

L'OMBRA MORTALE DELLA NOTTE STORIA ANTICA E MODERNA DELLA BELLADONNA

The Deadly Nightshade Ancient and Modern History of the Belladonna

BY GIANLUCA TORO

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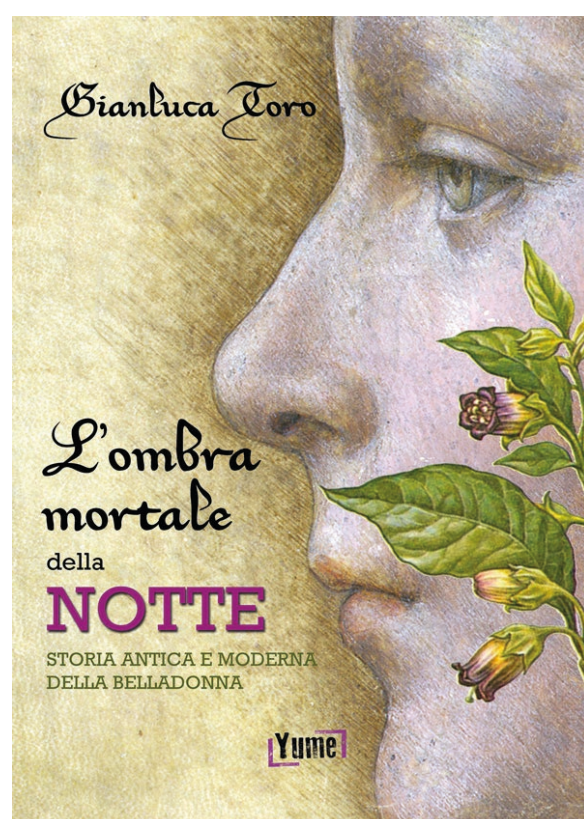
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Gianluca Toro, (Pinerolo, 1969) works as environmental chemist, and is particularly interested in natural and synthesised psychoactive drugs. He writes for Italian and foreign periodicals, and has published another book with Yume Editions.

The Deadly Nightshade (*Atropa belladonna*) is one of the most fascinating and mysterious plants. Since it is poisonous, it brings to mind seducing but destructive feminine entities, witches and devils, supernatural images of Fear and Death. Its Latin name originates from Atropo, the Greek god that was said to cut the Thread of Life; at the same time, it reminds us that Medieval and Renaissance women used its juice to obtain drops that would make their eyes more luminous. The book is a cross-discipline journey into the ways this plant was and is used: psychoactive or aphrodisiac drug, for magical or medical use. It is the guide to discovering a plant that still seems to keep its darkest sides hidden from man.