



Lady Butterfly (Antidoti) (Italian Edition)

Margaret Fountaine

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Nel 1940 un'anziana signora fu trovata in fin di vita sul ciglio di una strada presso il monte St. Benedict, nell'isola di Trinidad, Indie Occidentali. Aveva accanto a sé un retino. Sembrava aver avuto un attacco di cuore e venne soccorsa mentre era ancora cosciente, ma morì poco dopo. Era Margaret Fountaine, cacciatrice di farfalle. Molti anni prima, nel 1889, dopo aver ereditato un modesto vitalizio, la giovane Margaret aveva deciso di dedicarsi allo studio delle farfalle, una passione nata come semplice passatempo e che era divenuta la sua principale occupazione. Aveva anche rifiutato l'istituzione del matrimonio, non accettando compromessi: "Perché rinunciare alla mia libertà in cambio di una sistemazione più conveniente agli occhi del mondo?". La sua ricerca la portò in Africa, in Australia e in Cina. Conobbe il mondo agli inizi del Novecento servendosi di treni e piroscafi, viaggiò in bicicletta e a dorso di un mulo, affrontò le febbri tropicali, dormì in capanne di fango. Per mantenersi si ritrovò ad abbattere alberi in una fattoria australiana, visse negli Stati Uniti e si entusiasmo per Los Angeles e la nascente città del cinema, Hollywood. Esplorò i grandi fiumi sudamericani e si smarrì nella giungla africana. I diari qui riuniti, rivelati al pubblico solo nel 1978 come richiesto dalla stessa Fountaine nel suo testamento ("cento anni dopo il giorno esatto in cui ho iniziato a scriverli"), ci raccontano la vita avventurosa di questa donna spregiudicata e audace, ammirata non solo dalla comunità scientifica per aver lasciato in dono una collezione di ventiduemila farfalle al museo della sua città natale, Norwich, ma anche dal movimento per l'emancipazione femminile, che riconobbe nelle sue gesta lo spirito di una donna libera.

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