



WORN OUT

I recently heard the theory that the dead follow you they stay with you for the rest of your life

and the pull at you and tug at you and wear you out until you die.

And are you doing this to me? Are you pulling the color out of my hair because I only noticed grey hairs on my head after your death. And come to think of it, my back started hurting after you were dead for a while and -

and it that because I've been carrying you around? Are you clinging to me after you left?

Please, I don't want to feel guilty for leaving you. Please don't haunt me like this.

Maybe I should have been there to see them lower your casket into the ground. Maybe I should have seen you in your suit and tie in your coffin maybe then you wouldn't tug at me

and wear me down and make me feel old.

Because I recently heard the theory that the dead follow you and wear you out until you die. But I'm beginning to think that the reason people get old is because they've gone through too much.

And if the likes of you leave the likes of me you'll make me wonder if I'll have too much baggage to carry.

OVERDOING IT

June 16, 1999

Oh, what am i supposed to wear I need to look just perfect for you I need to look just perfect for me I have to make sure everything is right

I don't know what the right impression is supposed to be there are so many things that I am unsure of now and all I know

is that I want everything to be right and I don't know how to get that point across to you without looking like

well, without looking like I am overdoing it



SELF-CONFIDENCE

03-08-04

He hadn't seen me In five to tem years And we hugged each other hello And he asked me, "Have I gotten shorter?" And I was saying earlier That he was teller than me Back in the old days But I guess he DID seem shorter So I said, "I don't know." But I knew that I didn't get taller So he said, "Maybe you slouched a lot more When I saw you before." And I though, "Well, maybe. I have a lot more self-confidence now. I stand up for myself now."







WHITE PICKET FENCE June 28, 1999

White picket fence that is what I wanted

did I expect to almost lose my life did I expect to find the right guy at every corner turn did I expect to be alone and feel alone

did I expect to live life this way

I wanted a dog and at another point in my life I was sure it was a cat I wanted

now I will settle for the fish tank

just drop some food into the damn aquarium and leave it at that

what am i supposed to do who am i supposed to be what am i supposed to get

am i even supposed to get anything?

where do I learn all of these characters from where do I learn all of these roles from

I think we all know the answers to these questions if we care to think about it consciously



CHANGE MY PERSPECTIVE

july 3, 2000

god, i do these favors for other people and they're not making me a ton of money and these people i do favors for complain so much and i was asked why i do it and it's not as if the work excites me any more so my answer was that i do it primarily so i could expand my own collection of what i have done but why am i doing it? is that my end goal?

and someone replied to me, saying they knew of a story where a bunch of bricklayers were laying brick to build a cathedral and someone asked a few people what they were doing and most of the men said that they were laying brick and one man said he was building a cathedral

and when they replied to me, when they told me this, they said that it is all a matter of perspective

so now i have to figure out how to change my perspective or be happy with it, and sometimes i don't know how

SMART THING TO DO

June 28, 1999

There are so many things I have wanted So many things I have wanted from you

There are so many things That have scared me Are we being safe Is this the smart thing to do

And maybe the smart thing to do Is to just avoid you And get it over with And maybe the smart thing to do Is to get my arm around your neck And drag your sorry ass to me

Because I have wanted you at my lips And I have wanted that for a while And there is only so much I can do To stop myself from staying away from you

And maybe the smart thing to do Is to just sit here Until you come to me

And when you get here

Well, it is MINE, now, And that is when I let it all go The way I want it to be

It is at moments like this



When I want just about everything from you And I want to wrap my legs around you And I want to push you into me And I want to push your life into me

And for just a few moments I want to feel nothing else than this ME thing, And this YOU thing, And I keep thinking about this US thing

And that "just a moment" thing is lasting a lifetime

And for once, that does not scare me

And that makes me want So much more with you And so much more from you

And Hell, I do not know How this poem ends I guess it is called life And I will not be able to finish this Until my life is over

And Hell, I will not be writing then

You know

Just know that I want you And that I will want you

And that can last for now And that it will last a lifetime

DAMNED GREEN

I see these images now of a bunch of men looking like sticks with eyes so big all in green because you ran out of paint and all you had was the DAMNED green

and these images what do they mean? I think I just learned them and did everyone else? where did they learn them from? same places I did? a television show some hot stud on tee vee that you're really not attracted to that you once wanted to be attracted to maybe it was maybe it was a high school friend that wrote these pictures yes, you did, maybe, thank you for doing that to me maybe maybe it is that

everyone knows these images and everyone knows them like the backs of their hands by now

is it that no one ever knows it or that everyone does which is it?

N CRUSH/ BUT I WON'T July 5, 2000

I had a crush on you oh, what am I saying I have a crush on you and I think I've had it for a while but I know there is not a thing I can do and I can wish for something to change in my life but it won't

FOR NOW I'LL THINK July 5, 2000

Jesus Christ, there are so many things that I have wanted and that there is a part of me that wants you to take me and get naked with me and do things I shouldn't write about so so I won't so I guess I'll sit here and be with someone else but for now for now I'll think JKuypers@scars.tv • http://www.janetkuypers.com

I CAN HEAR

July 2, 2000

I can hear the cars below and I can hear the birds chirping above in their nests in the tree tops on the side of this mountain I can hear the cars roar by but it only sounds like a faint hum from the road a thousand feet below I can hear the rushing water of the river next to the street below I can hear the the occasional airplane I can hear the occasional fly I can hear the wind against my ear



FROM THE Dead

I look at the cars and the road and the trees and the river and the sky and I think that I can hear them all calling out to me and sometimes that is enough



July 5, 2000

And he rose from what you think was from the dead and could he come and throw his beloved juices, i mean, beauty, all over the planet

did it sound religious? did it sound sexual? sometimes they can be one and the same

sometimes which is which? CHANGE September 2, 1999

Change is supposed to be a good thing And I think I just have to Think about it contrelely And consider the good and the bad

I mean, what could potentially be wrong? That I may not know people And I know people here But they never call And they never write And they probably never think of me

So what difference would that make

So what could potentailly be wrong? There might not be the same culture there And it might not be easy for me to get what I need From the grocery store And there might not be a restaurant I want

And he tells me that winters that aren't freezing cold And summers that aren't unpleasantly warm

I remember loving summers Because, I think, I didn't have to be in class then

But I think I like springs and falls now Because it's not too hot or too cold then It's just right

And maybe this change would be just right And maybe the summers won't be so hot And maybe the winters won't be so cold And maybe change is good

UNDERSTOOD November 1, 1999

Isn't it funny how irony can grab a hold of you and turn you upside-down

Actually, irony doesn't do that to you it does everything else to you and everone else sees the irony

A father owned a bungee-jumping company And one day he had his family with him and they wanted him to jump

Because, I mean, it's a safe thing, you know

And it was his wedding anniversary and he said Okay I Can Do It

And he got up there and he got strapped in and the kids turned the video camera on

And yes, he was strapped to the rope and the rope wasn't strapped to the crane

The rope was strapped to nothing

And his own children got to videotape their own father struggling for the end of the rope or the end of the ledge or safety or anything And this is a true story, I tell you

And he had nothing like this happen before and this is the irony that everyone else saw

Because it wasn't irony that got a hold of him and turned him upside-down it was gravity and mistakes and everything that could go wrong

which did

It was something that got a hold of you something, I tell you and everyone else after the fact understood

BECAUSE THERE'S NOTHING TO TELL September 19, 1999

This is how they kill me this is how they do it to me this is how i die

I'm tired of being so much like you and I'm tired of having so many differences with you

which part of me has to die

to keep things alive with us

you should know me by now and you should know what I'm asking when I ask a question

don't you know me by now?

so thank you for pointing out that the answer is always "no" and thank you for killing just another little part of me

people do that to me all the time anyway

you wonder what is wrong when I seem unhappy and I tell you "nothing" and I dont mean "nothing" but I tell you nothing because there's nothing to tell because I'm almost dead anyway

I was just getting used to this "me" thing and now there's this "us" thing which really boils down to this "you" thing because, Hell, there's no "me" anymore

isn't that what you wanted anyway

people have been killing me all this time and maybe they won



DO I STILL

June 14, 2000

it is so easy to be filled with spite it is so easy to hold grudges and if your memory isn't shot to Hell it is so easy to remember the details

it's funny to think about how you convolute the world how your brain's preceptions are different from everyone else's

i swear to god, woman i didn't want to go to princeton and i don't remember wanting to apply

and you swore i wanted that to show i was smart to show i was good

and i swear to god i'm not that materialistic i swear

did i want to show everyone that being smart was easy for me did i want to show everyone that i was better than everyone else did i want to prove it all without putting the work in

do i still

GENEOLOGICALLY

do i have images of hank rearden floating through my head when i think of how she depicts a tall thin man set in his ways and unflinching and quiet

no, i don't think you're him i've never felt that way toward you

but maybe i want to think that these ideas can exist somehow in my family

and maybe i'm geneologically related to these ideas

START ALL OVER

June 25, 2000

I want to be rinsed of all of this, I tell you, and I want to be a newborn all over again and I want to have your blood dripping all over me and I want someone to come along and clean me off and smack me on the butt and I want to start all over again Is it your blood that I want?

Do I want someone to guide me through the birth? Do I want to even start all over again?

EVERYTHING IS NEW

"I don't know what you want, woman, and I don't know how to ask and you have to tell me. If you want to keep it different, let me do what I can, but what do you want from me?"

"I'm sorry. I probably ramble too much."

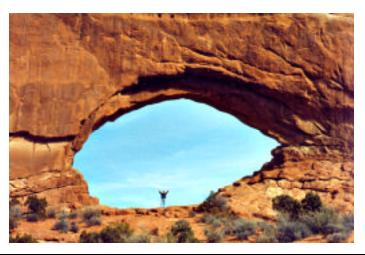
"I don't talk enough, so we balance each other out."

"But I just want to feel like I'm not getting old and I want to feel like everything is new."

"Is that what you want?"

"I think so. What more can I say? I talk too much."

"So should it be my turn?"



HOW MUCH FOR YOUR POEM

June 13, 2000

I have been pricing these things out: going to the five and dime, searching for names searching for pieces of worth

and the only ones I can find are the ones by dead people do you have to be dead to be thought of as good?

and so I'm seeing these books and they're all expensive (for someone who's been dead) even at the five and dime and so I go to the counter and ask for them for something by someone new

and they give me that blank stare (that you usually get when you ask someone what seems to them like an impossible question, when to you it seems obvious and apparent) and they tell you they have none

and you ask them how much it would cost to get something different, something new and they give you that blank stare again and they say "that stuff doesn't sell"

well, of course not, when you never put it on the market, you think and you shrug your shoulders looking at the books by dead people that you don't want to but as you walk away





janet kuypers chapbook

MY STUFF TOO November 1, 1999

I know that this isn't the end of the world In a way, I'm going home I know people there I've got a better job With better pay I mean, I know people there

This moving thing, it's no big deal I've done it before The first time my parents moved I was three or four

I've moved as an adult all over the place So I don't know what's up with her

She tells me she's been here all her life And this is all a big deal for her

And she's angry at her friends At not caring that she's leaving (well, she's always an isolationist, does she bring it on herself?)

But she's angry that she doesn't have a job (and why did she give up on looking?)

And no, I don't know what battles she's facing I won't claim to know But she wants me to take care of this move And she's got all this stuff

And I'm just waiting for the time When her stuff Becomes mine When it is my stuff too?

BUT THESE PLEASURES

November 1, 1999

there are so many things I have wished for and most of them were metaphysical and some of them, like this one, are all about you and oh, the ideas I have had about you and I

I know you asked me point blank about this before and I know I turned it down in your presence because, well, I had to and you know, I didn't have the balls to say it then but these lurid, cyprian pleasures I can't help help but imagine it or stop imagining that you could be could be doing this me

do you know how long I've been looking for this? looking for a spine, a backbone, a man with some balls, someone who will grab me and tell me what's right and make me do things others are ashamed of and tell me to do what I really want anyway

I have no idea what you have had in your life I just want you to be missing something in your life and I want you to get some temporary satisfaction in me because, trust me, i'll be doing the same

HOW WOMEN LOOK IN MEN'S CLOTHING June 13, 2000

so where is the irony in having women look good when they cross dress and men look wrong

think of a woman in a man's oversized men's shirt and loose-fitting tie and hat tilted sideways

and think of a man in his little sister's dress

hell, think of the shoes, even

and explain the irony to me, please



I want you in me I want life inside me and I'll start to live then

INSTEAD OF FEELING NERVOUS June 13, 2000

I didn't know how many occasions would be obvious and apparrent. I didn't know how nice it would be to have you around, even if I never made the effort to visit you. You know, my sister said that it would be nice if I moved to where I grew up, because even if we didn't see each other all that often, it was nice to know that I was close enough. I think of you now, after I had moved toward you and then I moved away. I think you're ingrained in my head now, you and your stories, you with the way you wanted to show yourself off to people who didn't like you, you who made fun of things instead of feeling nervous about them. That is what I like about you. I don't know how to explain it any other way.

I remember you coming by when I was at work and you said you were borrowing your dad's jaguar, and you wanted all of my coworkers to see it? ad i thought, well, okay, if they have the time you this, and you wanted to point the car out to me and I saw it out the window and I thought, yeah, that's a car... Once you gave me a ride in the car and well sure, it's a nice car, but it doesn't win me over, that the theory here is that I'm supposed to like you for who you are and not for how much stuff you have, but... god, that makes me think of how you would get into a huge argument with one of your friends and you two would hate each other, and two weeks later you'd make up because she apologized and all would be well again and I knew in the back of my head that they got mad because they didn't like your attitude but they'd have to apologize because they liked the perks of being frinds with a rinch kid.

I digress... sorry...

Once when you and a girl you were on a date with met me at a fifties restaurant, and the waitress was insanely slow and we couldn't get her attention, so you took your paper napkin and your plastic tropical drink knife and stabbed the paper napkin into the straw and said you felt like macgyver because now you have a rescue fag that we could use to flag down the waitress.

you see, these are my memories with you. they're all a little above and beyond the call of duty, but I guess that's who you are.

We went to post prom one year while we were in college, ganged up with friends we still had in college, and we ate at the top floor of the john hancock building for dinner, and one of the high school girl dates was afraid of heights... Well, they were all boyfriend and girlfriend, and this was their prom. and they were doing something extravagant and they didn't want to mess anything up and look too young. Versus you and I, of course, who knew everything at the ripe ol' age of nineteen, and we were feeding each other portions of our food and I think they were shocked with us but we weren't interrupting anyone, no one thought we were doing anything wrong, and lo and behold, we were having fun. Go figure.

I don't know, we had this habit of making fun of things that were unfair to us - one guy that liked me, well, you made so much fun of him that I'd be buckled over laughing, we'd comment on the rocks silently asking for food because they must be starved if they called the park "starved rock" park, and then there was this one guy you know that said you were an athiest, and instead of confronting him about it, you told me that no, you aren't an athiest because you praised that guy that said you were an athiest, and we would jokingly insert his name and pray, "Our Steve, who art in Heaven..."

But what I think I remember the most is when I flew across the country to see you and you were working, you got me a map and gave me a key and told me to just do what you want t do, so I shopped, and read in the sun, and toured the college and felt like someone assumed for once

that I was entirely capable of making my own decisions and being in charge of my own life. Which was nice.

What is my point from all of this? Well, that maybe memories can seem poetic, but that it is nice when you don't feel nervous through life and you just make a point to live. How many people get a chance to do that?

2 MINUTES WITH A DECREPIT IDOL June 21, 2000 Jesus Christ, woman I'd want you to tell me stuff And I want you to teach me lessons I should learn from my own mistakes Because I've made so many But Christ, woman I'd want to tell you a thing or two myself Because hell, I've seen what you've gone through And I can't help but think That your stoic statute can't be be solid forever And all I know Is that I'd fall apart Long before you'd ever think about it And would you ever? Would you ever think about it and Would you wait, woman, see how much shit they could throw at you how much would take its toll on you how much should take its toll on you how much To see how your resilience let you still come bouncing back And you're a real bitch that way, you know And I hate you for it And does everyone else think that too? And does everyone else think that you're just fine And you can take everything And you'll always bounce back?

What does that to you?

Was it having to be strong When parents ignored you For all of your childhood

Was it being strong after the closest thing To your high-school sweetheart Raped you as soon as you were on your own

Was it that a man asked you to marry him, Him, the knife-wielding gang-banger Without a college education Was it that the little fucking bastard Tried to beat you up to win your love

Was it that they knew they couldn't destroy you So they tried to kill you And they'd fuck your chances for a future And they take away your home And they'd make you learn everything from scratch again

What, was it that? Was that too much?

You were supposed to be the woman of steel You're supposed to take it all in stride You're supposed to teach us lesson

Because hell, woman, I don't know what makes you you And I don't know what makes me me And I was hoping That we could figure it out together With more than two minutes Because I don't think I can do this on my own And I don't know if YOU need any help But maybe we don't each Have to be failing

I HAVE TO EXPLAIN

Try to explain an artist when everyone else think he's insane well, try to explain him when YOU have the knowledge and THEY now a fraction of what you do

Christ, I think about artists I've known who created, who never told me what they meant

Why did you do that painting? Why did you die before explaining what you really meant for it? It's a dancing woman, I have to explain to them, you see, there's her shoulder, and her hip, and the thish and arm moving across the canvas

I have to explain this to them and the thing is, that woman is me

that dancing woman is me the woman in motion the woman that never stops

and he finished that painting the day before he died

and what does it get me what does this knowledge get me what does anything get me I'm still without a pinting that was of me, for me and no one still understands

ТН Јине 14, 2000

I don't know what it is about you but it can be the fact that you're a yes man and you never say anything bad and you never agree to something you can't do

and well, I don't know, you're just cute

in your little way

you have the chiseled jaw and it makes me want to be there for you and it makes me want to make you feel better and it makes me feel better too

TAPES THE KEY HOLE

she dressed in her husband's clothing once after he was out with the boys and waited for him to come home when he came home and saw her he asked, "why are you dressed in my clothing?" and she said, "well, you always want to be out with the boys and you don't go out with me, so i thought i could dress up like one of the boys and you would spend time with me" and once when he came home from being out with the boys late one night drinking she ran a small piece of scotch tape over the key hole and then she listened when in the dark night he struggled trying to get the key in his own lock she loved being the little demon with him that way, and in a way, he loved it too

THE REAL BITCH OF IT

You don't understand the real bitch of it And it's not that you had to work really hard To make it through school And not fail at what ever you tried Because, I suck this way But it always just came

Maybe I was the Bionic Woman And now they've taken that away From me And now I feel like something is missing and when I decided what it was It was when I thought of death as an option

Because hell If you don't have hope Why are you alive?

Why do you continue to function When your brain tells you there's no point What do you do When you want to spill everything you have Or ram glass into your head Just so you can see The blood dripping down From your own forehead

What do you do then?

What does it boil down to for you To get to that point When you have consciously When When you have to consciously justify your existence?

I guess that's a the real bitch of the All you can think of at that point is What do you do then? JKuypers@scars.tv • http://www.janetkuypers.com

STOP DROP AND ROLL June 15, 2000

what do you do in a monent where you want to panic and cross your fingers and close your eyes and hope that someone else will scoop you out of this mess? do we ever get that question?

MEMORIAL DAY

May 29, 2000

do we remember the crap we learned in school to we take precautionary measures to we save ourselves from falling apart do we stop drop and roll do we duck and cover do wehold ourselves in do we protect ourselves do we turn our wheels too much when our car is about to spin out of control do we throw a blanket over the fire do we keep our head between our knees instead of keeping our head in our hands

do we know this all?

So here I sit a decade ago I wrote about my dad, I wrote about boyfirends, I had no idea of what life had in store for me and now I sit here with John and we're married and I live on the other side of the country and he has no idea what I think and I don't know how to tell him

Isn't communication supposed to get easier when you get older and when you're a communication major and when you have so much experience under your belt

29

isn't it supposed to get easier

MY SECOND MARRIAGE

I know how my mother kept dental records for me when I was an infant and I know how she kept a file of all the shots I had, too

it's like that, I guess a scrapbook, or a photo album and I could do that for my marriages

my first marriage was one that I needed. but hindsight is twenty twenty, and maybe I needed a counselor more than I needed a husband. he was a great guy, don't get me wrong, and he wanted to learn from me, but I think he knew it wouldn't work out for us, and so he just waited until I came to that comclusion too.

I don't know why I went through my second marriage. people think I was crazy for putting up with him, for tolerating him, for including him, and I didn't care, because in my own little way, he was mine. it was a role reversal for me, I was used to being the weak one in a marriage, but this time, well, this time I learned my lesson. I decided when we went out of town, how much money we would spend, what bars we would go to, I think it all boiled down to







me deciding how much fun we would ever have. And he followed me, like a puppy dog who has just found his best friend, and his tounge would hang out with excitment when he could roll down the window of the car and we could just take off. I think my problem is that I wanted this marriage to work, but my puppy dog only accepted scraps from under my dinner table and never offered anything in return and I swear, I wanted something to work, I wanted this to work out for me, and it still pisses me off that everything didn't just fall into place.

okay, okay, by third marriage. it seems a bit more stable. I think he is a guy that balances out the first two marriages. and that almost scares me



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