

The Mirror



Sixteenth Edition
Spring 2019

Foreword from the Editor-in-Chief

Of all of the poetry and prose works we read at St. Francis, those of Edgar Allan Poe are perhaps the most consistent in theme, style, and tone. Poe's works are often dark, but not hopeless; tragic, but not without an excited energy. They have a dreamlike quality, somewhere between the fantastic and the realistic, the thoughtful and the emotional, the enlightening and nightmarish. When we read the works of Edgar Allan Poe, we are meant to question ourselves, search out the iniquity of human nature, and see that the world is composed of both light and dark. It is in the light that we are able to see humanity as it is, but it is in the dark of Poe's work that we can imagine how we should be.

In this edition of *The Mirror*, our talented writers, poets, and artists have come together to honor one of America's darkest, most thought-provoking literary figures of all time. We seek to emulate his work, whether in style or in theme, and thereby bring his spirit into the context of a new generation.

~Anneke Zegers

Acknowledgements

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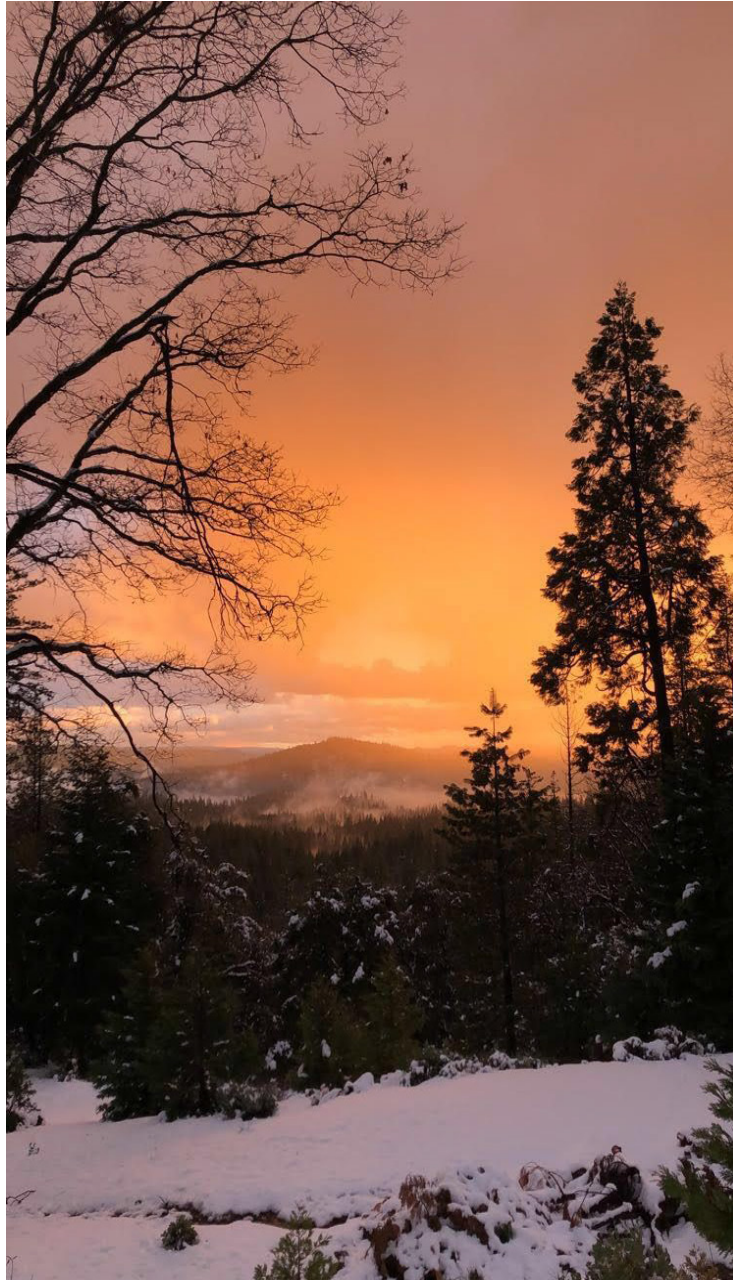
The Rain

Alyssa Appel

It Rains every day here
No sun no stars no moon
Just clouds and an
Endless curtain of Rain

Sprinkling or Pouring
Gallons of Water pure
Here I can't tell morning
From noon sometimes
I wish it would be a little hotter

I think it happened last year
Sometime in the month of June
The Water washed away all Color



Edgar Allan Snow
Anne Ayotte

Late Night Waltz

René Quiggle

I slide my key into the lock, jiggling it slightly until I can finally hear the bolt click into place. Slip my keys into my pocket and make my way down the staircase of my apartment building, the sound of my footsteps echoes off the concrete walls. I push the bar of the door down, and with a loud *clank* I enter into the night.

I shrug the hood of my jacket on and let my mind become consumed with the recountings of the day's toils. I begin to wander mindlessly down the moon cast streets. As I make my way deeper into the urban jungle sightings of passing cars become few and far between.

I spot a playground, left empty and deserted in the night. The park stale and dull, missing the vibrancy it once held in the sun. Instead left hollow in the shadows of the night.

Once I pass the foreboding park I turn on to a side street, leaving the main road. As I make my journey down the road my eye is drawn to a flickering street light. As my gaze drifted up to the flickering light, some movement in the distance caught my eye. At the opposite end of the street there was a silhouette of a man moving in some sort of strange dance. With each step he would move in a kind of square shape, almost like a waltz, then he would take an odd jutting stride forward.

Due to the late hour, I shrugged off his peculiar behavior as

caused by some kind of inebriation. Simply a drunken man enjoying a toon only he could hear. I sidestepped slightly, positioning myself closer to the road, thus giving him ample space on the sidewalk to pass me. He seemed harmless enough but I didn't want him to sway into me, or vomit on me.

As he moved closer still I began to take more notice of his movement. There was no hesitation or stuttering in his stride. Each step was confident yet gentle. He moved with the fluidity and grace of a dancer, each stride even further accentuated by his long, lanky form. As my eyes traveled up his body I could make out that he was wearing an old suit, the kind of suit that was so tattered that you could only assume it was worn like a second skin. As my eyes continued their journey as he continued his I was able to make out his face. With the precision of his steps I expected him to be watching his feet, but instead his chin jutted forward, his face tilted back towards the night sky. A chill went down my spine as I saw that his eyes were opened painfully wide and his face was stretched and contorted into a cartoon-ish smile. Nevertheless, he continued his journey leg strutting forward, then side, back, side, then forward again. All the while his distorted face presented itself to the darkened night.

The sight of his stride, his eyes, his smile, proved too much for me. My eyes broke from him as I walked across the street to avoid having to get any closer to him. My feet swiftly took me across the street, only when I made it to the opposite side did my eyes swing back to the dancing man. My foot froze before it met the ground. He had stopped dancing. He stood perfectly parallel to me, one foot, toes pointed, in the street. His entire body faced me, his chin pointed straight at me. A smile still wide on his lips. Eyes still locked on the sky.

My foot hit the ground awkward and heavy. My breath caught in my throat. I continued walking as before but this time, I didn't take my

eyes off the man.

He stood there as if paralyzed by my gaze. As my stride took me halfway down the block I finally let my eyes leave the man. I watched the cement slabs of the sidewalk disappear below me. The hairs on the back of my neck were still raised, my body still coiled. I whipped my head back and saw, nothing. The street was empty. I let out a breath that I didn't even know I was holding. My shoulders dropped, my feet relaxed. But then the street light flickered, and I noticed him again.

He had crossed the street. Now directly in front of me. No longer was he standing tall but instead his body was coiled, crouched down. My eyes had been away from him for only a matter of seconds, yet he had already crossed the street. I stood there. Frozen. As he began to move.

No longer the dance walk from before, he now took long exaggerated steps, tiptoeing, as if he was in a cartoon sneaking up on someone. But instead of slow meticulous steps, he was moving fast.

My hand twitches at my side as my brain screams at me to grab something, my pepper spray, my phone, anything. But my arms didn't move. I couldn't move my body. Now it was me standing paralyzed. All the while the smiling man continued his demented approach, seeming more like a caricature than a man. And then he stopped. Only mere steps ahead of me, he paused, chin still forward, wild eyes still fixed on the sky.

As if I just remembered I could use it, I found my voice. I felt as if I was trying to stutter out my first words. Instead of a booming demand, a "What the... ?" stumbled from my lips. My words were weak and shaky. Fear dripped off of every syllable, which left me even more afraid. It was as if I had just presented myself as prey to a predator. A predator that fed on my fear.

But despite my words he just stood there, mouth wide. Until with a pivot of his heels, he turned around and began dance walking away

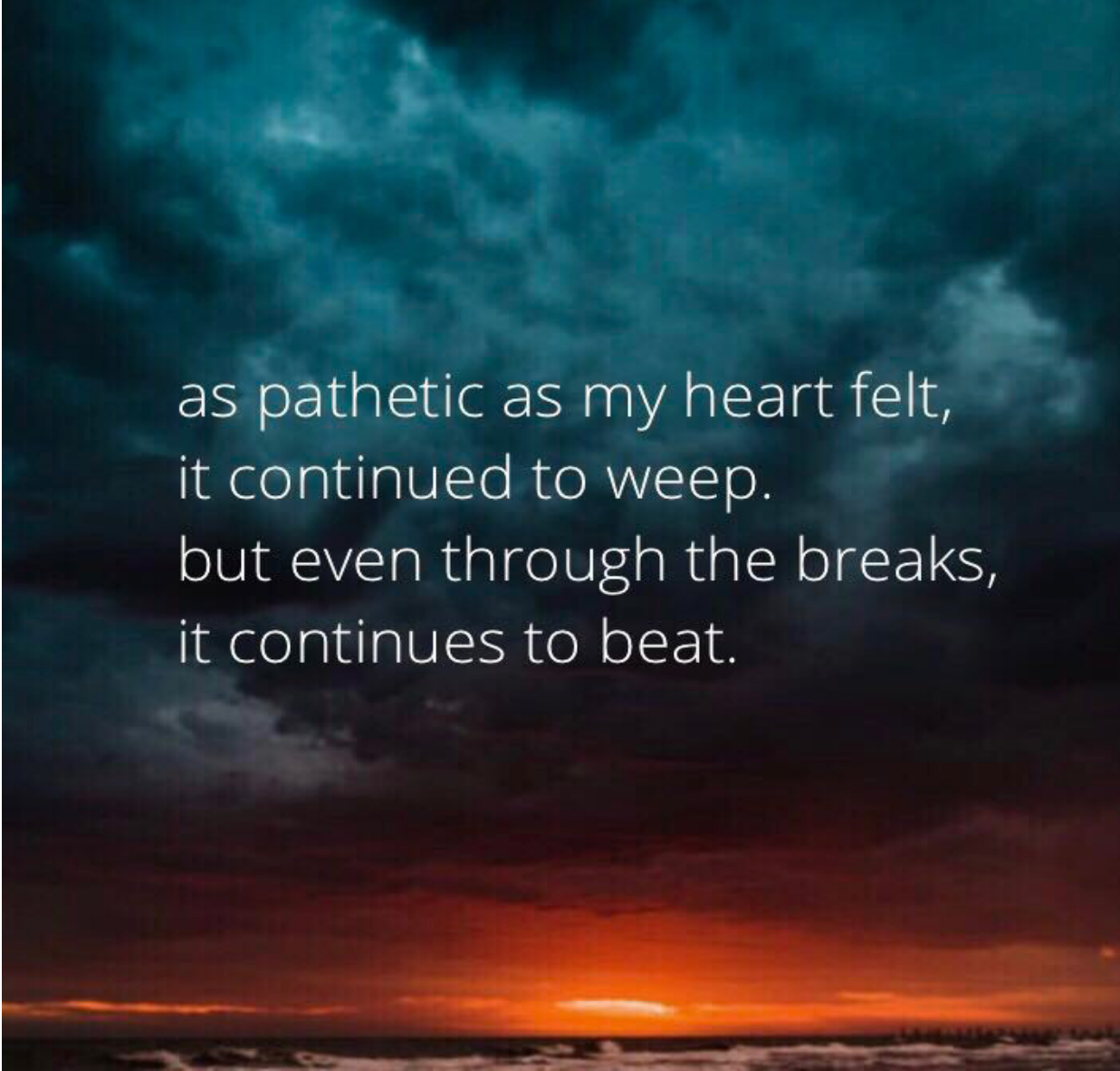
from me, resuming his previous graceful squares.

I began to shift my shoulder to turn but paused unable to turn my back to him. I stood there waiting, watching his form become smaller in the distance until he was almost out of sight. Just as I readied to turn my back again, I felt a lick of heat travel down my spine. No longer was his form retreating, no longer was he dancing. My chest caved, my eyes widened, my breath halted. Abandoned was all semblance of his previous grace and ease, replaced only by the cruel pounding of his feet against the concrete. The street light flickered rapidly as if to the beat of his drum.

Now, he was running. And his face, was forward.

I too began to run. My ears filled with the sound of my blood pumping. My feet jolted against the ground. I glance around wildly and see the park from before, the swing no longer swinging. I ran until I escaped from the side road and made it back to the main road. I finally let myself come to a stop. I felt my blood rushing through my body, my hearing finally coming back to me. Then the distorted sound of panting filled the air. I quickly snapped my head back to look behind me but the dancing man was nowhere to be found. The breathing was my own.

I close my eyes now, his face fills my mind's eye. His smile was pulled incomprehensibly wide, the skin blistered and cracked around it, as if it never fell. But his eyes, his eyes were something else. There was something about what was in his eyes that was wrong. They were filled with something- not anger, not sorrow, not even bloodlust. No. Something worse. Something all the more frightening. They were filled, with insanity. As if there was nothing human left.



as pathetic as my heart felt,
it continued to weep.
but even through the breaks,
it continues to beat.

Heartbeat
Emily Pu

Time

Anneke Zegers

Bygone hours, rest in peace,
As I shall not disturb you
In your grave,
Since time still trudges on
Accompanied by the tick-tock
Of her death clock.
I should not waste
A moment of her life
Wondering how deep
Her casket crouches
Beneath the green earth.