

ST. FRANCIS CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

THE MIRROR

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Acknowledgments

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The act of taking up space

Audrey Mayo '24

When we are young,
hands not weathered,
bare footed,

and eyes still bathed in Eden,

We are often told that the breaths we breathe are precious ones.

Ones to be thankful for.

Philosophers and theologians alike will tell you,

That life itself is a gift,

A statistical miracle or an act of divine love.

And is always true.

Whether explained by math, or God,

life is forever,

and forever,

unfathomably precious.

And yet,

it is equally true to say, that we feel we must work,

weather our hands

boot our feet

and bite that apple,

to make our stay worth it.

Isn't that true?

That despite every
number,
and passage,
and parent,
Telling you your life is a miracle, living itself
Is the bare minimum.

You worry that you take up space,
That one this table of earth
You must earn your keep.
And that no one would cry if you met your quietus,
too early or too late.

But,
The tail of a tiger does not worry itself,
of its existence
simply because the beast could live without it.
And the four-hundredth hill in a valley of four thousand,
does not weep because the valley could go on,
perfectly well,
without it.

Because maybe we just are.
We are just alive because we were meant to be.
Because if we weren't meant to be, you wouldn't be reading this,
And I wouldn't be writing it.
And, when you do get to your final peace,

The attendees dressed in black,
Will not be musing
About the space you took up
But rather weeping
About the space you left behind.

Society

Veronica Schutz '25

What do you expect of me

Will I be a disgrace

If I want to disagree

Turned away from your embrace

To what outdated ideal must I conform

How must I reform

Who defines the norm

So I may be different

Does that make me irrelevant?

Must our society be so ignorant?

To teach us to be ok with the slander

To shun away everyone that doesn't meet the standard

That doesn't fit the mold

Or want to join the fold

Dear society why can't you let me be

To let all of us be free

Remove the bars from the cage
To let us set the stage
To free us from the constant fear
To let them know that we are here

Where I Return To

Amelia Ross '23

Sister dear, what land do you call your own?

What valleys do you know as home?

On which mountains do you roam?

What skyline can hold you?

Which forests deep have stolen you?

Darling, there is no place on land I call my own.

There is no harbor I know as home.

On the seas, I will forever roam.

For no port can hold me.

Because, sister dear, the ocean winds have stolen me.

You Better Swim Before You Drown

Charlotte Gay '23

Sometimes in eating disorder treatment, I refer to my disorder
as a log.

Wooden, floating, saving me from drowning.

You see, this creates a sort of liminality.

I am not dying.

I am not sinking.

I am not swimming.

I am not living.

It goes like this:

I was thrown into the deep end,

Freezing water filled my lungs,

Before I could tell which way was up, I was grabbing onto a log.

And so I was saved.

From jagged rocks hungry for blood.

From river reeds ready to tangle, to trap below the surface.

From the stinging water that made my bones ache and my teeth
chatter.

And so I was afloat.

And so I did not die.

But I would.

The log is a killer.

That scraped my skin nearly to the bone,
That splintered, broke under my weight, drifted further and
further from shore.

And

So

I

Let

Go

My swimming is not a pretty story.
No, it is one of ferocious flailing and mouthfuls of filthy water.

But from the shore, I can see it all:
The blue-lipped girl twisted and bloody at the bottom of the
river,
The girl I couldn't stand drowned in the pain I was trying to
stave off.

The stubborn skeleton sailing downstream,
The girl who favored closed fists and clenched teeth.

You see, the eating disorder,
That dreadful log,
It is a crutch, just like anything.
Just like my father's cigarettes,
Or my grandmother's nightly drink,

It was one vice in exchange for another.

And so my eating disorder is a log.

Wooden, floating, saving me from drowning.

And I do not need it anymore.

Good Morning

Ella Rolland '24

To say the sun is rising, on the fields and on the trees
Gently waking up the little flowers and little bees
When the sky is all alight with shining white and gold
And the first few rays of warmth chase away the clinging cold
To see the morning come alive, with trilling, tipping birds
Who swing and dive and float as softly as kind words
And the leaves of every tree gently start to sway
Gracefully beginning the first dance of the day
Sleepy little flowers yawn and stretch and rub their eyes
Still humming a quiet tune from last night's lullabies
Joyfully, they greet their buzzing little neighbors
Bees who have just as joyfully begun the day's labours
Every sunlit drop of dew becomes a treasure to be seen
More priceless than diamonds in the crown of any queen
The freshest wind comes by, laughing, hoping to play
Spinning the world in a dance, bringing word of coming May
And the sky, oh Lord, the sky! How could I explain?
Brilliant, laughing blue, without mark or stain
And with beauty from the sun, the whole world is adorning
And joyfully I hear it laugh, "Good morning, friend, good morning"

My Secret Garden

Regan McGhee '22

I once lived in a fairy house,
Where tiny fingers poured tea,
And teapots and kettles and cups were whittled,
And the garden lived in me.

I had a secret garden,
And laid in a bed of greens.
I made my fate before me
When I learned people grow like trees.

I danced with my friends
Big and small.
Soon they grew like a tree to be 50 feet tall,
But my toes still dug into the dirt.

When my secret garden began to swell,
All my fairies and goblins and dwarfs said farewell
And I said goodbye that day,
Even though in my heart I wanted nothing more than to stay.

Because people grow older and tall

Even when in their hearts they feel weak and small.

But in my mind my toes are still in the dirt.

In my mind I still haven't hit my growth spurt.

Road Trips in Our Youth

Stella Kinney '24

That familiar saccharine song begins,
A beautiful blend of sour notes and ripe harmony,
The one that seduces me into a waltz,
As I suffocate on honeyed piquant lyrics.

My entire being is conned within the melody,
Or rather the sharp air dissipating from the speakers of the car
radio,
Another purity in an Earth so irrevocably stained with crimson,
As the poetry found within its words triggers the memory of my
youth,

Igniting this gruesome war between my past and present.
The singer persuades my soul from my body and transports me
to forgotten places,

As the lyrics trickle out of her mouth like syrup,
Eventually ensuring nostalgia its victory.

Time stops and the car disintegrates,
As ashes of my adolescence form photos,
And manipulate themselves into small folds,
Able to fit in my back pocket.

Remembering--reminiscing--at this time of night is a dangerous
game,

An inexplicable form of poetry as my weary head confuses
colors with sounds,
And fatigue claws at my skull.
I am hardly awake in my own
Monotonous yet painfully beautiful,
Magenta-colored fever dream,
Which begs the inconcealable question
Do I hold significance?
In the backseat of a blue Honda,
Surrounded by strangers disguised as friends,
Tiredly discussing our plans to stay-change the world together?
Perhaps it is here that Unity,
With whom parts his blue lips and extends his icy arm,
In an effort to silence the pathetic whispers of the contrary.
His coal-black hairs twist in tight fibrous curls,
On his wonderfully weary head,
And his red eyes could pierce layers of steel.
His soulful companion, Liberty,
Gallops in on a noble steed adorned in fine silk robes,
And her dark hairs fall straight, resembling black eyeliner,
The favorite of the preachy nihilistic minors that flood the car,
And her neck smells of fresh strawberries,
Ripe from the syrupy summer air.

I am now flush with the weight of my insignificance,
But delight in the simplicity of this moment.
As I stare into the clean window I hold my face and smile,
For the passion advocated for by literature's highest powers,
Shakespeare and his children and whatnot,
Does not compare to this feeling of gratitude,
At this moment in which I realize,
I alone may be insignificant,
But if we could brighten the world with our misery,
We'd spark a magnificent fire.

Pinky Promise

Stella Davenport '25

Us joined at hip and hand, us twins in lust
 imagine life absent of boastful love.
My breath cannot catch me, try as it might
as we ran when we were snatched from the cove.
Remnants of you coat my hand, dust to dust
 temptation too sweet and sticky to fight
 Will alone did not suffice to save us
bring knives when we vanish into the night.
 Do not prolong the inevitable
 conversation had, conversation went.
 Is something so pure irrevocable
 now that our secret is no longer kept?
My heart beat the fastest under their eyes
let your dust fall further, sink and capsize

Nervosa

Kavya Benush '25

Timidly, i shroud my empty over you
Tell me dearest; how should i feel today?
When you hold me in your arms tonight
Am i heavier than i was before?

And if i am

What do i deserve (if anything at all)
Leaving your mahogany apartment

The salt swells on my tongue

A taste i have not felt in days

And long to never feel again

Though in part i know i must

The walk home,

Often longer than my heavy heart can bear

Forgive my legs for-giving out behind the door
For they like i cannot hold this cursed weight much more
But tell me dearest do you love me as you know i do
Or do you(i) hate me as a sinner hates the truth

Irrevocable lines are yet the burden of my life

Irrevocable lines are yet the burden of my life
My toil strives to mend but an eternity of strife and
Still i long to hear the unvaried chiding of their voice
Perchance, the choice to hoist these battered bones
Above your unceasing torment
Is enough
To stumble, stagger,
Aching joints
Home.