

A Weekend with Poe

I guess you could say I was surprised when I got a random phone call Thursday night on my old lip shaped home phone that I hadn't used since the seventh grade. I guess you could say I was even more surprised when the person on the phone said I had been selected for a program called "A Weekend with the Past," and apparently a historical figure was coming to Richmond, Virginia to spend a night at my house in TWO DAYS!! I guess you could also say I was surprised about how difficult it was to plan the weekend, but I think I'm finished. And I'm picking him up tomorrow.

Early Saturday morning, just after the sun rose, I jumped out of bed. I dressed in nice jeans, a black turtleneck, and a white vest. While tying my hair up, I walked out the door, but not before I scrubbed my floors so clean that you can see your reflection. The fancy car I rented out for just this weekend was waiting for me outside, and I was off to the airport to pick up Edgar Allan Poe.

Once arriving, I blended in with all of the families and friends waiting to see their loved ones step off the plane. They saw me standing there with my glittery sign with "Edgar" sprawled across it in cursive, and thought nothing of it. I saw him walk off the plane, with a blank expression on his face and just a briefcase in his hand. "Edgar!" I'd shouted, flailing my right arm in the sky "Edgar Allan Poe!" People who recognized the name turned their heads, but I had made sure to get him out of there quickly before anyone could catch a glance. "Hi, Edgar! It's Beatrice, your tour guide for this weekend!" He stared at me, some would've thought in disgust, but he is the man who never smiles, as his co-workers call him.

The first place I took him was an escape room named Gnome and Raven in Stony Point mall. I thought it was funny because of the raven. He didn't think it was that funny, but he did

seem intrigued. The theme was tomb ruins, where you must find a stone raven and break the curse of Pharaoh Nekauba. It was pretty fun, he had fun (I think) but he wouldn't let me help solve it and flinched every time the lady came on the loudspeakers to help us. After that we walked over through the mall to P.F. Changs, I got fried rice, and he got Chang's spare ribs. I told the waiter it was a special night and got her to bring us the special dessert topped with a giant sparkling candle. I almost thought I heard a laugh, but it must have been the kids sitting behind us. We finished up the meal and started to leave for home. The whole car ride he was asking questions about how the world was now. I told him about electricity, Starbucks, tv shows, and some of my other top favorites from this country. He seemed a bit upset by the fact that people usually just watch a show instead of reading now, but was interested in watching *Twilight* and *Sherlock Holmes* with me.

As we arrived at my house, I told him to get out of the car but he struggled a bit opening the door, and he seemed pretty embarrassed. It was 8:05 pm and I was going to suggest a movie but he asked me right away where he would be sleeping. I showed him to my guest room and he shooed me out, I guess he was really tired. I went to bed as well, since I had gotten up so early that morning. As I went to bed, I thought about how tomorrow would be, and a little about *Twilight*.

I woke up to my alarm singing "Wake me up! Before you go-go" by *Wham* and slowly got out of bed, a little less eager than yesterday. I got dressed in leggings and a gray sweater, and left my hair down. I walked out to make a cup of coffee and found Edgar Allan Poe sitting next to my decorative bookshelf with my copy of *Macbeth* from an aesthetic book pack on Amazon. "Oh wow, how long have you been awake?" I asked. I had almost passed off his visit as a dream. "I'm not sure" he said "I watched the sunrise." That meant he had been up for at least 3

hours, I thought, as he put the book away. “You have nothing good to read. Some of those books aren’t even real,” he said walking towards his bedroom, I rolled my eyes. “Get ready, we’re going to brunch at the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts.” I walked away to the kitchen to make that cup of coffee I so needed, but not before I heard a loud crash. “What was that?!” I ran into the guest room only to find my grandfather clock on the ground and a wide-eyed Edgar Allan Poe holding its pendulum.

“All right, we’re here,” I said, as we pulled up to the VMFA. I had explained to him through the car ride about how we had reservations at the third floor restaurant, Amuse, and then we could look at whatever art he’d wanted to see. We got a plate of delicious devilled eggs, and both got the seared ribeye. I think he enjoyed the meal, but his almost-frown face couldn’t tell me much. We looked around the museum and he seemed fascinated by the American, European and Mediterranean art. He looked at some pieces longer than others, and it was pretty boring for me. So I stayed on my phone looking at photos of cats, occasionally letting out a “mhm!” or “beautiful” to let him know I was listening, when I got my idea for what our last activity should be. I quickly got on Google and found the perfect place. I waited and waited until he finally was done, and hurried him out of the museum.

I yelled at Siri about 30 times trying to say “directions to Kitty Kingdom Cat Cafe!” and Edgar Allan Poe looked at me like I was nuts; I thought I was nuts for a second too. When the phone finally decided to work, I drove out of the parking lot and turned the radio up. I sang my heart out to Taylor Swift and tried to get Edgar to join in, but he just sat there ruining the mood. I started to get worried he wouldn’t like this idea as much as I wanted. But those thoughts went away when little cats came running to our feet as the bell on the door jingled, and I saw his annoyed expression soften a little bit while he gasped. “Hello..” he said looking down. “You can

just pet cats here, it's super cool" I said excitedly. "Can I. pick one up?" he asked. "Of course you can!" I answered. I started walking to the receptionist, and heard him talking to some of the kittens. I got us a table and some cookies, and picked up a cat myself. We sat down and he had a black cat in his arms. "This is Christopher," he said, looking at the cat. "Well hello Christopher!" I replied looking at him too. We kept petting and eating and talking, and then I noticed something different on Edgar Allan Poe's face. Right there, there was a smile. I almost jumped up and yelled "OMG! OMG! YOU'RE SMILING! I MADE YOU SMILE!" but I decided against it and chose to sit down and enjoy this rare moment. Leaving ended up being more difficult than I had imagined, Edgar seemed very sad to leave his new BFF Christopher. But he had a plane to catch and I had some netflix to watch.

As I drove to the very small Richmond airport, I couldn't help but wonder where exactly he was flying to, and thinking of that made me remember how bizarre this situation was, so I decided to just leave that mystery behind. We entered the airport again and I helped him check in, and then we had to say our goodbyes. I told him what a great time I had showing him around the city, and he told me that he enjoyed it very much. I started walking to the automatic doors to leave this as a memory, but then I heard my name, I turned around and Edgar Allan Poe was still behind me, smiling, "Thank you, Beatrice."