



The Dying Animal

Philip Roth

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David Kepesh is white-haired and over sixty, an eminent TV culture critic and star lecturer at a New York college, when he meets Consuela Castillo, a decorous, well-mannered student of twenty-four, the daughter of wealthy Cuban exiles, who promptly puts his life into erotic disorder.

Since the sexual revolution of the 1960s, when he left his wife and child, Kepesh has experimented with living what he calls an "emancipated manhood," beyond the reach of family or a mate. Over the years he has refined that exuberant decade of protest and license into an orderly life in which he is both unimpeded in the world of eros and studiously devoted to his aesthetic pursuits. But the youth and beauty of Consuela, "a masterpiece of volupté" undo him completely, and a maddening sexual possessiveness transports him to the depths of deforming jealousy. The carefree erotic adventure evolves, over eight years, into a story of grim loss.

What is astonishing is how much of America's post-sixties sexual landscape is encompassed in **THE DYING ANIMAL**. Once again, with unmatched facility, Philip Roth entangles the fate of his characters with the social forces that shape our daily lives. And there is no character who can tell us more about the way we live with desire now than David Kepesh, whose previous incarnations as a sexual being were chronicled by Roth in **THE BREAST** and **THE PROFESSOR OF DESIRE**.

A work of passionate immediacy as well as a striking exploration of attachment and freedom, **THE DYING ANIMAL** is intellectually bold, forcefully candid, wholly of our time, and utterly without precedent--a story of sexual discovery told about himself by a man of seventy, a story about the power of eros and the fact of death.

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