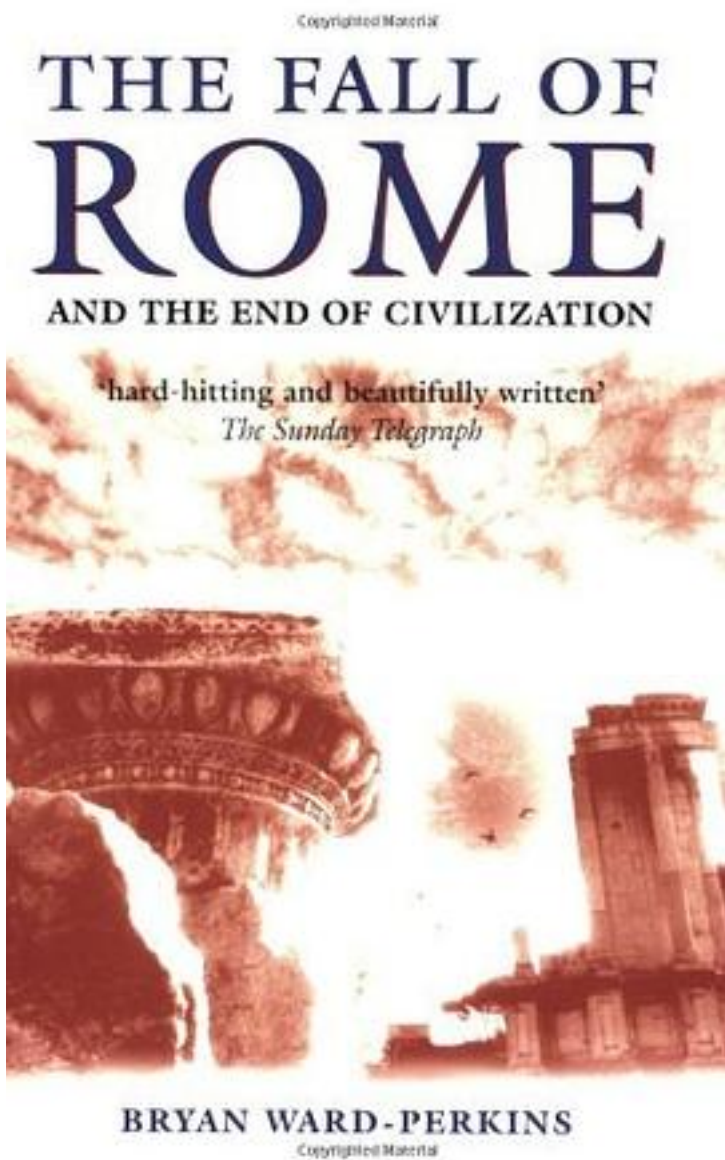


The Fall of Rome



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The lone black teacher at the Chelsea School, an all-boys boarding school in Connecticut, Latin instructor Jerome Washington has championed the classical virtues of rigour and discipline throughout his career. Having spent his career - and his life - at Chelsea trying not to appear too "racial", he is reserved, controlled, and seemingly content with his isolated life. Then, into his classroom steps Rashid Bryson, a promising black student from New York City, who initially sees Washington as a potential ally in this citadel of the white status quo. But to Bryson's surprise and dismay, Washington responds unexpectedly to him. It is up to Jana Hansen, herself a newcomer to Chelsea, to come to Bryson's aid. A middle-aged white divorcee who used to teach at a state school in Cleveland, she is as foreign to the sylvan self-possession of the Chelsea School as Washington and Bryson are. As the three get to know one another and are forced to struggle with their own personal demons, they begin their journey toward an inevitable and ultimately tragic confrontation that is both painful and life-altering. Told from three different perspectives, THE FALL OF ROME explores powerful and timely issues as it unfolds inexorably, like the classical tragedies that were the glory of ancient civilisations.

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