5. At Night on the Terrace, Fiesole

Published by

Anderson, Idris.
Mrs. Ramsay's Knee.
Utah State University Press, 2008.
Project MUSE. muse.jhu.edu/book/9854.

For additional information about this book
https://muse.jhu.edu/book/9854
Tonight I look out on the lights of Fiesole, the shadow of the little campanile on the hilltop, and the long dark line of trees along the Arno, the winking lights of the bridges of Firenze, and I know behind the slopes of Monte Ceceri, big and red above the cluttered rooftops, the Duomo of Santa Maria del Fiore is certain and invisible. My mind goes there remembering colors of stone pieced together like quilt making, white and green and pink, the dome’s elegant marble ribbing, the scale and feat of it, crying conceit and control. Among things seen and unseen, how far can we know what we know? How much can I tell you that is true?

Meanwhile the late Italian light has been taking the last of the blood red roses on the terrace, petals papery, perfume lost in the pungence of magnolia and cypress, fig and rosemary. High over it all, a half-moon rises while across olives and vines now also in the dark, the hollow clatter of the Fiesole bell clangs hours and half-hours. The white dove we’ve seen, tail fanning up, now settles and coos in the cypress. Inside your slatted light of shutters you’re in bed reading a mystery—the whisper-turning of pages. Drowsy in my arms on the table in the cooling night of the terrace, I look out on the lights of Fiesole and make no promises, not even to myself.