



Public  
Access  
*Poetry*

Janet Kuypers poetry  
interview & reading  
in her TV show,  
recorded 12/8/19

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## *Our Color, Our Gender, Our Creed*

There is a house inside of me.  
It's a house with a rich heritage  
brimming with the knowledge  
of how our souls have flourished,  
and about how it all can be so quickly taken away.

There is a house inside of me  
that has had to shut down  
to hide everything away, because  
those who didn't look like me  
decided that I was nothing, and treated me accordingly.

There is a house inside of me.  
It's pulse has an infectious rhythm  
that we've had to stifle, to hide from  
your generic white bread world; we only  
let it out when we're alone, to save us from your madness.

There is a house inside of me.  
I've hidden it away, I've sealed it up  
and placed it deep within, brimming  
with my history *and* my future, and I  
don't let it out when people can't think of me as human.

There is a house inside of me.  
I've put boards over the windows  
to save myself from your storm.  
With your wrath, I've learned to  
not fight back — only because my captor won't listen.

There is a house inside of me.  
And this house will stand strong  
even after you have raped me,  
beaten me, tortured me, tried to  
kill me, treated me as nothing. But you were *so* wrong.

There is a house inside of me.  
And what you don't realize is that  
this house will outlast yours. Trust me.  
If your house was built on distrust  
and such blatant disrespect, your house is bound to collapse.

Because after all this time, and after  
my *wanting* to fight, I have learned  
that passive resistance is only part of  
my story. Because in these struggles  
I have gained a wisdom and a connection that is beyond

this house inside of me, beyond  
this sharing, this inquisitive mentality.  
So I want you to remember, this house  
is a symbol for all like me, and for those  
*not* like me too. Because, I have a dream that everyone

who has suffered like this — and even  
those who have not — should *share*  
their stories with all of the world,  
no matter our color, our gender, our creed.  
This is my dream. Because *this* is how we truly grow.

*the burning*

I take the final swig of vodka  
feel it burn it's way down my throat  
hiss at it scorching my tongue  
and reach for the bottle to pour myself another.  
I think of how my tonsils scream  
every time I let the alcohol rape me.  
Then I look down at my hands —  
shaking — holding the glass of poison —  
and think of how these were the hands  
that should have pushed you away from me.  
But didn't. And I keep wondering  
why I took your hell, took your poison.  
I remember how you burned your way  
through me. You corrupted me  
from the inside out, and I kept coming back.  
I let you infect me, and now you've  
burned a hole through me. I hated it.  
Now I have to rid myself of you,  
and my escape is flowing between the  
ice cubes in the glass nestled in my palm.  
But I have to drink more. The burning  
doesn't last as long as you do.

## *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

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

# *Everything Was Alive And Dying*

for 12/18/12 TV show

I had a dream the other night  
I walked out of the city  
to a forest  
and there were neatly paved bicycle paths  
and trash cans every fifty feet  
and trash every ten

as I walked, there was a stray cat  
she still had her little neon collar on  
with a little bell  
and she walked a few feet,  
stretched her front paws,  
oh, she looked so darling  
and then she walked right up to me  
and she said thank you  
and I said for what?  
And she just looked at me for a moment,  
her little ears were standing straight up,  
and then she said, you know,  
in some countries I'm considered a delicacy.  
And I said how do you know of these things?  
And she said,  
when somebody eats one of you  
word gets around  
and then she looked up at me again  
and said, and in some countries  
the cow is sacred. Wouldn't they  
love to see how you humans  
prepare them for slaughter,

how you hang them upside-down  
and slit their throats  
so their still beating hearts  
will drain out all the blood for you  
and she said isn't it funny  
how arbitrary your decision  
to eat meat is?  
and I said, don't put me  
in that category, I don't eat meat  
and she said I know

and I woke up in a sweat

so tell me, Ted Canadian Cuban Cruz  
so tell me, Nancy my eyes are pried open Pelosi  
so tell me, Mitch the slowest turtle McConnell  
so tell me, Crooked Hillary Clinton  
so tell me, Entertainer in Chief Donald Trump  
so tell me, Barrack Hussein Obama  
if you woke up from that dream  
would you be in a sweat, too?

Because everything is linked here  
we destroy our animals  
so we can be wasteful and violent  
we destroy our plants  
we destroy our earth  
we're even destroying our air  
we wreak havoc on the soil, on the atmosphere  
we dump our wastes into our lakes  
we pump aerosol cans and exhaust pipes



and you think I'm extreme?

so I'm beginning to think  
that we just keep doing it  
because we don't know how to stop  
and deep inside we feel the pain of  
all that we've killed  
and we try to control it by  
popping a chemical-filled pain-killer

we live through the guilt  
by taking caffeine, nicotine, morphine  
and we keep ourselves thin with saccharin  
and we keep ourselves sane with our alcohol poisoning

the thing is, in the wild  
you have no power over anyone else

now that we're "civilized"  
we create our own wild

maybe when we have all this power  
the only choice we have  
is to destroy ourselves

and so we do

## *Us, Actually Touching*

I heard a physicist explain  
that when two solid objects  
are pressed together  
they never actually touch

I can't imagine it  
but maybe  
because electrons repel  
all objects remain one molecule apart

I wonder if this is why  
when I see you  
and when we embrace  
I want to hold you tighter and tighter

because I want to defy  
the laws of physics  
and feel that contact with you  
as long as I possibly can

is this why whenever we embrace  
I want my face at your neck  
so that I inhale you deeply  
I breathe you in

because I want to experience you  
with all my senses  
I want our molecules to intermingle  
I want us to actually touch

## *Beauty in the Eyes of Einstein*

I heard NASA scientists say  
that Einstein dismissed some of his theories  
  
even some theories we may know all too well

but Einstein didn't like some of his theories  
because he thought they weren't beautiful

and I wonder:  
what is beauty

is it the geomagnetic aberrations  
of the Aurora Borealis  
dancing along the horizon  
at the arctic circle

is it the way you look at me  
with those gorgeous doe eyes  
after we've been apart so long

is it the scattered collisions from comet  
Shoemaker Levy-9 into the planet Jupiter

is it what I feel  
when your arms are finally around me  
and I don't want to open my eyes  
and I never want to let go

is it the eternally changing  
whisps of volcanic trails  
in the Saturn moon Titan's atmosphere

is it the way that listening  
to the music you make  
fills me with such energy

or is it converting matter  
                  into pure energy  
with just the right formula

Einstein believed  
“The most beautiful thing  
we can experience  
is the mysterious.  
It is the source  
of all art and science.”

so am I driven  
to look up at the stars in the night sky  
to see stars from billions of years ago  
to fall in love every night

Einstein reminds us,  
“We are all ruled  
in what we do  
by impulses”

so is it how on impulse  
I move a bit closer to you  
so I can feel the heat from your body  
so close to mine

we ask, what is beauty

they say beauty  
                  is in the eye of the beholder  
so it makes me wonder

*Death takes many forms.*

for 12/18/12 TV show

It is winter now.

The trees have lost their leaves;  
the city is covered in a thin layer of soot and snow.

The grass is dead.

In the sunless sky black birds circle overhead  
searching for prey.

An eerie cold settles over everything.

Nothing is growing anymore.

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.

You wouldn't hear the howling wind of the changing seasons,  
but 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.  
I said good bye to you to travel my own road  
but I knew you didn't want me to go.  
And now it's my turn.

Why are we always saying good bye to each other?  
...Are you trying to teach me a lesson?  
Because if you are, well,  
I've learned it. Trust me, I have.  
You can come back now.

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.

Now, you once showed me that winter could be beautiful.  
Instead of the dark and dirty snow lacing the city streets  
you showed me a quieting snowfall,  
over a lake at your parent's back yard  
glistening in an untouched whiteness.  
I told you I hated winters  
and you told me, "This you don't hate."

Well, I'm still learning.

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.

*Ultimate Connectivity:  
a bird in the hand*

So after a night camping  
at Bryce National Canyon  
(yeah, yeah, there was snow on the ground,  
but my sleeping bag zipper wasn't broken...)  
I got out of my tent in the morning  
and a few little birds fluttered by.  
Now, one seemed to hang out  
a little too close,  
so I put some grain  
in the palm of my hand,  
stretched out my forearm  
and remained perfectly still.  
Almost on cue,  
less than two minutes later  
the bird landed on the palm of my hand  
and enjoyed the bounty I gave them



And suddenly I felt  
like I was Mother Earth,  
I could stretch out my arms  
like a scarecrow  
but this time the animals  
wouldn't be afraid,  
and with my outstretched arms,  
I would give them food,  
and shelter, and love.

And maybe that was when  
I twitched my finger,  
or else I was out of food,  
but the next thing I knew,  
my three inch little bird  
took a step or two  
along my palm  
and across my fingers  
before it flew away.

## *And I'm Wondering*

I'm wondering if there's something  
chemical that brings people together,  
something that brings people to their  
knees, somethings that sucks them in

And I'm wondering if you're sensing what I'm  
sensing, is it just me, am I making this up  
in my head, or when I glance up and catch your  
eyes, well, are you actually staring at me

And I'm wondering if it could work out this  
time, if we'd have one of those relationships  
that no one ever doubts, especially us,  
because we know we'll always be in love

And I'm wondering if you'd find  
my neurotic pet-peeves charming  
like how I hate it when someone touches  
my belly because I'm so self conscious

And I'm wondering why you had to tell me  
when we happened to be sitting next to each  
other that the fact that our legs were almost  
touching was making your heart race

And I'm wondering why I felt the need  
to take your cigarette and inhale, exhale  
while the filter was still warm from  
your lips, there just seconds before

And I'm wondering if a year or two from now,  
after we've been going out and should have  
gotten to the point where we are bored with  
each other and sink into a comfortable rut

if you saw me making macaroni and cheese  
in the kitchen using margarine and water  
because I'm out of milk and I've got my hair  
pulled back and strands are falling into my

eyes and I'm wearing an oversized button-down  
denim shirt and nothing else, well, what  
I'm wondering is if you would see me  
like this and still think I was sexy

When I glance up and catch your eyes from  
across the room, when I see your eyes dart  
away, when I feel this chemical reaction, well,  
it makes me wonder if you can feel it too



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