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Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliographical references and index.
Nota di contenuto	The breath of life -- Early beliefs -- Industry and revolution -- Miasma and bad air -- Laboured breathing -- Breathing high and low -- Breathing fast and slow: breathe in, breathe out -- Inspired breathing -- Last gasp.
Sommario/riassunto	Our knowledge of breathing has shaped our social history and philosophical beliefs since prehistory. Breathing occupied a spiritual status for the ancients, while today it is central to the practice of many forms of meditation, like Yoga. Over time physicians, scientists, and engineers have pieced together the intricate biological mechanisms of breathing to devise ever more sophisticated devices to support and maintain breathing indefinitely, from iron lungs to the modern ventilator. Breathing supplementary oxygen has allowed us to conquer Everest, travel to the Moon, and dive to ever greater ocean depths. We all expect to breathe fresh and clean air, but with an increase in air pollution that expectation is no longer being met. Today, respiratory viruses like COVID-19 are causing disasters both human and economical on a global scale. This is the story of breathing—a tale relevant to everyone.