

get your



buzz

Oh...

**poetry and stuff
from a live Cafe Aloha performance
by Janet Kuypers
Seas Publications**

oh my gosh, what is IN me?

the table of contents

all enclosed writings are better portions of longer pieces except
“Fantastic Car Crash.”

title

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history

Janet Kuypers (June 22, 1970), graduated from the University of Illinois in Champaign/Urbana with a degree in News/Editorial Communications Journalism (with a minor in photography and while studying computer science engineering). She specialized in creative writing. During college she was an acquaintance rape workshop facilitator, and edited to two literary magazines. Since then she has released six CDs (three music, three reading performances), and has also had seven books published:

Hope Chest in the Attic

The Window

Close Cover Before

Striking

(*woman.*)

Autumn Reason

the Average Guy's Guide to

Feminism

Contents Under Pressure

and *Changing Gears*

stats

Fed up with her job as the art director of a few magazines for a publishing company, Kuypers, to relieve the stress:

- vented her angst musically with acoustic bands like “Mom’s Favorite Vase”, “Weeds and Flowers” or “the Second Axing”, recorded with Pointless Orchestra and learned how to play the guitar,
- wrote so much that she irritated editors enough to get published in books, magazines and on the internet over 5,200 times for writing or over 200 times for art work,
- wanted to read other people’s depressing stories, so she ran her own literary magazine, or
- all of the above.

Oh wait, that still wasn’t enough, she thought, so she tried to generate order from chaos by getting married, buying a house, and even (because she’s psycho and doesn’t believe in rest) designed more books and mastered an intricate web site.

(about
the
author)

portions of the poem

"god eyes"

It was a stupid point to argue about at 2 a.m.,
sitting in the lobby of the Las Vegas Hilton
listening to the clink and whirr of slot machines
and the dropping of tokens onto metal.
You believed in God, I did not. Even after two
rounds of Sam Adams and three rounds of Bailey's
I knew you wouldn't change my mind, and
I had no desire to change yours.

I tell you about the first time I got drunk - I was
maybe ten, and asked my sister to make a mixed
drink mom had that I liked. She made me a few.
So there I was, walking to the neighbor's house in
the summertime, wearing my sister's seventies
zip-up boots, oversized and unzipped, carrying my
seventh drink and sticking my tongue out to see the
grenadine. You liked my story. You laughed.

Passion is a hard thing to describe. Passion
for life. You must know and understand a spirituality
behind it. You do your work, the things in life
solely because you must - it is you, and you
could not exist any other way. It is who you are.
It is a feeling beyond mere enjoyment. You said
that the spirituality was a God. I said it was my mind.
You think we are so different. We are not.

All of my life I have seen people espouse beliefs
but not follow them. Tell me you're not like them.
Our values are different, but tell me we both have
values and will fight to the death for them. I need to know
that there are people like that, like me. We are different,
but at the core we are the same. We understand all this.
I'm grasping straws here as the clock says 3:45 a.m.
and the betting odds for football games roll by

on the television screen. You don't gamble. Neither
do I. Why must you be so far away? You reminded
me that I have a passion in life, that I have to
keep fighting. But I get weak and tire
of fighting these battles alone. I, the
atheist, have no God and have to rely on
my will. When I am low, I struggle. You have
your God to fall back on, I only have me.

And you looked into my eyes as it approached
the morning. You stared. We locked horns once
again. I ask you again what you were
thinking. And you said, "I see God in your eyes."
I asked you what you meant. You said, "I see
a God in your eyes. I see a soul." Whether
what you saw was your God or just me, my
passion, well, thank you for finding it.

portions of the poem

"looking for a worthy adversary"

I've been looking for a worthy adversary
someone I can lock horns with
because although my life makes more sense when I'm alone
it's not nearly as interesting
because it can't be about love, you see
love can't exist on the terms I demand

but all I offered you
was fruit from the tree of knowledge
I didn't know how willing you were to take from that tree
I'm not used to that, you know

I saw your performance at the theatre down the street
and you know, your protagonist was doing what I was doing
right down to faking it with people who don't matter
right down to going home and still feeling empty

and you know, I liked to see
that boiling emotion underneath
that no one else could see

and you know, I'm beginning to wonder
if we can get together and write our own play
it would be a masterful performance, you know
and as that curtain would close we'd hold each other's hands
and walk off the stage
and the audience would know that there is a happy ending

and now when I walk out on to the set
and there you stand, in front, stage left
I wait for my cue to make my move
none of the rest of the scene matters to me, you know

maybe they'd like our little play, maybe they wouldn't
who really cares

when you talk you reach your hand into my brain,
pull out my thoughts, shove them into your mouth
and spit them back at me

I've been looking for a worthy adversary
and maybe you are much more than that

and now my performance of a lifetime is made
I stand here like a statue
and wait for my applause
as I wait for the reviews
on the performance I was made for
but none of that matters

because I know what you are going to say
it's everything that I want to say

and now I wait for you to come on stage again
for our next wonderful performance
where you tell me what I already know

portions of the poem "Burn It In"

Once I was at a beach with a friend on New Year's eve.
The yellow moon hung over the gulf
like a swaying lantern.
The wind picked up, my friend just stared
at that moon for a while, then closed his eyes.
I asked him what he was thinking.
He said, "I wanted to look at this scene,
and memorize it, burn it into my brain,
record it in my mind, so I can call it up when I want to.
So I can have it with me always."

I too have my recorders.
I burn these things into my brain,
I burn these things onto pages.
When I looked around me, and saw friends
raping my friends
I wrote, I burned into these nightmares with a pen
and yes, I have this recorded
I have all of this recorded.

What did you think I was doing
when I was stuffing hand-written notes into my pockets
or typing long hours into the night?
In college, I had two roommates
who in their spare time would watch movies in our living room
and cross-stitch. I never understood this.
In my spare time, I was not watching other's stories
or weaving thread to keep my hands busy
I was sitting in the corner of a cafe scribbling into my notebook.
I was slamming my hands, my fingers against the keyboard
because there were too many atrocities in the world
too many injustices that I had witnessed
too many people who had wronged me

and I had a lot of work to do.
There had to be a record of what you've done.

Did you think your crimes would go unpunished?
And did you think that you could come back, years later,
slap me on the back with a friendly hello
and think I wouldn't remember?
I have defiled many pages
in your honor, you who swung
your battle ax high above your head
and thought no one would remember in the end.

you want to know why I do the things I do
I had to record these things
that is what kept me together
when people were dying
when my friends went off to war
when my friends were raped and left for dead
and when no one bothered to notice this
or change this
or care about this
these recordings kept me together

portions of the poem

**"Death takes
many forms."**

Death takes many forms.

For you, death first came when you were five years old
and your mother had to give you three shots of insulin a day
until you could take a needle to yourself.

Did it hurt to push that needle into your arm, the first time?
Or did it hurt you more to know you had no choice?

Death takes many forms.

Death can be someone losing their sight.
Behind coke-bottle glasses you would see me and say,
"That's a nice black suit you're wearing."

And I would tell you, "It's green."

And you wouldn't believe me.

You wouldn't hear the howling wind of the changing seasons.

Death takes many forms.

I know what follows the autumn wind.

It is winter now.

Do you remember when it happened?

The changes are subtle, the temperature drops,
first only slightly. It's almost imperceptible.

Only when the first snow falls do you realize
where the seasons have gone.

Death takes many forms.
Death can be a sweat-soaked shirt, the shakes, dizziness
when you needed food.
You would look as pale as a ghost
as I would hold your cold wet arm and steady you.
Quick, some sugar will make everything better.
Isn't everything better yet?

Death takes many forms.
Death can come as you lose your circulation.
"My feet are numb, Janet," you'd say.
"I can't feel my feet anymore."
And I would rub your feet for you,
and you would say it makes a difference,
you feel better.
If only I could do this forever.

Death takes many forms.
And now, now it seems
you've taken me down with you
you've taken me into that casket with you
and I'm running my hand along your jacket lapel
and I can feel the coldness of winter all around me
and I can hear them shoveling the dirt over my head
and I want to get out
and I want to take you with me.

It is winter now. And death takes many forms.
The seasons change for you and I.
It is snowing. And something is ending.
It is snowing. Somewhere
it is snowing.

portions of the poem

"True Happiness in the New Millennium"

I'm here to usher in a whole new millennium
I'm the new savior the savior of science
 the savior of strength
 the savior of survival
 survival of the fittest
 survival of the best
and I'm here to tell you we're starting anew
so fasten your seat belts
 hang on to your hats
place your seat trays in their upright and locked position
for it's a bumpy ride, and I'll tell you why

I'm here to usher in a whole new millennium
the millennium of reason and logic and strength
and I don't want to hear about your self-destruction
I don't want to hear your whining, psychosis,
your depression, suicide, alcohol and drugs
and just what made you think that playing with needles
and escape would make things better somehow
 God, I've always hated needles anyway
 what is it with you people

well, you need a leader and I'm stepping up to the plate
you keep asking for a big brother and I'm here to set you straight
you want someone to wipe your noses for you
well, pick up the damn tissue and do it yourself
because when you give up your rights, you take away mine
and we're not having any of that

they say that Eve ate from the tree from knowledge
but you know, she shouldn't have stopped just then
cause the loggers are raping the trees of knowledge
the loggers are raping the forests of talent
the forests of ability the forests of reason
of skill of logic preserverance and life
we're letting them rape the forests of excellence
and you know it's now time to take it all back
because I'm here to usher in a whole new millennium
and I'm here to tell you how it's going to be done

it's time to make choices and it's time to lay claim
to everything we've been blindly giving away
because I'm here to usher in a whole new millennium
take charge of yourself, and I'll take charge of me
I'm my leader, not yours, so wipe your own damn noses

take it in to your hands, people, mold your own tools
this is the new millennium, and this is your chance
because no one should be showing us how to fail
people mastered that feat a millennia ago

I'm here to usher in a whole new millennium
And I'm waiting for you to usher in yours
Because true happiness this way lies, my friend
and I won't wait long if you lag behind
cause I'm setting my rules so step out of my way

portions of the poem

"being god"

I'm tired of dying for your sins
over and over again and why is it that
I am the one that's doing the dying
when you are the one that's doing the sinning
I don't think you're learning your lesson

I'm tired of taking this knife to my hands
over and over again giving myself the stigmata
the blood gets all over my clothes
and I can never get the stains out
and for what, for you to see how I suffer

Over and over again I become your servant
and never are you bowing to me
I don't even get a thank you

I'm tired of preaching to the converted
when the converted aren't even really listening
they're snoring in the back rows; there's not even
air conditioning in here and I'm sweating

I'm tired of coming to you and healing the sick
taking away the problems, over and over again
giving you something to look forward to
and all I have is an eternity of waiting for
someone to take my place and tend to my wounds

I'm tired of giving the earth up to you
watching the devil's work be done, and you know,

he's just sitting down there looking at me
and laughing, over and over again because it's
so easy for him when he doesn't have to work

I'm tired of being your salvation
over and over again you turn to me
and I have no one to turn to but myself
it's a bitch, you know, being your own god
since no one can save me from me

I'm tired of being your teacher, handing you
what you need on a silver platter and waiting
for that damn collection plate and someone
is always stealing out of it from the back row
I know who you are, you who leave me nothing

I'm tired of wearing this crown of thorns
over and over again the needles prick my skin
and even gods bleed, at least this one does
and when I ask you to wipe the blood
out of my eyes, well, I can't see you anywhere

I'm tired of being something for everybody
maybe the devil has the right idea, you know
maybe I'll sit back and wait for you miss me
as you wonder who's your messiah now

portions of the poem

"Andrew Hettinger"

I never really liked you. I met you through a friend and he explained to me that multiple sclerosis left you with a slight limp and a faint lisp. Faint, under the surface, but there, traces of something no one would ever know of you well enough to fully understand.

I never really liked you. You never revealed yourself to me and I never wanted you to; you scared me too much. You, plagued with physical ailments. You, with a limp in your walk. You, with a patch over your eye. You, who stared at me for always just a bit too long.

They told me the patch was from eye surgery with complications and now you had to cover your shame, cover someone else's mistakes, cover a wrong you didn't commit, cover a problem not of your own doing. The problems were never of your own doing, were they.

I heard these stories and I thought it was sad. I heard these stories and thought you had to be a pillar of strength. And then I saw you drink, straight from the bottle, fifteen-year-old chianti. And I saw you smash your hand into your living room wall. This is how you lived.

I never really liked you. Every time you talked to me you always leaned a little too close. So I stayed away from the house, noted that those

whom you called friends did the same. I asked my friend why he bothered to stay in touch. And he said to me, "But he has no friends."

This is how I thought of you. A man who was dealt a bad hand. A man who couldn't fight the demons that were handed to him. And with that I put you out of my mind, relegated you to the ranks of the inconsequential. We parted ways. You were reduced to a sliver of my youth.

I received a letter recently, someone wanted me to tell my friend that they read in the newspaper that you hanged yourself. And I was asked to be the messenger to my friend. I shouldn't have been the one to tell him this. No one deserved to tell him.

I never really liked you. But now I can't get you out of my mind; you haunt me for all the people we've forgotten in our lives. I don't like what you've done. I don't like you quitting. I don't like you dying, not giving us the chance to love you, or hate you, or even ignore you more.

My friend still doesn't know where your grave is. I'd like to find it for him, and take him to you. Let you know you did have a friend out there. Bring you a drink, maybe, a fitting nightcap to mark your departure, to commemorate a life filled with liquor, violence, pain and death.

I never really liked you, but maybe we could get together in some old cemetery, sit on your grave stone, share a drink with the dead, laugh at the injustices of life when we're surrounded by death. Maybe then we'd understand your pain for one brief moment, and remember the moments we'll always regret.

portions of the poem

"the Battle at Hand"

I wanted you to know that I was on a mission when I saw you
and that I was a warrior
and you were just a helpless victim
that couldn't fight my weaponry

that wouldn't fight my weaponry

I would come in to town
and pillage and rape
and rape and pillage
depending on how you put it
and rape is such a hard word, you know,
entirely inappropriate for this
because I made sure that you wanted me
before it was all over
because I have a knack for doing that
 when I fight my battles

this is how I care to think of you.
I was on a conquest
and I came fully equipped with ammunition
I had bayonets
I had a rifle
with rounds of bullets in a chain
thrown over my shoulder
I had a .22 caliber magazine loaded hand-gun

I didn't even need to use the hand-grenade
or the tear gas

even before i started using my tongue as a weapon with a kiss
I used it as a weapon with words
and I knew I had won you won over from the start
you looked at me when I spoke
and I think you might have actually wanted to listen to me

and I would never have to resort to violence
to get what I wanted from you

and no, it was not a monumentous moment in my life
it was just a moment
a conquest, a battle,
and in my own mind,
I won the war

people thought we would never get along.
but I know better
I know there is no such thing as NOT getting along with me
and I know I can make anyone like me
as I did with you

you were easy prey, you know.

portions of the poem

"Expecting the Stoning"

and you want a popsicle
and you don't even know what it's going to taste like when you get it
and then you finally get it
and it tastes oh so good
and you have some if it
and you want to save it so you can have it later
and then you realize

that it has to stay in the freezer in order to survive
that it was meant to be cold forever, or consumed
it was either one or the other
they taught you that fact when you were little
you can't have it both ways
you can try, and it might be fun at first
but everyone knows it will hurt later on

I think what I liked the most about us
was the theory of romance
I would travel across the country to see you
the times we had were like poems to me

but what did it get me

I didn't realize the novelty would wear off for you
that you were like the average American
and after twenty seconds of watching a television show
you'd want to change the channel with the remote on the arm of your chair

I didn't know you were a popsicle that would melt
when you were exposed to any sunlight or any heat at any time

I didn't know you were a snowman
in the backyard at my house in the winter when I was little
fully equipped with a carrot nose, like pinocchio, no, wait, like you,
with no hair, like you, with black rocks for eyes, like you
and yeah, that snowman melted with spring, like you

maybe I should have learned my lesson from that damned snowman

maybe everyone else learned their lesson, maybe they learned something
that I should have learned

I should expect the stonings for telling you that I know what you have done
I will expect the stonings, for I am used to the punishments
for telling the truth, even when people don't want to hear it

I don't want to be your prophet
I think I am too cocky to be a good leader, anyway

so, thank you for getting my hopes up and then blowing them away
with one breath from your lips
like anyone would do to a pile of sand
or table salt spilled on the counter
because I think I needed to learn that lesson
and in a way, for now,
I only have you to thank for it

Fantastic CAR CRASH

and our life is one big road trip now
and we set the cruise control
and make our way down the expressway.

and most of the time we're just moving
in a straight line, and the scenery
blurs. there's nothing to see

but I know what's inside you and I
know what you're made of. I know
there's no such thing as a calm with you

you are a fantastic car crash. you stop
traffic in both directions as the gapers gawk and
the delay grows and they slow down and stare

everything shatters with you, you know.
it's a spectacular explosion. I try
to duck and cover as metal flies

through the air. and every time you leave
the scene of the accident
I am left picking up the shards of glass

from the windows. you know, the glass breaks
into such tiny little pieces. they look like
ice. it takes so long to pick up the pieces



*two photographs taken by family
of the author's car, from a car
accident three days after this
poem was written.*



even though I'm careful
I'm still picking up the pieces
and I'm still on my knees

and the glass cuts into my hands
and the blood drips down to the street.
think of it as my contribution

to this fantastic car crash
that is you, that is me, that is us
as I pull the glass from my hands

and I wave my hand to the line of traffic:
go ahead, keep driving, this happens
all the time, there's nothing to see here



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ccandd96@aol.com

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Weeds & Flowers (The Beauty & the Destruction)

the Second Axing

(in "Oversampling", "Rehashing")

