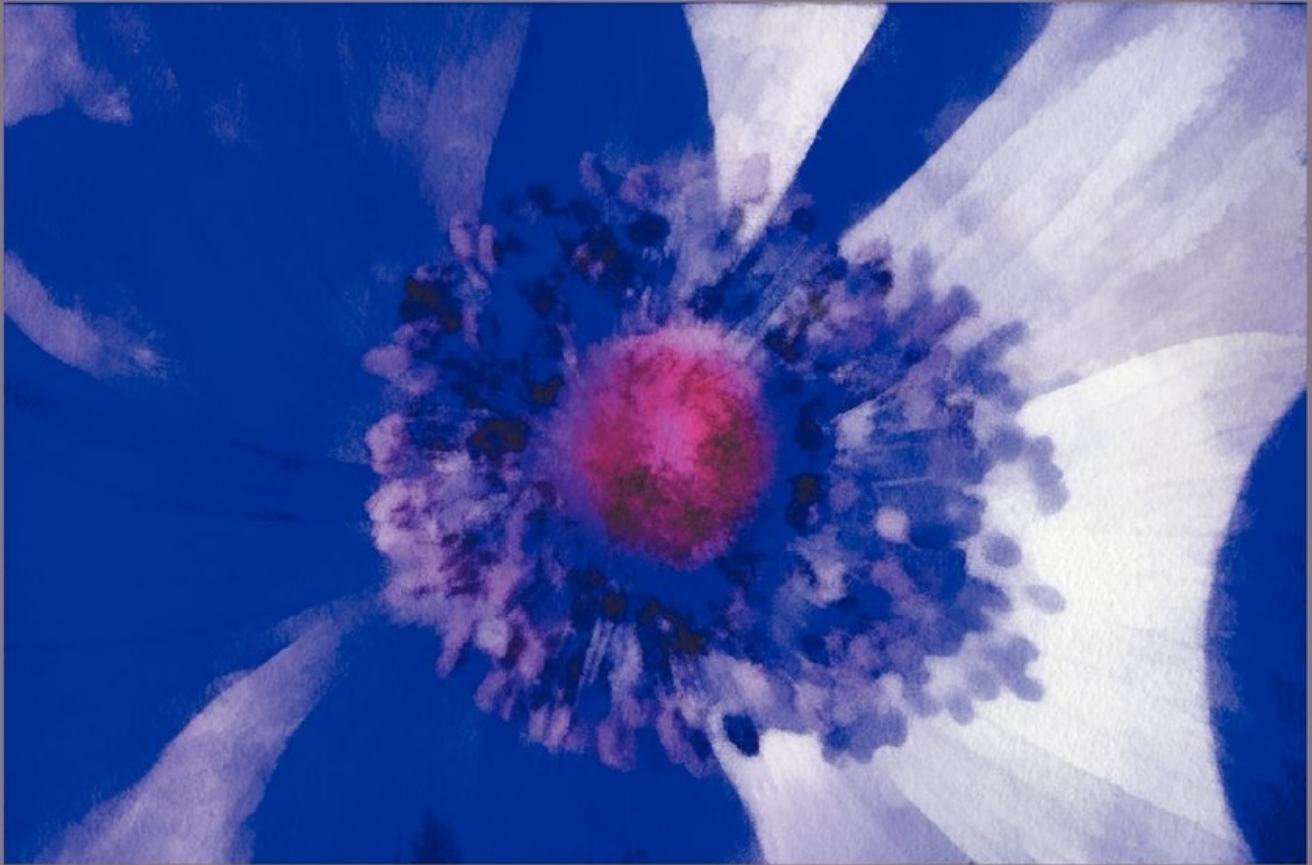


FLORENCE

GRANT ALLEN



Resumo de Florence

Purchase of this book includes free trial access to www.million-books.com where you can read more than a million books for free. This is an OCR edition with typos. Excerpt from book: ORIGINS OF FLORENCE ONLY two considerable rivers flow from the Apennines westward into the Mediterranean.

The Tiber makes Rome; the Arno makes Florence. In prehistoric and early historic times, the mountainous region which forms the basin of these two rivers was occupied by a gifted military race, the Etruscans, who possessed a singular assimilative power for Oriental and Hellenic culture.

Intellectually and artistically, they were the pick of Italy. Their blood still runs in the veins of the people of Tuscany. Almost every great thing done in the Peninsula, in ancient or modern times, has been done by Etruscan hands or brains.

The poets and painters, in particular, with few exceptions, have been, in the wide ethnical sense, Tuscans. The towns of ancient Etruria were hill-top strongholds. Florence was not one of these; even its neighbour, Fiesole (Faesulae) did not rank among the twelve great cities of the Etruscan league.

But with the Roman conquest and the Roman peace, the towns began to descend from their mountain peaks into the river valleys; roads grew important, through internal trade; and bridges over rivers assumed a fresh commercial value.

Florence (Florentia), probably founded under Sulla as a Roman municipium, upon a Roman road, guarded the bridge across the Arno, and gradually absorbed the population of Fiesole. Under the later empire, it was the official residence of the Corrector of Tuscany and Umbria.

During the Middle Ages, it became for all practical purposes the intellectual and artistic capital of Tuscany, inheriting in full the remarkable mental and aesthetic excellences of the Etruscan race.

The valley of the Arno is rich and fertile, bordered by cultivable hills, which produce the famous Chianti wine. It was thus predestined by nature as the ...

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