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FINDING VALENTINO: FOUR SEASONS IN MY FATHER'S ITALY

Angela Di Sciascio
Victory, \$29.99

Angela Di Sciascio's father emigrated to Australia and was renamed Wal, a name he disliked. His family only discovered this fact when Alzheimer's broke down the imposed Anglo-Saxon restraint. The discovery of what he had lost by migration deeply affected his only daughter. So she went to his native Abruzzo, to rediscover her Italian heritage and, by extension, Valentino. Four seasons are covered in this book, during which Di Sciascio spends long periods with her relatives. She studies the language and eats good Italian food (recipes provided). Gradually she identifies the different strands in her heritage: Australian openness, Italian furbo (astute cunning). She sought to find what she could no longer ask her father about: his identity as an Italian. She discovered that the Italian and the Australian man were one. A warm and engaging travelogue.