

janet kuyper
double meaning poetry

2012 cc&d ISSN 1555-1555 chapbook

this is
a poem
about

this is a chapbook of poems giving a different meaning to everyday objects, to give common things in life an additional and separate meaning and identity of their own

s c a r s u o ! t d c ! j q n d

Quiet for a While

your incessant screaming
is making me go insane

I swear, if I didn't need you
so much in my life

all I want is some rest
and there you go,

if I thought I could get along
without you every morning

bothering me again,
destroying my peace

if I didn't need you
to get me through my day

and when I finally feel
I'm at one with the world

I *would* get rid you you
I'd kick you to the curb

you harass me again,
you screech and wail

because this cycle is killing me
and how many more times

until I can't take it any longer
and I use my bare hand

will you do this to me
before you break down?

to strike you hard,
to shut you up

but I know we'll do this daily battle
before you're reduced to nothing

you stay quiet for a while
but only a day goes by

and I'll find someone else
to give me life again

before you do it again
before you set me off again

(this is a poem about an alarm clock)

Under your Total Control

it takes a lot of convincing
to get me to come to you

I've got work to do
I don't want to stop my routine

and all this time,
you sit there and wait for me patiently

when I finally break down
when I finally come to you

I dedicate myself to you
and I start to undress

you make me so wet
as I drop my head and give in

you beat your heat
into all of my pores

as I let you have your way
with all of my skin,

leaving me raw

and you know, every time
we come together like this

I end up feeling so good
and I never want it to end

you see, I'm usually afraid
to let go like that

I'm usually afraid
to give in to you,

to let myself be
under your total control

but whenever we're together
oh, you remind me

of how good it feels,
how it is so worth my while

to break up my routine
by coming to you like this

(this is a poem about a shower)

Feel Comfortable

I am so comfortable
with you

you make me feel
as comfortable as

when I roll out of bed
or dry off after a shower

I can feel complete
with you

like when I walk out
on to my driveway

to pick up
the newspaper

or wave hello
to my neighbors

before
returning inside

to be alone
with you again

what's what
it's all about,

you know —

but with you
I feel as comfortable

as with hot cocoa
and a bed-time story

(this is a poem about a bath robe)

Under My Fingers

I know I trusted you
with all my secrets

and I know
you'd never betray me

but I'm sorry
I grew tired

of feeling you
under my fingers

you were rough
I knew that

maybe that's because
you were my sounding board

you were the only one
that was always there for me

when I was
at my lowest

but you see, I shared
all my secrets with you

because I wanted
to bury those memories

so I hope
you understand

why I had to
let you go

(this is a poem about a diary)

Hollow for so Long Already

After dealing with a needle
too many years

since that felt good,
I switched to the other arm

I was told I could do good
give back to the people

and they keep talking
about the highs

if they just used another needle
to take more out of me

but right now, all I feel
are the lows

so, trying to be
the good Samaritan for once

as I sit here
time number five

I offered myself to them
four times

trying to do the right thing
waiting, to let them

but they were never satisfied
with my identification

hollow my out

*you know, I'm doing
something good for you*

*haven't I been hollow
for so long already?*

*and you're the ones
putting me through hell*

time to state
at all the technicians

I'm used to he needle
by now

wearing white jackets
rubber gloves

I've avoided
the track marks on my arms

plastic face masks,
saying it's to be hygienic

shoved the needle in once
saw my vein move out of the way

*anything for them to avoid
coming in contact*

move the needle
watch my vein move again

*with anything to do with
me*

#

what the hell am I saying,
“giving back to the people”

they say altruism is good
but they pay you money

to take
what’s inside of you

so without a job
for six years

I’m tired
of living on the dole

so let them
suck out my insides

just so I can afford
to get drunk again

#

I knew a man
with no job

who used to donate
whole red blood cells

when he found out
he could be paid at this place

he decided to stop
with donating blood

‘cause you see,
a man’s gotta survive

any way he can

#

I love playing
these waiting games

because here I am
at visit number five

reading their paperwork
verifying I don’t have AIDS

that I haven’t lived
in the Netherlands

*well, that’s what I’m from,
but I can’t afford to visit*

I mean, I don’t even have
enough money

to stay drunk enough
while I’m here,

if I’m giving up
my insides to drink,

you think I can fly
to Amsterdam

for over six months
to stay stoned?

so thanks for checking,
but no

I’ve had no blood transfusions
that I’m aware of

I wasn’t born
anywhere in Africa

and although there's no test
for Creutzfeld-Jacob Disease,

as far as I know
I have no fatal brain disease,

*(my brain
may be diseased,*

*but I'm afraid
it's not fatal)*

so while
waiting here

someone asked
for my two month old

Wall Street Journal
that someone gave to me

I said sure, because
newspapers may be dying

in the twenty-first century
but sometimes

holding those pages,
getting that ink

on your fingers,
can really be addictive

#

so in hour number three
of waiting

the news on tee vee
says the tax forms

for a presidential candidate
say they made millions last year

I hear this as I sit
in hour number three, waiting

for them to take my insides
so I can have money to drink

#

so finally, on the fifth visit
after waiting over three hours

they call me, paint
ultraviolet ink on my fingernail —

so I don't donate
somewhere else today

then they check my vitals,
take my blood

ask me about my travel past
ask me about my military history

ask about what drugs I take
then send me to an RN

where after driving over
for five visits,

after waiting
for over three hours,

they explain to me
that they are taking from people

to help a certain kind
of sickness

by looking at my medication,
they see

I already have
that certain level of sickness

so even though
I've offered myself to them

after I tried for too long
they say they don't want me

#

all I can think is: lovely.
at least

I didn't miss
work for this

I can't help myself
and apparently

no one else
can help me either

now I just have to
figure out

who will help me
with my next drink

(this is a poem about a plasma clinic)

Push Your Button

it's so easy
i only do this once to you

and you get so hot, i know
when i push your button

and it only takes you
a minute or two

before you come up for me
instantaneously

i love what you do for me
when I get you going

all i want to know is this:
how much longer,

how many more times
will we do this to each other?

(this is a poem about a toaster)

Know You Only Got Me

you know you got me
because it seemed obvious
that you really needed
someone to hold on to.

and I loved how you held me,
how you were so infatuated with me,
how you curled up with me,
how you caressed me.

I liked that, you know.

I have feelings too,
and it was nice to give you
something to lean on
when you felt alone.

but I've noticed that
as more time has passed
you've spent less time with me,
and I think I know why.

I think you've realized now
that you know you only got me
because I would only be a distraction
so you wouldn't think about

being alone.

(this poem is about a teddy bear)

Ever Since You Got Me

I've been hanging here
ever since you got me
when the two of you
were first happy

every once in a while
one of you looks at me
reflects on what it was like
and I think you smile then

I sit here now
looking out at your world
seeing how you live now
and I wonder

because I don't think
you notice it
but I see the changes
of how you live now

I don't think you're unhappy
I can tell you're not really happy,
but I don't think you're about
to end your life or anything

but as I was saying,
though I can't see much
from where I'm at,
I don't think you're unhappy,

but you don't seem
to have the same pep in your step
I think the both of you
have lost something

I only know this because...
look at me, I know
what you looked like then
your faces, and your happiness

is burned into me forever
you two are holding each other
and beaming with happiness
like the whole world's ahead of you

wait... is that it?
is it that life is passing you by?
I mean, I think I understand,
I know I am fading with each passing year

but I look at you two walking around,
like you're drones now,
going through the motions,
not looking like life is in your hands

they way you did
when you created me.

(this is a poem about a wedding photo)

Now That You Got Me

you know, I am really getting a little pissed
at this lack of attention I have been getting from you.
I mean, I know you talked about how you needed
me more in your life, how you needed me
around more to make this place we now share
look more homey, make it look like we belonged
here together. but now that you got me,
you barely pay any attention to me at all.

it's been getting so depressing now, I think
I'd like to wallow in liquor, but you only occasionally
bring me the drink I need. I often feel parched
to my veins, but no one hears my screams
and no one comes to help me when I need it most.

I've become an afterthought to you now,
I think, but I thank you for your occasional
effort... you know how I like to hang out in the sun,
and I think it's cute how you try to take care of me
and then clean me up when I'm exhausted,
but maybe I wouldn't seem to be on the edge
like that if you cared about me more often.

and the thing is, just feeling you near me,
sensing your breath, gives me life, and I hate
how my dependence on you is so basic and banal
that I seem like a groupie. and no, I'm not a stalker,
because I wait for you to make your move on me.
but I *need* you to make that move, I really need
you there for me, or I think I might die.

you said you wanted me to bring some life
to your existence, and I think in a way
we're both somehow dependent on each other.
please, you don't hear me when I beg,
but maybe we can somehow both bring a little
more life into each other once again.

(this poem is about a house plant)

Good Escape

I sit around here
waiting for you

that's all I do, you know
wait for you

when you turn me on
all I want

is to make you happy
but you need to take control

you need to let me know
what you want from me

what do you want
to see in me

do I have something
somewhere inside of me

to clear your mind
of your troubles

I know you must have
a lot on your mind

and I hope
I'm a good escape for you

I'll be here waiting
whenever you need me

whenever you want
a chance to escape again

I'll be here for you

(this poem is about a television)

Gouge Out Their Eyes

looking forward to my little ritual,
I searched out my next victim

and gain gratification by gaining
total control over someone else

looked forward to getting them alone
and cutting out the top of their head

driving my knife through their skull,
cutting down to their fleshy intellect

so I could scoop out their brains
feel bits of the organ in my bare hands

clear out their skull,
make them hollow

gouge out their eyes
open their mouth wide

so the world could see
how empty my victims now were

I didn't do this often
otherwise I might have been caught

all these years
of debasing someone weaker

this was my little ritual
and I was ready to share my secret

with just the right person,
to help me get rid of the remains

to revel with me
in this little game I play

###

I found someone,
I confided with them

and they told me this
was against their religion

I begged,
I pleaded

and the only way
they would join me

is if they could take the skull
and throw it from a buiding roof

after we were done
dismembering them

you know,
to further destroy the evidence

and I agreed

so we drank in the sewer
and drew up our plan

###

that may have been
one of the last times

I did this to someone,
because it really was fun —

in the middle of the night,
when no one else was around —

watching their hollow skull
splatter on the ground

I think it was closure,
the final piece to this ritual

where after so much destruction,
I could say my work was done

(this is a poem about a pumpkin)

Part of my Pain

I've been trying so hard
to be the most perfect

but I'm putting myself
through hell for it

consider it war paint
that leaves me scarred

your insides are smeared
around my eyes almost daily

so yeah, you've also been
a part of my pain

#

this pain has now taught me
to believe in inflicting pain

as much as I apparently
believe in receiving it

I like taking a small sharp
blade to you at times too

since you have to be ready
to hurt me more later

#

so although I'm acutely aware
of the pain I go through

don't you think for a second
that I can't give out

what I already take

(this poem is about eye liner)

Only Occasionally

I only see you occasionally

after being together
then dealing with

all the hot air
you spit at me

I can't take it
and must get away

(this poem is about a hair dryer)

this is a poem about

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