



**à stàtine
in à
Fàntàstic
càr cràsh**

Janet Kuypers
*with the melding of
“Periodic Table” poetry
(#085) & classic poetry
in a live Chicago reading 1/11/13
cc&d chapbook supplement #1068-5154
Scars Publications 2013 release*

astatine in a fantastic car crash

mixed 1/10/13

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.
There's no such thing as a calm with you.

You are a fantastic car crash.
You stop traffic in both directions —
In your twisted way, you come from the decay

*of others... And what do you leave
in your wake? More radioactive destruction,
as all around you **slows down to stare,***

*and all **the gapers gawk, as the decay grows.***

Everything shatters with you, you know.

It's a spectacular explosion,
until your instability corrodes you down

*to the basics in the world. And yeah,
what was left of you after you were gone
is so much more stable than what you were,*

but still, I'd duck and cover
as metal flies through the air. 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,
and even though I'm careful,
I'm still picking up the pieces

*after dealing with only fractional amounts of you.
I've only been able to infer what you're like
by knowing your brethren,*

while I'm stuck here, picking up the pieces,
and I'm still on my knees.
The glass cuts into my hands,

*because it was only after so much
of your destruction that you left **blood
dripping down to the street.***

think of this as *your contribution*,
this radioactive short-term flash of decay...
think of this as *your **contribution***

to this fantastic car crash
that is you, that is me,
that is us.

*I've tried to learn, I've tried to study
these microscopic parts of you
to make sense of you...*

*But whether or not you ever leave enough,
despite your destruction,
despite this decay of yours,*

*I have to keep reminding myself
that when it comes to you,
This is what you do.*

This happens all the time.

So,

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.

fantastic car crash

07/01/98

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

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

Astatine

*from the "Periodic Table of Poetry" series (#085, At)
(with references to the poem "Fantastic Car Crash", 7/3/98)
1/1/13*

Everything shatters with you, you know.
I am left picking up the pieces
after dealing with only fractional amounts of you.

I've only been able to infer what you're like
by knowing your brethren, as everyone around me
and all the gapers gawk, as the decay grows.

In your twisted way, you come from the decay
of others... And what do you leave in your wake?
More radioactive destruction, as all around you

slows down to stare, until your instability
corrodes you down to the basics in the world.
And yeah, what was left of you after you were gone

was so much more stable that you were,
but it was only after so much of your destruction
that you left blood dripping down to the street.

So, all I can think is that this continual decay
is your contribution, this radioactive
short-term flash of decay, is you.

I've tried to learn, I've tried to study these
microscopic parts of you to make sense of you...
But whether or not you ever leave enough,

well, from what you've shown me, I have to keep
reminding myself that despite your destruction,
despite this decay of yours, I have to keep going.

Because, when it comes to you,
when it comes to what you do...
This happens all the time.

astatine in a Fantastic car crash

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Children, Churches and Doodles (c&d magazine), founded June 1993; Down in the Dirt, conceived 1994, founded 2000

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