

The Face in Fremantle’s Chapel Window

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A face appears in a chapel window when viewed from outside, but not inside. Fremantle’s legend identifies it with Martha Rendell; the glass offers an explanation of its own.

STATUS	A recorded story, with its history attached
CLASSIFICATION	STR
MATERIAL	Fremantle, Western Australia
DISPOSITION	PUBLIC / SOURCED STORY
CATEGORY	Strange Files
RECORD TYPE	Ghosts & hauntings
STORY HISTORY	Martha Rendell died in 1909; later prison legend

THE ACCOUNT

Fremantle’s apparition stays in the window. Prison legend identifies a face visible in the chapel glass as Martha Rendell, the only woman executed at the prison. The peculiar rule is that the image can be seen from outside but not from within. There is no figure to follow down a corridor, and no conversation to reconstruct. The haunting depends on where the observer stands. A familiar face seems to be watching over the prison until the visitor changes sides and finds that the same pane no longer contains it.

FOLLOWING THE TRAIL

The National Film and Sound Archive’s heritage-film transcript records the legend and dates Rendell’s execution to 1909. A publicly documented photograph of the window describes ripples in its old glass producing the face-like effect. That provides a concrete visual feature to compare with the story; the appearance does not establish whose face a viewer is recognising.

WHY IT STAYS WITH US

This is an unusually inspectable haunting. The story gives the image a name, while the window gives it a physical surface. A change in viewpoint can alter the supposed presence without altering the building at all.

WHERE THIS TELLING COMES FROM

Fremantle Prison

National Film and Sound Archive of Australia

<https://www.nfsa.gov.au/collection/item/fremantle-prison>

Fremantle Prison window illusion

Wikimedia Commons; Ghostieguide~commonswiki

<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:FremantlePrisonWindowIllusion.JPG>

RETURN TO THE STORY

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Visit the record for its illustrations and further reading.

<https://u225x.com/record/STR-GHOST-040>