



TWILIGHT IN ITALY

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Global Grey ebooks

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BY
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1916

Twilight In Italy By D. H. Lawrence.

This edition was created and published by Global Grey

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I thought of the Lake of Como what I had thought of Lugano: it must have been wonderful when the Romans came there. Now it is all villas. I think only the sunrise is still wonderful, sometimes.

I took the steamer down to Como, and slept in a vast old stone cavern of an inn, a remarkable place, with rather nice people. In the morning I went out. The peace and the bygone beauty of the cathedral created the glow of the great past. And in the market-place they were selling chestnuts wholesale, great heaps of bright, brown chestnuts, and sacks of chestnuts, and peasants very eager selling and buying. I thought of Como, it must have been wonderful even a hundred years ago. Now it is cosmopolitan, the cathedral is like a relic, a museum object, everywhere stinks of mechanical money-pleasure. I dared not risk walking to Milan: I took a train. And there, in Milan, sitting in the Cathedral Square, on Saturday afternoon, drinking Bitter Campari and watching the swarm of Italian city-men drink and talk vivaciously, I saw that here the life was still vivid, here the process of disintegration was vigorous, and centred in a multiplicity of mechanical activities that engage the human mind as well as the body. But always there was the same purpose stinking in it all, the mechanizing, the perfect mechanizing of human life.
