




The Chestnut of the Giants

Directed by: Luigi Cammarota
Produced by: SD Cinematografica
Duration: 43 Min.
Versions: 
Format: HD

There are many stories and legends around a tree that fed generations of Valligians in the Alps before modernity emptied the villages: the chestnut tree. Uschione is a small village perched on the sheer rocks that overlook the valley of Keystone, in the high Valtellina. From the stone houses of the village the centers of the valley floor appear as from the plane, eight hundred meters below. Switzerland is just a few laps away, and it's where almost all its inhabitants have emigrated, drawn to the mirage of an easier life. The village remained uninhabited for many years, but only by men. The fraction is intact, but suspended in time. It remains the rural Alpine jewel that had been in the last century: no paved roads, only stone lanes between the stone houses, dry stone walls, vegetable gardens, orchards, small vineyards on the terraces that slowly engulfed the forest swallowed one year after another. But nature continued to live: many wild animals, herbs and flowers of all kinds. And the chestnut trees by the dozens, which every year in October continue to donate big curls and fat. The chestnuts of Lombardy are among the best in Italy, renowned since the Middle Ages. In Uschione, tons of chestnuts were produced, swollen with energy, which almost no one climbs to collect anymore. It is as if the great trees were orphans, suddenly useless, abandoned even if in full health. The "stone staircase", a steep granite-paved path leading to the village is tiring to climb, a testament to the time when you only walked. It was the time when chestnuts were "the bread of the poor", in fact a nutrient-rich fruit, the basis of the food and subsistence economy of many communities. The "gift of God" to which the devil for spite had put thorns around but which hardworking and patient men knew how to open and eat. But the inhabitants have not abandoned it, and working connected to the rest of the world try to revive the gardens and orchards living according to nature, also to no longer leave alone the generous giants of this Italian mountain corner, the secular chestnut trees of Uschione .



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