

One Woman's True Story of Love and War in the Orient



Lilla's Feast: One Woman's True Story of Love and War in the Orient by Frances Osborne

★★★★☆ 4.3 out of 5

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In the annals of World War II, there are countless stories of heroism, sacrifice, and resilience. But few are as gripping and inspiring as the true story of Agnes Smedley, an American journalist and activist who fought alongside the Chinese Communist Party against the Japanese invasion.

Born in 1892 in a small town in Colorado, Smedley was a precocious and independent child. She left home at a young age to pursue a career in journalism, and eventually made her way to China in 1928. There, she witnessed firsthand the horrors of the Japanese invasion and was deeply moved by the plight of the Chinese people.

In 1936, Smedley joined the Chinese Communist Party and began working as a correspondent for the party's newspaper, the New China Daily. She quickly became a trusted confidante of Mao Zedong and other party leaders, and played a vital role in shaping the party's propaganda strategy.

In 1937, the Japanese launched a full-scale invasion of China. Smedley was evacuated to the countryside, where she continued to work as a journalist and propagandist. She also organized and trained guerrilla fighters, and helped to smuggle weapons and supplies into the war zone.

Smedley's work was dangerous and often grueling. She was constantly on the move, dodging Japanese patrols and sleeping in caves and bombed-out buildings. But she never lost her faith in the Chinese people or in the cause of communism.

In 1941, Smedley was captured by the Japanese. She was tortured and interrogated, but she refused to give up any information about the Chinese Communist Party. She was eventually released in a prisoner exchange, but her health was broken.

After the war, Smedley returned to the United States, where she continued to write and speak out about the Chinese revolution. She died in 1950, at the age of 58, but her legacy lives on.

Agnes Smedley was a remarkable woman who dedicated her life to fighting for justice and freedom. Her story is a testament to the strength and resilience of the human spirit, and an inspiration to all who believe in the power of love and compassion.

Further Reading

- The Agnes Smedley Center
- Battle Hymn of China by Agnes Smedley
- Great Road by Agnes Smedley



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