

Into and Out of Brook Ramsey's The Eyes of Venice

by Fred Dale

There's nothing shy about it—her face floats in the glass of intrigue, or maybe she's just looking for something from us, like a helping hand out of a hell she's not yet ready to reveal, or she's a sort of jellyfish confusing the ease of our passing, or better yet, she's a provocation, daring us to stir up her day. No matter. A face is only a design choice for the rise of the eyes, the same secret way windows use buildings to get to the air. She's the woman the city imagines itself to be. If need calls out, rest your head upon the anvil grey building there, your two eyes matching its thin, half-circle, twin windows, jealous in their failure as eyes, though windows and eyes are only, themselves, fields of containment for the pupils, the pitch-black centers drilling their way out of creation so that what rises in them is a place without the kin of a past. Perhaps, still, you're a warning, a protector of all that vibrancy. How easily the color of the city goes through you, that clarity in opposition to the sooted formality of the grey building, which, after all, is not a place for ladies to sigh against, but an abandonment you cleave free. I see it now, how your countenance is an imploration for us to take from you this weathered relic of the city's darkest hours. You, dreamed child, can't escape the city's sleep, but you can curate it.



Paired with mural: "Eyes of Venice" by Brook Ramsey | fdale@unf.edu