



07/03/11 Beach Poets
Janet Kuypers feature

with music from John Yoiko
& music from Cousin Bones

a Very Goth
Beach Party

Look at the Downs

I go every week to my favorite bar
and pick up a “Reader” newspaper
to thumb through while I drink

and once I looked at their “Ink Well,”
their crossword puzzle,
and their second clue, 5 across, was

“Things on a cat’s penis.”
So... I started looking
at every other clue:

14 across: “Defender of NAMBLA.”
16 across: “Sex column topic.”
Okay, maybe I should look at the downs.

So I randomly picked another clue
and read “Get off my _____.”
So, I thought about the pain in my back,

then thought about how everyone
worries about their back,
but no one ever talks about their front.

My front’s killing me.
I’ve got a pain in my front.
Get of my front.

I seriously had to find something else
to read, so I saw within their “matches” section
a section called “I Saw You”.

Now, I never look at the Matches section,
I prefer drinking in my favorite bar
by myself, but the voyeur in me

had to read some of these
hundred words or fewer
one chance writings and hopes.

‘You said you liked a dirty martini,
then you left.’ ... “Care to see
how dirty you next martini meet up

can get? You: man. Me: man.”
And I thought... hmmm...
then there was a meeting date and time.

So I read the next one:
“Thanks for opening the door for me
and letting me use the ATM

because I got there first.”
Wait a minute, that’s called etiquette,
not a budding romance.

But I have to admit,
when I sit here every week
at this bar, drinking by myself

it’s nice to hear about stranger’s stories
in pen and ink like this
every once in a while.

Made Any Difference

(poetry sung to music)

So I'm at my bar my favorite hang-out
I just overheard from people talking

that another guy who's always here
in the past few months has had a few strokes

and this is grapevine I just heard snippets
but I needed to see him put in my two cents

he went out for a smoke and even though I don't
I walked up to him after he lit up

I reached my hand out toward his smoke
he offered me a new one but... I wanted his

then holding his smoke I told him I heard
I spoke of his wife asked about his kids

and I don't want to get on a high horse
but we care for him we want him happy

he said I was right he'll take some time off
then he saw his smoke said that he should quit

handed me the smoke and then walked away

I stood there a while sucking nicotine
wondering if I made any difference

egg for a week

i saw how our school system works
and i see how teenage girls think

how are we teaching our kids
when taking care of an egg
for a week in a high-school health class
is taught to pregnant 15 year olds

Escaping Every Cage

I felt caged in this tiny Windsor hotel room
I wanted to get out

that's when he struck
I was attacked, knocked over, strangled

I managed to break free
scraped arms, bruised and bloody knees

strangers offered to help me
as I made my way through the lobby

I had to get so far away,
I left the country and never went back

###

when I couldn't take being trapped at work
when I was too caged by those office walls
I quit my job
and drove around the country in my car

now, I know a car can be a cage
but with this little cage,
I felt like I could be free
and could go where I wanted
and do what I wanted to do

I was free for that split second of time
until someone tried to kill me in my car
and they put me in another cage again

###

labeled me again

{poem inside of a poem}

they gave me a straight jacket
slapped on a bracelet

i contorted out of the straight jacket
tore the wrist ID

please don't

they labeled me again

when I was in the hospital for weeks
I would tear the medical bracelet off my wrist daily

please don't track me

when I was able to walk,
I would try to leave
but I didn't know where to go
and they would find me again
and bring me back to my cell

###

when I was a child,
I wanted to get away from my family
wanted to get away from my town
I wanted something bigger, faster,
stronger than anything I ever knew before

and so as I grew older
I took those childhood memories
those childhood toys, those childhood stories
and one by one
started placing them on an Island
surrounded by deep water
where no one could touch them
and they would always remain
just on the horizon

###

I have always loved the water
I swam all my life
I swam in pools with friends when I was little
I swam along side the tropical fish off the Oahu coast
I swam with dozens
of White-Tipped Sharks off the Galapagos Islands

when I get closer to water
I get itchy to just jump in

but even when I could let go in the water
I'd see that Island in the distance
holding all of my childhood traumas
and I still never felt entirely free

###

one day
I decided to face these ancient cages
that still hold me down

I wanted to face it all
battle all of those past demons

so I went down to the shoreline
arched my hand along my eyebrows

looked for that Island of mine

the water at the shoreline lapped over my feet
pushing the coastline farther inland today

I kept searching
until I realized

my Island fell into the ocean

###

everything from my past disappeared
except my memories

###

that day,
I couldn't go into the water

###

we all have our cages
sometimes we can't see them
but they're there,
holding us back
restraining us
holding us down
holding us in

as I am in my cage writing this
I look at those walls
hear the cars driving past me
and I think of these things that hold us down

Eat Me Alive

I had a dream I woke up in a sewer
my clothes were wet from the filthy water

it felt like something was pulling me down into the filth
and I worked harder and harder to just stand

and I thought
how did I get here?
who put me here?
how on earth can I get out of here?

who drove me to this point?

I felt the slimy, filthy walls
of this coffin-like cave
as I was
trying to find a ledge for support
trying to find any way out

the noise from people walking above ground
was muffled
when I heard the rats coming
along with the water
from down the tunnel

I turned in the darkness to run
until I tried to take a turn
and was wedged in the concrete slabs

I was stuck in the sewer
and the rats would eat me alive

Letting Ourselves Go

(people are invited to start singing anything throughout the reading)

I hear that in France
they have a national music day,
when everybody sings
and it doesn't really matter
if it's not all in tune.

not that I'm all for France or anything
but we could learn from that,
that would be kind of good here
where everyone could just let go.
I mean, just allow ourselves to sing.
On key or not. Hum a tune.
Music is supposed to make us happy,
and we're filled with so much
that takes away our happiness.

If people sing,
I'm probably the first
that would be the stickler
if someone was off key.

The stickler:
by definition,
someone who who insists
on something unyieldingly.

We've all been taught these rules,
we're taught when we're little
that if we're not good at something
we just can't do it.
We just close ourselves off
to letting ourselves go.

I mean, think of it:
have a national music day,
where everybody sings
and it doesn't really matter
if it's not all in tune.

It's just letting ourselves go,
hearing the rhythm,
and enjoying the music.

Tight Rope Affair (song)

i know all the moves
i play the game
and it gets to you

you can't say a word
you can't move an inch
cause you can't break the rules

i know what to say
i know what to wear
i know what to do

and it sets you on fire

i have to play
on what you like
to see what you can take

and i walk out on to that tight rope
to watch you move and shake

and now you're stuck there
and so am i
but here is where you quake

but you can't fall from this wire

we walk a thin line
in our tight rope affair
there's no net when you're high
so you better beware

do you know your way down
when you're in making your moves
and balanced in
your tight rope affair

when you're up on the wire
you feel the fire
and you feel the fear

but you're filled with desire
you want to go higher
whenever we're near

what will transpire
with our lives
now that we're here

what can we do to make us right

when we gracefully step
on the paper-thin wire
we're balancing high

we look to the ground
see a circus of clowns
as we're touching the sky

now we both tightrope walk
in a deadlock
and I wonder why

why we can't bring it all into the light

we're walking a fine line
in our tight rope affair
we walk a thin line
in our tight rope affair
there's no net when you're high
so you better beware

do you know how it feels
when you're in making your moves
balancing in
your tight rope affair

you balance on this twine
in our tight rope affair
cause I know you'll be mine
yeah, be with me if you'd dare

this love is divine
but it cannot compare
to this rush
from this tight rope affair

we're walking a fine line
in our tight rope affair
we walk a thin line
in our tight rope affair
there's no net when you're high
so you better beware

do you know your way down
when you're in making your moves
balancing in
your tight rope affair

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Give What You Can, Down in the Virt v0.84, Come Fly With Me, Clearing the Debris, Sectioned & Sequestered, Six Six Six, Skeletal Remains, Out of the Web, Don't Tread on Me, Lines of Intensity, Entering the Ice Age, When the World Settles, Into the White, Along the Surface, Life... from Nothing the Line to Power, Fear the Forsaken, Down in It, Falling Into Place, Wake Up and Smell the Flowers, Unknown, Looking Beyond, Forever Bound, See the World Burn.

Influenced by our Poetics, Anita's Miss an Understanding of her Art, the Electronic Windows, Changing Women, the Swan Road, the Significance of the Frontier: The Synthesizers Unpublished, Harvest of Gems, the Little Monk, Death in Madaga, Moments in Time, In the Palace of Creation, R.I.P., Bob the Bumble Bee, Remnants and Shadows, I Saw This, the Drive, Thomas at Ten, Cracking Down: Winesmith, Blue Calla Ballet, again, In Your Heart the bootstrap's, Tuesday's God, the Adventures of the Key to Believing Bear, Anita's Miss an Understanding of her Art (second printing), Dickard Kinder / Charlie Newman, 12 Times 12 Equals Cross, a Marble Made Pauline Borchose with a Marble Apple in her Marble Hand, Challenge of Night and Day and Chicago Poems, Lighten Up, Not Far From Here, Watershed, You Have Finally Won, Avenue C, Suburban Rhythms, Down Syndrome, the Dark Side of Love, the pill is a man's best friend, Angel's Syllable is Good Boss of Devil's Spine, Poems and Stories from The Blue Color Book of the Dead, Cat People, Death of an Angel

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