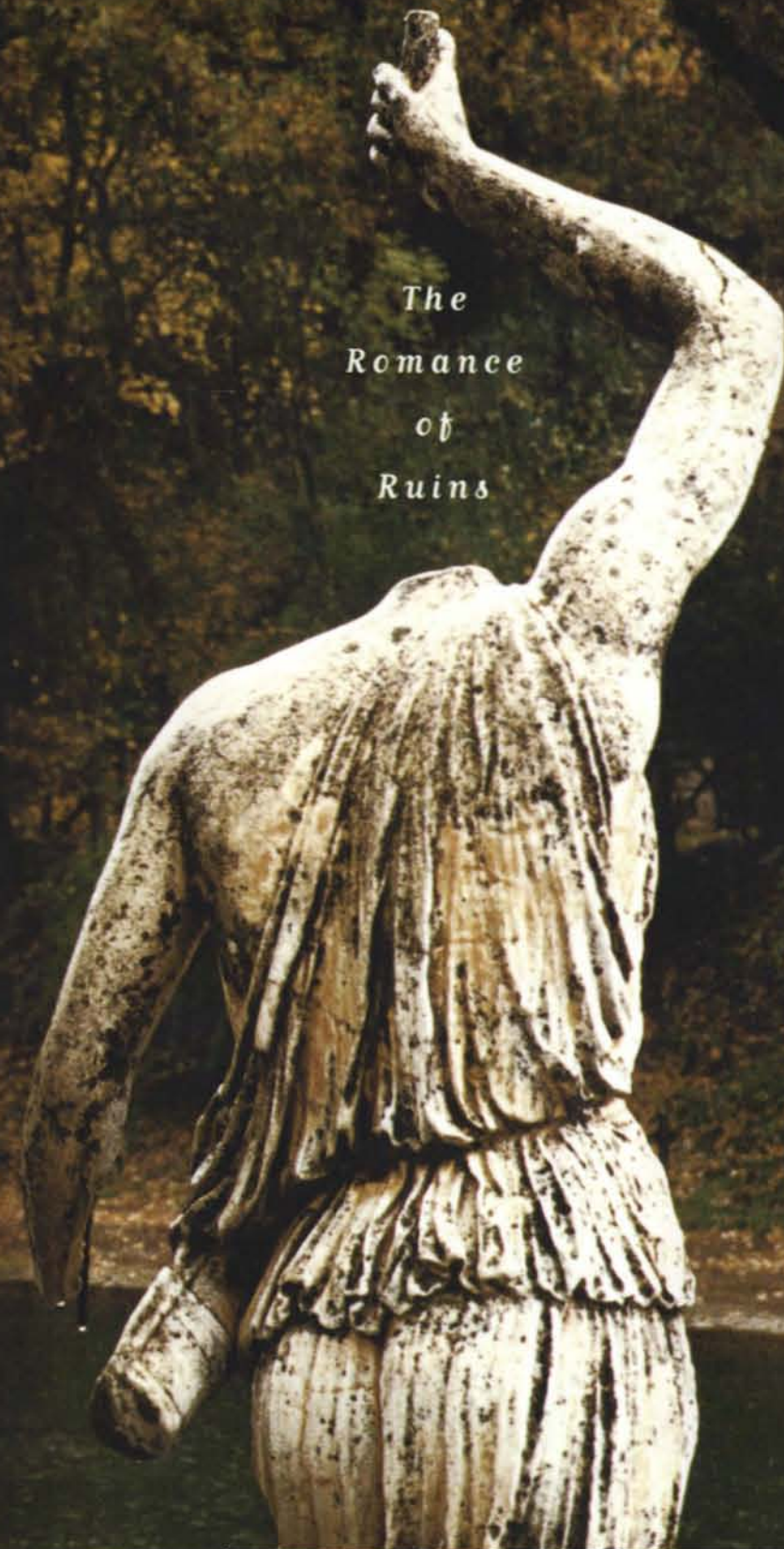
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MIDAS MIDAS
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*The
Romance
of
Ruins*



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Aged 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. Mankind alone refuses nature's model and is bothered by the realization that "life is a way of dying slowly." But, by ignoring or evading the lure of decay, are we simply trying to escape from the truth?

Midas Dekkers argues that things are at their most beautiful when they deteriorate, provided they are given the chance. 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 Fellini might have written it; Dekkers asserts that ancient Rome's days of decline were its finest. *The Way of All Flesh* is at once a wonderfully witty book about the inevitable ruin of everything from bodies to works of art to ideals and a profound meditation on what it means to outlive one's usefulness, when the wheel of fortune has gone full circle.



MIDAS DEKKERS was born in 1946 in Haarlem, the Netherlands, and is his country's most popular writer-biologist.

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