

**Open Your Eyes Jackson Ryder**  
**Canvas28 May 2016**

(Escalator Press \$30)

A dramatic moment looms from page one of this coming-of-age novel set in the 1960s about New York teen Jackson who is forcibly relocated to California. We meet him in hospital, then backtrack over events leading to this, starting with the death of his mother and the ensuing taut relationship with his father as both grieve. Once the narrative reaches California, it rewards with rich plotlines; Jackson struggling against his father to pursue his calling as an artist, finding his place in a new school and navigating the charged emotions of a teen boy whose eye is drawn to all the wrong girls. The final twist that lands him in hospital is suitably unexpected. The backdrop of major 60s events are convincingly portrayed and, for anyone unfamiliar with the era, this book is a good introduction.