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Sommario/riassunto	A distinct symbol of the desert and the Middle East, the camel was once unkindly described as "half snake, half folding bedstead." But in the eyes of many the camel is a creature of great beauty. This is most evident in the Arab world, where the camel has played a central role in the historical development of Arabic society-where an elaborate vocabulary and extensive literature have been devoted to it. In Camel, Robert Irwin explores why the camel has fascinated so many cultures, including those cultivated in locales where camels are not indigenous