



The Decay of the Angel (Sea of Fertility, Book 4)

By Yukio Mishima, Edward G. Seidensticker

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Yukio Mishima's *The Decay of the Angel* is the final novel in his masterful tetralogy, *The Sea of Fertility*. It is the last installment of Shigekuni Honda's pursuit of the successive reincarnations of his childhood friend Kiyoaki Matsugae.

It is the late 1960s and Honda, now an aged and wealthy man, once more encounters a person he believes to be a reincarnation of his friend, Kiyoaki — this time restored to life as a teenage orphan, T?ru. Adopting the boy as his heir, Honda quickly finds that T?ru is a force to be reckoned with. The final novel of this celebrated tetralogy weaves together the dominant themes of the previous three novels in the series: the decay of Japan's courtly tradition; the essence and value of Buddhist philosophy and aesthetics; and, underlying all, Mishima's apocalyptic vision of the modern era.

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Bibliography

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Editorial Review

Review

“Mesmerizing. . . . A saga of 20th-century Japan: a story of national decline that nonetheless proposes redemption through the endurance of a certain soul, forceful enough to be reborn ad infinitum.”

—*The Guardian* (London)

“The end of [Mishima’s] *Sea of Fertility* tetralogy. . . is surely one of the best final scenes in the history of the novel.”

—David Mitchell, *The New York Times Book Review*

Language Notes

Text: English (translation)

Original Language: Japanese

From the Inside Flap

The dramatic climax of the SEA OF FERTILITY, bringing together the dominant themes of the three previous novels; the decay of Japan’s courtly tradition and samurai ideal, and the essence and value of Buddhist philosophy.

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