

## Part 4: Ciao Bella Ding Dong! - Florence, Venice, Rome 2008

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Thursday, 24 April 2008  
Last Updated Monday, 08 June 2009

Fountain Palazzo Vecchio Florence Italy THE SEYMOUR MONKEY CHRONICLES:

What has become of me? I am spending an hour in line just to see Dave's dick. A few short days ago Parisian boobs both painted and paraded had been the order of the day, now I wait patiently to view a polished stone knob.

The queue snakes around Chinese calligraphy touts pimping on cardboard tables. Names and proverbs penned in bright colours with flamboyant brush strokes prompting shaken heads from the assembled conga line. As we approach the Galleria dell'Accademia I ask whether this is globalisation in a nutshell? Florentine-Chinese artisans, intruding onto Michaelangelo's turf. - I wonder what Marco Polo would think of this.

We navigate through the security scans and ante rooms until we sight the most famous penis in art hanging at the end of the hallway. It is attached to a grand physique as David towers over the throng as he holds silent court to the assembled. Big feet, big hands, big head & Tiny Cazzo! Finger pointing and giggles from schoolgirls. I surmise it must have been a cold day in Firenze on the day of posing.

This was my first day in Italy, weary from the journey from Paris. Neck and muscles still stiff from tossing and turning on the night train to Milan - Creepy blue light illuminating creepy blue cabin mates. On the top bunk I slept in thirty-minute shifts as we passed through France, Switzerland then Italy, the global roaming text beeping my phone with every border crossing. I cursed my connectivity.

Now my calf muscles are screaming from Tuscan tower stairs. Gilded medieval frescos stare down at me as I rest weary limbs in medieval chapels & Christ's angelic entourage and a devil with a mouthful of corpses. I watch pigeons flutter through the scaffolding surrounding the Gothic grandeur. A beggar sprawls on a corner till the Basilica bells chime the end of her shift.

I am going goth sans the Eyeliner. Blood red orange juice fits with the dark ambiance. Gelati addiction reaches crescendo. I wander, I snap, I pretend - An imposter Renaissance man.

I pass goldsmiths on bridges flogging 24 carat marriage insurance to doe eyed lovers whilst carriage horses tuck into feedbags around the corner. A few drops of rain cause the tout army switch inventory. Umbrellas and ponchos emerge as if by magic.

I farewell the Duomo Basilica and the severed head statues of the Palazzo Vecchio. I leave behind Firenze and entrain for Venezia. Magnificent hill top castles and walled cities tease in glimpses through carriage windows. Snow capped Bologna hills give way to open plains. Weighed down by baggage I arrive at Santa Lucia steps and survey the aquatic traffic.

Loaded like a pack mule I enter the Venetian maze of side streets, dead ends and canals. Five hundred metres as the crow would fly seems like kilometres following trial and error navigation. An hour later finally freed of burden the human lab rat collapses into white cotton sheets.

Part 1: Evening Pints & Dragon's Breath Mornings - London Feb 2008

Part 2: Non Moleste I'm on Siesta - Barcelona March 2008

Part 3: S'il Vous Plaît Burlesque - Paris March 2008

Part 4: Ciao Bella Ding Dong! - Florence - March 2008

Part 5: Venetian Blinded - March 2008

Part 6: Rack 'em Up - Rome 2008