



# Cursed Legacy: The Tragic Life of Klaus Mann

*Frederic Spotts*

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## **Cursed Legacy: The Tragic Life of Klaus Mann** Frederic Spotts

Son of the famous Thomas Mann, homosexual, drug-addicted, and forced to flee from his fatherland, the gifted writer Klaus Mann's comparatively short life was as artistically productive as it was devastatingly dislocated. Best-known today as the author of *Mephisto*, the literary *enfant terrible* of the Weimar era produced seven novels, a dozen plays, four biographies, and three autobiographies—among them the first works in Germany to tackle gay issues—amidst a prodigious artistic output. He was among the first to take up his pen against the Nazis, as a reward for which he was blacklisted and denounced as a dangerous half-Jew, his books burnt in public squares around Germany, and his citizenship revoked. Having served with the U.S. military in Italy, he was nevertheless undone by anti-Communist fanatics in Cold War-era America and Germany, dying in France (though not, as all other books contend, by his own hand) at age forty-two.

Powerful, revealing, and compulsively readable, this first English-language biography of Klaus Mann charts the effects of reactionary politics on art and literature and tells the moving story of a supreme talent destroyed by personal circumstance and the seismic events of the twentieth century.

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