

Part 5: Venetian Blinded March 2008

Contributed by Seymour Monkey
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Fresco on a chapel ceiling in Florence Italy THE SEYMOUR MONKEY CHRONICLES:

Gee Wilickers More Basilica's! Clouds of feathered rats swarm around St Mark's Square as vendors sell tourists bags of grain for them to gorge themselves on, then sit back and watch a pecking and shitting frenzy ensue. Shutters snap frenetically. Strike a pose and Cool!

Above saints and rampant horses look down wearing their own white battle scars from centuries of pigeon duelling. Intricate frescos glow amidst the ancient dark woodwork. Outside the late afternoon sun magically turns the grey domes golden.

Alone in Venice I allow pints of Birra to seduce me as I drink by the Rialto bridge. Lovers in gondolas and rowdy school kids wearing jesters hats pass me by. Shops selling ornate glassware and Carnivale masks abound. I start thinking I must be the only single guy in Venice over 20. My romantic mezzanine apartment wasted.

Pink street lamps light the way to the opera house. We queue politely trying not to trip over the bottom lip of an American teen dragged here kicking and screaming by his parents. He oozes misery. Trading in his Emo longings for costumed performers belting out Baroque and roll.

Bravo! Polite applause increases in enthusiasm as the show picks up speed. The cast ham up the best bits from an operatic smorgasboard. I walk back to my apartment through eerily deserted streets. It is 11pm. Venice is not a party town.

Sporting Italian leather and scarf I strut through the ancient streets. I pause in a market to browse. A television crew emerge like magic. TV vox pop interviewer enthusiasm turns to smiling disappointment as soon as I open my mouth. "Pfft! Appena un turista!" My Italian TV career over before it had begun.

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