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Tuscan Cities

William Dean Howells

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Tuscan Cities

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Tuscan Cities William Dean Howells
"It was their lovely ways, far more than their monuments, that made the Florentines delightful. I would rather have had a perpetuity of the cameriere's smile than Donatello's San Giorgio."Tuscany is arguably the most alluring and iconic region of Italy. It is a place of breathtaking natural beauty, imbued with an ancient and rich cultural heritage that, as Shelley's 'paradise of exiles', has inspired centuries of artists, scientists writers, poets and travellers. For William Dean Howells, American Consul to Venice for four years, Italy was the country that fashioned his prose and fostered his love of travel. One winter he travelled the length and breadth of Tuscany, from Florence and Fiesole to Siena, Pisa, Lucca, Pistoia and Prato. Immersing himself in all things Tuscan, he describes in compelling detail the daily life - funerals and weddings, military marches and lovers' trysts - of a place that was bursting with life and endlessly fascinating to him. He muses on the character of the Italians that he meets, revelling in their sense of drama, their sentimentality and impulsiveness and vividly resurrects the artistic, tempestuous, world-changing history of Tuscany, from its mysterious, ancient beginnings to the birth of the Renaissance and its status as cultural soul of Italy. Tuscan Cities, a passionate Italophile's glowing tribute, cannot fail to inspire anyone who has ever travelled to or loved Tuscany as Howells did.

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