

LADY WILKINSON & NARRATIVE

I was about to say goodbye and leave when, with one final flick of her tail, she stopped me.
“Are you really leaving me like this?
When will I see you again?
Stay and talk with me.
You will not regret it.
Maggy’s word.”

My vacation plan was simple.
Two days.
The following evening I was supposed to fly back to Italy.
But an elderly aristocratic lady was calling from London, and I, a half-blood Calabrian, could not pretend not to hear her.

“How much time would you like me to dedicate to you?”

Her eyes widened.
For a moment she looked as if she had not heard me correctly.
As if she had misunderstood.
But no.
It was really me speaking.

And she, an English woman armed with experience and blessed with absolute clarity of thought, immediately recognized the opportunity.
Smiling, she answered:

“A lifetime.”

Whenever a woman anywhere in the world says:
“You will not regret it,”

it means she already has one or more surprises waiting for you.
That was something I learned throughout my life, inside my multicultural experiences.
The women I met were never a number.
They were simply the origin of the world to which I belonged.

I would return to my hotel and inform them of my new departure plans.
I would give her five days.
It was the least I could offer.

Before letting me go, however, she stopped me once again and said:

“The woman you call Mother today is a friend of mine.
We fought in the same war.
Fate eventually carried us in different directions, but neither of us ever allowed herself to forget.
The respect remained real.
The respect remained mutual.”

Then she looked at me with the calm certainty of someone who had already lived several lifetimes and quietly pronounced the words that changed everything:

“Welcome, nephew.”

Ferdinando Frega