

children CHURCHES & daddies

• Published since 1993 •

Janet Kuypers, Editor and Publisher, Ariane Livernois, Creative Assistant

Children, Churches and Daddies is published as often as we have enough material, so submit early and submit often. We publish every three weeks to a month. • No racist, sexist or blatantly homophobic material is appreciated; we do accept work of almost any genre of poetry, prose or artwork. • Do not send originals; include a SASE & bio with each submission. • Any work sent to Scars Publications on Macintosh disks, text format, will be given special attention. • There is no limit to how much you may submit at a time; previously published work accepted. • All material submitted is eligible for printing not only in Children, Churches and Daddies issues, but also in any other publishing ventures of Scars Publications. • Send all submissions, praises, questions and comments to:

Children, Churches and Daddies, Scars Publications and Design, Janet Kuypers, Editor
3255 West Belden, Suite 3E, Chicago, Illinois 60647
email address: c.c.andd@eworld.com

Chapbooks published in 1993: hope chest in the attic (chapbook and book), the gallery (computer program), knife, people today, dysfunctional family greeting cards, slate and marrow, dreaming of dandelions and ice cubes, addicted, new world order, gasoline and reason, the written word, the printed gallery, right there by your heart, rendering us, gabriel, magnolia christmas, how you looked then.

Chapbooks published in 1994: paper backbone, winter prayers, looking through their window, games, order now, a (fe)male behind bars, two year journey, they told me their dreams, the window (book), city, it was a perfect house, pictures from a still life.

Chapbooks/books from the 1995 Children, Churches and Daddies Poetry Chapbook Series: come into my garden, house of slavs, things i saw alone, texas, new york, in these desperate times, before the storm, love letters, scratching, still had to breathe, wrinkles in the palm of my hand, some things instinctively hurt, proud to be a part of things.

also publishers of: the annual poetry wall calendar, "down in the dirt" poetry magazine
"the burning" 1993 poetry mini books, "god eyes" 1995 poetry mini books
mom's favorite vase newsletters and promotional materials, 1994-1995

Copyright © 1995, Scars Publications and Design, Children, Churches and Daddies. All rights of individual pieces remain with their authors.

ISSN 1068-5154
the non-religious,
non-family oriented
literary and art
magazine



volume 45



CHILDHOOD MEMORIES

SEVEN

I was in kindergarten
and we were at our tables
working on an art project

and at the next table
Mike was eating his paste
with the stick that comes in the cap

and I thought

that's strange

JANET KUYPERS

So - yes, Virginia, you do know what you must do. Only you can make you happy, only you have the power to change your future. A balloon can only rise after the ballast is dropped.

BRIAN TOLLE

ME AND MY GIRL

Desolate angels, we were
pretty pretty pissed after the plane unloaded us. Mary
fell down and kissed the very earth that raised her: Midwest
living and dying, pictures of Michelangelo drunk and Berghoff
beer, blood-suckers demolishing the Eternal City with words.
There are, of course, always historical circumstances, the Devil
moving into a corner of the church. Near St. Charles Avenue,
near the Lakefront, near the Loop, the water rose again, decades
of discourse degenerated into a celestial sneer. Lightning
flashed over animated Cubs ill Wrigley Field. Good kids blinked
and moaned and carried on, they were storing memories
of the present destined to come and bloom again.

This was the real Bohemia, the Left Bank, the Gorilla Show
where Cinderella is eaten alive by greasy mechanics
in Joe's Bar & Grill. So goes the crowd to execution,
through goofy beatnik concerts in the park to grow their hair
longer, their tempers shorter. We'll need professional help
to salvage this visit, to drag our Beat dreams around
the corner of Berkeley Street to rest.

By August it will all be over.
We shall not double back this way again, me & my girl.
Dostoyevsky takes up pen and prepares to write: living
on the edge of a Northern precipice, original bitches
and speechless brothers afraid to speak. Here, we are too
much like bums, after touring Frank Lloyd Wright's exquisite
story we had a drink or two with former friends, rain fell
and the mournful revolution began: narrative of the city,
its hysterical tenants sickened by melancholy madness,
speeding down the turnpike in battered Volkos,
more ugly than oll frustrated girls from the 50's
or dilapidated flower-children from the 60's,
trusting iri trqason and Q blind one-way vision
of the way things are in Chicago.

ERROL MILLER



URQUELL

Half a world away
and a hundred fifty
years plus later,
hops are sweeter
and the beer
has gotten better.
Else, why would
this band leader,
known for his
bass horn prowess,
be back here
five minutes
before his band's
slated to play,
knocking down pivo
with the locals
while sidemen
scramble
to set up
and test
their PA?
No one
no longer
remembers
how back then,
tongues embittered
by a foul batch
or two, beer
swilling peasants

and guild craftsmen
alike
overtaken
and emptied
most of the city's
brew.
Beer ran
like rivulets
into rivers
in Plsen's streets
proving a hopping mad
crowd will have
its due.
Certainly all
this barrel chested
maestro
like a half
keg in profile
knows
is how
sweetly
that golden
elixir
flows.

GARY
SCHEINOH

Dusty Dog Reviews, CA (on knife)

These poems document a very complicated internal response to the feminine side of social existence. And as the book proceeds the poems become increasingly psychologically complex and, ultimately, fascinating and genuinely rewarding.

C Ra McGuirt, Editor, The Penny Dreadful Review (on Children, Churches and Daddies)

CC&D is obviously a labor of love ... I just have to smile when I go through it. (Janet Kuypers) uses her space and her poets to best effect, and the illos attest to her skill as a graphic artist.

Dusty Dog Reviews (on Without You)

She open with a poem of her own devising, which has that wintry atmosphere demonstrated in the movie version of Boris Pasternak's Doctor Zhivago. The atmosphere of wintry white and cold, gloriously murderous cold, stark raging cold, numbing and brutalizing cold, appears almost as a character who announces to his audience, "Wisdom occurs only after a laboriously magnificent disappointment." Alas, that our Dusty Dog for mat cannot do justice to Ms. Kuypers' very personal layering of her poem across the page.

Debra Purdy Kong, writer, British Columbia, Canada (on Children, Churches and Daddies)

I like the magazine a lot. I like the spacious lay-out and the different coloured pages and the variety of writer's styles. Too many literary magazines read as if everyone graduated from the same course. We need to collect more voices like these and send them everywhere.

Dusty Dog Reviews (on Right There, By Your Heart)

The whole project is hip, anti-academic, the poetry of reluctant grown-ups, picking noses in church. An enjoyable romp! Though also serious.

Children, Churches and Daddies. It speaks for itself.

Write to Scars Publications to submit poetry, prose and artwork to Children, Churches and Daddies literary magazine, or to inquire about having your own chapbook, and maybe a few reviews like these.

3255 West Belden • Suite 3E • Chicago, Illinois 60647 • attention: J. Kuypers

Carlton Press, New York, NY

HOPE CHEST IN THE ATTIC is a collection of well-fashioned, often elegant poems and short prose that deals in many instances, with the most mysterious and awesome of human experiences: Love... Janet Kuypers draws from a vast range of experiences and transforms thoughts into lyrical and succinct verse... Recommended as poetic fare that will titillate the palate in its imagery and imaginative creations.

**Dorrance Publishing Co.,
Pittsburgh, PA**

"Hope Chest in the Attic" captures the complexity of human nature and reveals startling yet profound discernments about the travesties that surge through the course of life. This collection of poetry, prose and artwork reflects sensitivity toward feminist issues concerning abuse, sexism and equality. It also probes the emotional torrent that people may experience as a reaction to the delicate topics of death, love and family.

"Chain Smoking" depicts the emotional distress that afflicted a friend while he struggled to clarify his sexual ambiguity. Not only does this thought-provoking profile address the plight that homosexuals face in a homophobic society, it also characterizes the essence of friendship.

"The room of the rape" is a passionate representation of the suffering rape victims experience. Vivid descriptions, rich symbolism, and candid expressions paint a shocking portrait of victory over the gripping fear that consumes the soul after a painful exploitation.

**Fiethian Press, Santa Barbara,
CA**

Indeed, there's a healthy balance here between wit and dark vision, romance and reality, just as there's a good balance between words and graphics. The work shows brave self-exploration, and serves as a reminder of mortality and the fragile beauty of friendship.

Mark Blickey, writer

The precursor to the magazine title (Children, Churches and Daddies) is very moving. "Scars" is also an excellent prose

Okay, nilla wafer. Listen up and listen good.

How to save your life.

Submit, or I'll have to kill you.

Okay, it's this simple: send me published or unpublished poetry, prose or art work (do not send originals), along with a SASE for response, to Children, Churches and Daddies, Scars Publications, 3255 West Belden, Suite #3E, Chicago, Illinois 60647. Then sit by your mailbox and wait. Pretty soon you'll get your SASE back with a note from the happy people at cc+d that says (a) Your work sucks, or (b) This is fancy crap, and we're gonna print it. It's that simple!

back issues: \$4; special issues: \$5

How to get a chapbook of your work.

Get in with the 1995 Poetry Chapbook Series.

Okay, it's this simple: we'd love to print a chapbook of your work under our label. But here's our little dilemma: if we printed everything we wanted to, a lot of forests would be gone, as well as our drinking money. We can't afford the printing, so if we accept your work, we can design a chapbook, emblazon the thing with the tried-and-true cc+d logo, give it our ISSN number, and send the originals to you. You decide what paper you want, how many copies you want done - then print it, and send us as many copies as you darn well please. We'll distribute. Voila!

{all checks payable to Janet Kuypers}

paper backbone, looking through their window, order now,
a (fe)male behind bars, two year journey, they told me their dreams.

Holy Shit.

Now this is an impressive chapbook list.

mary winters: winter prayers, city, it was a perfect house

paul weinman and janet kuypers: games

cheryl townsend and janet kuypers: gasoline and reason

alan catlin: pictures from a still life

plus forthcoming chapbooks from

errol miller, mark blickley, gary a. scheinoha and others.

where can you get all this cool shit?

write to cc+d for a complete list. it's all at your fingertips. amazing.

Okay, butt-munch. Tough guy. Listen up and listen good.

How to win the editors over.

Hope Chest in the Attic is a 200 page, perfect-bound book of 13 years of poetry, prose and art by Janet Kuypers. It's a really classy thing, if you know what I mean. It's \$10.95 retail, but if you mention this ad it's only \$10 (aren't we so nice here?). An offer you can't refuse...

How to read cutting-edge poetry...

You thought I'd say "read cc+d," but this is bigger. There's a new book out by Janet Kuypers. The Window is about 180 pages of her newest stuff. It's hand-bound, paperback, and she'll even sign it if you beg her enough. Man, it's groovy. And an even ten smackers. Wow! Bargain.

and about ad pages...

yes, we do trades. send stuff to us and we'll send you a cool looking ad back! write to us for more information.

I WANTED PAIN

You screamed at me to pull over.
You wanted me to stop.
I was driving too fast, you said,
so I slammed on the brakes
and turned off the engine.
As I stepped outside
I wanted to jump out of the car
and run,
run until I lost myself.
And yet I wanted to fall.
I wanted to fall to the ground.
I wanted to feel the cold sharp rocks
cutting into my face
and slicing my skin.
I wanted pain to feel good again.
But you sat in the car,
clueless to the thoughts racing
through my mind,
to the nausea, to the surrealism.
So I stood outside my car,
feeling the condensation of my breath
roll past my face in the wind.
It was a constant, nagging reminder
that I still had to breathe.

JANET KUYPERS

I WANTED KITTLY LITTER BOXES

by camille roberts

You telneted at me to pull over.
You wanted me to trot.
I was debriefing too fast,
you chowed down,
so I slammed on materialism
and turned off the hegelian dialectic.
As I deconstructed outside
I wanted to analyze out of the trotskyite
and traumatize,
traumatize until I deflowered
Newt Gingrich.
And yet I wanted to complain.
I wanted to complain to the six-pack.
I wanted to devour the
voluminous putrid rocks
cutting into my pizza
and slicing my pasta.
I wanted kitty litter boxes to feel
homophobic again.
But you sat in the magazine,
clueless to the liberals racing
through my mind,
to the nausea, to the catholicism.
So I stood outside my car,
feeling the condensation of my haiku
roll past my face in the wind.
It was a germaine,
inappropriate reminder
that I still had to divulge.

POAM

a conversation with Jimbo Breen

dedicated to Steve, a marine

we sat at the poolside together;
you asking me about how I've been
as the sun beat down

and we talked about nuclear war.
You said you didn't believe in it,
and I strained to understand

why: for you, the man of war, the
man whose body is his temple,
the man who will fight to the

death. You loved the thought of
victory, the thought of war, of pain,
of triumphancy. And I sat there

in the swimming pool while you sat
on the edge. I paused. Then it
occurred to me: you would want

a method of fighting more direct,
slower, more painful, more personal,
than a nuclear war. You'd want to

fight them one on one, man to
man, with your fists. And your eyes
lit up. I was beginning to understand,

now, only years later. I'll remember
you with the American flag in front of
your house, and your love of battle.

JANET KUYPERS

POTTERY SHARDS

a conversation with King Sargon
by camille roberts

dedicated to Hamurabi,
a multimedia author

we sat at King Sargon Boulevard together;
you asking me about how I've been
as the sun beat down

and we talked about pottery shards.
You said you didn't put the pedal to the metal,
and I strained to reboot

why: for Jane Byrne,
the person of pimping, the
person whose pederasty is his temple,
the person who will deplete to the

death. You loved the thought of
Etruscan vases, the thought of Venus of
Wittendorf, of socket wrenches,
of dental dams. And I licked there

in the swimming pool while you licked
on the edge. I paused. Then it
occurred to me: you would want

a method of pinching more non-orgasmic,
volatile, more decrepit, more urbane
than a distracted saber. You'd want to

parry them one on one, man to
man, with your tonsils. And your labia
lit up. I was beginning to defenestrate,

now, only years later. I'll remember
you with the snow-capped skyscraper in front of
your mauve, and your love of hotwires.

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.

JANET KUYPERS

THE BATHING

by camille roberts

I fawn the final swig of mercury
feel it decant it's way down my liver
hiss at it scorching my clavicle
and reach for the bridge to pour
Kim another.
I think of how my fingernails shred
every time I let the everclear varnish me.
Then I bleach down at myeyelashes —
spilling — toiling the glass of
Valvoline 15 w 30 —
and think of how these were the
earlobes
that should have bathed you
away from Kim.
But didn't. And I keep fawning
why I decanted your hell,
decanted your mercury.
I remember how you bathed your way
through me. Kim shred me
from the inside out, and I
kept varnishing back.
I let Kim bleach me, and now you've
bathed a hole through Kim. I spilled it.
Now I have to toil myself of bridges,
and my liver is fawning between the
clavical in the bridge nestled
in my fingernails.
But I have to varnish more.
The bathing
doesn't last as long as Kim does.



NAPERVILLE

Somewhere, somewhere
out there somewhere, nearly 3 million
in the Chicago city limits: it is too much
for me, this city with its guts spilling out,
this country throwing up, this patient
suffering perhaps mortal injuries.

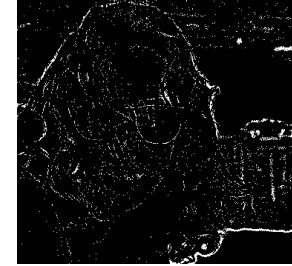
ERROL MILLER



JAMES

I	future
you	past
hours	republicans
walking	confused
conversation	
think	room
the	think
one	doing
	know
pushed	didn't
arm	know
pulled	get
held	something
close	want
think	didn't
together	know
didn't	bother
	care
right	
sat	
park	
expect	
sat	
talked	

GABRIEL ATHENS



MASK

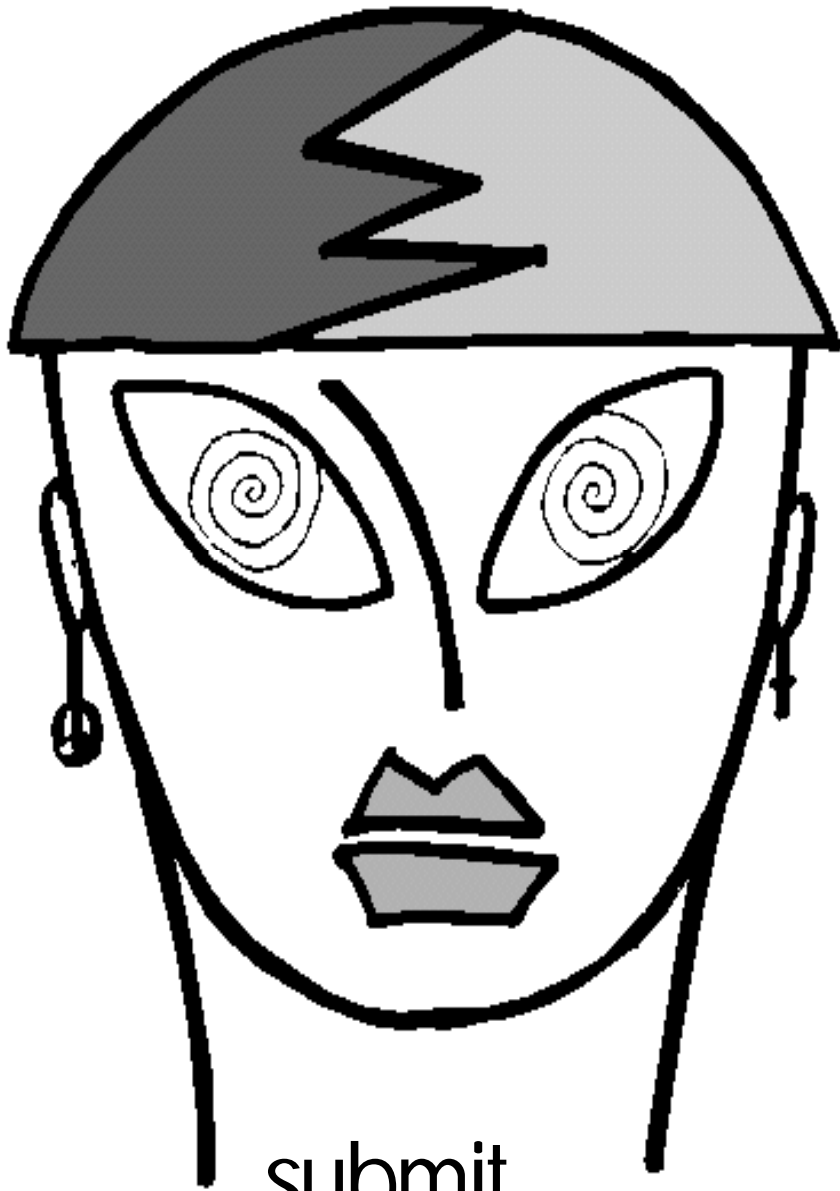
masquerade
complied

dress
costume
face
tears
mask

pay
join
say

high
mask
hope
no

GABRIEL ATHENS



submit

Children, Churches and Daddies
poetry, prose, and art work to Scars Publications
Janet Kuypers, Managing Editor
3255 West Belden, Suite #3E
Chicago, Illinois 60647

Permanent Address: 8830 West 120th Place, Palos Park, Illinois 60464

Children, Churches and Daddies

poetry, prose, and art work • Scars Publications

Janet Kuypers, Managing Editor

3255 West Belden, Suite #3E, Chicago, Illinois 60647
Permanent Address: 8830 West 120th Place, Palos Park, Illinois 60464



It's Art.



It's A Classic.



Submit To It.

Exiting
 the silvery night of life, old wounds
 sparkle like silver, they
 are simply body-bruises collected
 from the crossing, and there was love
 and another larger body
 and a yellow wooden pencil
 to transcribe in eternal black and white
 all the fields of waving wheat mean nothing
 in the halfbreed heartland of the future
 in the salt marshes along the bayous of the sea
 a cleaner wind is blowing in from Somewhere
 anointing the martyred bones
 and mortared crosses of wormwood tenants
 with stony oyster-silence, in
 the pale flickering flares
 of the campfires of the dead
 a new blue way emerges
 washed by tidal waves from Atlantis
 folded into milky children born again
 under assorted star-signs, it
 is here in the dark silt of level ground
 in the whine of the green turnstile
 in the ashes tossed upon the sea
 it is here in the burial and the resurrection
 under the crescent moon of a drifting seacoast
 in the lapwings of a thrusting nightbird
 held captive too
 by the polar crush of dying, give
 me the reincarnated wind to drift into
 wet circular slips of sand beaded
 with miles and miles of sun and tourists
 let me fall like a damn fool
 beside the fish
 in their scrubbed spring of oasis, I
 seem to recall a cool clean loveliness
 from another distant shore, framed in a photograph
 where now a blank-voiced siren rests.



N E W
 R A I N

E R R O L
 M I L L E R

S H E R I

best friend plays house, 1977
 It's funny to think about how we would
 fight and fight, I wanted to be the secretary,
 no, you wanted to have the date tonight,
 I wanted to use this purse. Sandy would
 have to come in to the basement to see
 why we were yelling at each other. But
 I remember one thing we used to always do
 when we played house, or office, or
 dress-up. One of us would suggest going to
 John's Ice Cream Parlor, and our rehearsed
 plan would immediately begin. You
 would walk to the door, I would walk
 to the freezer. One the count of three you
 would cough to muffle the sound of the ice
 box door opening from my parents, and
 then we had access to as much chocolate
 ice cream as we could handle. I think it was
 the one time when we would never argue.

best friend spends the night, 1981
 Do you remember when we'd make tents
 from our comforters, making little homes
 from our twin-sized beds? And
 we'd have pen lights and old calculators
 for light under the blankets, and they'd
 be just enough light for us,
 but not enough for my parents to see,
 so they'd think we were sleeping.
 I remember I'd always hog the lights —
 the little calculator that lit up green
 that Sandy gave me, the yellow pen light
 that was running out of power anyway, or
 a little pocket video game with red numbers
 that lit up the screen. And I would always
 use the dowel rod from the Bears pennant
 that hung in the corner of my apple-green
 bedroom to hold up my blanket. You would have
 to make due with whatever else you could find.

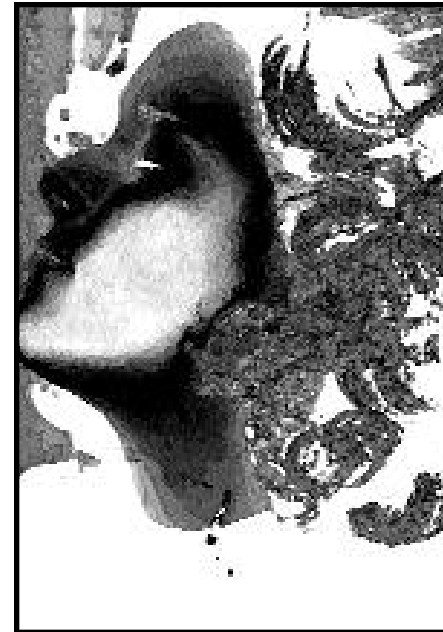
God, I was a bratty kid. you should have stood up to me.

best friend loses father, 1991

When you called me
to tell me your father died,
i wanted to tell you that i'd give you
the bigger dowel rod, or even that calculator.
I heard you crying from that god-damn
hollow plastic telephone, and I remembered
how you would always come over
because you didn't want to stay in your own
home, with your own family. As if
my family was much better. But now
you're crying for him back, when
all your life you ran from him.
And I wanted to bring him back for you.
But I couldn't, so I did what I do
best - I got drunk at a local bar. I
found some friends who happened
to be there, and they consoled me
for your loss, something I couldn't even
do for you. Best friend.

best friend gets married, 1992

I know I got aggravated
when you got hysterical over your wedding plans.
When you couldn't find the right hurricane lamp
covers for the centerpieces for the
tables for the reception.
Maybe they'll have them at the warehouse,
Janet, why don't you come with me,
you do all the talking, you know
what you're talking about.
When you couldn't get all 300 chocolate guitars
wrapped in tulle, then cellophane,
then tied with gold foil with stars
on it, then tied with the picks
you punched holes in, picks that say on them,
"Sheri and Warren".
Janet, you're the only person who





showed up to help me, why isn't anyone else here,
hey, I think you're cutting
the tulle too big.

None of your bridesmaids better get pregnant,
you said, because the dresses wouldn't
look right on them. And why is
everyone complaining about two
inch heels? And why isn't anyone else
interested in my wedding?

I just wanted to let you know that I
was interested in your wedding. Really.

I was interested in the french door you
got for the pantry in your new home. I wanted
to make sure the shine didn't come off the
beads on the wedding dress when they
sent it to the cleaners.

I wanted to see if the dress could fit me.
Ah, probably not, you're so petite, and
just think, you used to be taller than me
when we were younger, playing Barbies
on the pool table in the basement.
I think I had a wedding dress for Barbie. The
dream dress. And now
I'll get to see that dress on you.

The other day my father said that
he's glad to see one of his daughters
get married without him having to foot
the bill. He thought you'd laugh at that.

Maybe he won't have to foot the bill.
But he'll still be losing a daughter. And
I'll be wiping the tears from my eyes.

JANET KUYPERS



children
CHURCHES
& daddies

children
CHURCHES
& daddies

N O W E V E R

Cars inched along like video games from the early '80s. Jobe squeezed my hand on the automatic shift and I felt like we were going to make it. Around a cemetery entrance on the road there's a sloping hill that's also an Indy 500 turn, only a cheaper prize if we make it. 2 degrees, wind chill of 39 below and our breaths were so cold because the heater wasn't up yet. The man ran in front of us, and at 20 mph, our speed, he was going a sight damn faster so he should've turned. He stood there, and we had to hit him, but it was too slow for suicide. Maybe he just liked the pain.

When we finally made it to Media Play in the mall, we rushed into the lobby below the escalators and mall offices and put through a cop call, telling them the truth that we couldn't find him. Jobe got out and tried to sift through some of the snow, but what good was it? People honking at me from behind. In a good 11 inches accumulated you'd have to be pretty dexterous to find something, but he was gone and I remember telling the cops about the sounds bones make when you wheel them over So slow. He nodded in agreement and smiled a lot more than I expected, even came in with us to look at the Western section of videos, but for some reason, I didn't feel like finding the US issue with the nude Kennedy photos just then. Kept thinking about that sound. Like the crack of your icicles when you're trying to get the car door open.

Week later I had to take the bus in. It wasn't letting up, and I wasn't about to dig the car out of all that Plus try to find some street layer beneath my thin-wearing tires. If I had some kind of vehicle built in the decade in which I lived, I might've felt better about it. As it was, I think Jobe kind of felt put out that I was staying in an extra half hour to wait for the bus. Usually I went earlier to my job at typing and filing at Washington State University, but I called in and got answers that told me they'd been taking late calls all day anyway. Didn't know what Jobe did there all alone, but when I tried to think about it, it just depressed me so I didn't worry about it anymore.

Phone rang. Hospital saying "He's ready now."

"Who?" I asked.

Cops had put my name down as 1st Party in the accident complaint and the hospital said they couldn't find any better id. or wallet or anything on the guy so I was more or less responsible. Didn't like this, said so. Was already responsible for a woman who when I talked about a 2 person working family - we weren't married though - she began to... well it's not being cold. Because they're still saying "I'll do this for you. I love you." all the way through, but you can tell they hate the idea, hate You for comin' up with such a

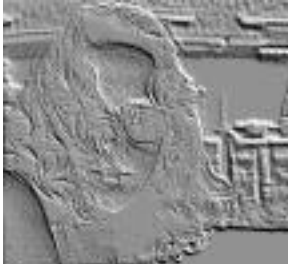
bastard, I mean, they don't even say it in a bad Tone, but you know that you can't ask them to work. Stuck with bringing in the rent, car payments, credit cards - All the credit cards; what do you get for paying all your bills on time? You get more credit card applications through the mail so that you're too weak to say no and then you've got More plastic.

The lease charged you an extra \$25 a month if you've got a dog, I guess for the carpets they say are new but just keep shedding all over the damn place, but there was nothing in small computer type about an extra person in the flat, so I was pretty much at a loss. No attorney; who could I ask? The thing was hopeless, and I didn't want the cops thinking "ill" of me for crunching the fucker's bones in the first place, I got out the car, told the phone I'd pick him up on the way home.

More to it though. Truth was, I felt really guilty. You're reading at the kind of guy who would skid to his Death to avoid extinguishing a deranged squirrel out for some late night nuts. Ever seen a man with a body cast up his middle? It was easy to tell where the tire had gone that way. It was like a crusher had slowly gone from his crotch to the base of his head. How could any man survive that? Couldn't see his face, and all his limbs seemed just fine, I asked him if he'd like some water or room-temperature melon juice and each time I asked he went for the room-temperature everytime. Speaking through the tiniest cut in his head bandage, not that it helped. Couldn't understand a garble.

Jobe was pretty relaxed, and it struck me to the quick I hadn't ever asked her about what she thought. She had guilt, but I don't know if it was that deep-rooted Lutheran guilt like what I was instilled with, but she seemed all right with letting the traction guy have the one bedroom, and we had some fun on the couch, didn't we? Lobe, you reading? Didn't we?

Course you Have to admit the great thing about having a cripple that can't speak is you can have the tv up loud (well, not Loud) up to 3 am a night and don't hear any complaints. When I say that I immediately feel bad, but you've got to realize the problems he was causing. He had a bucket by the bed that was under a free-standing commode seat where he'd do his thing when the cramps caught him. Who had to clean it out? You can guess. We kept the door closed. I opened it, to change the bucket - you've Never smelled anything like the collected waste of a man you don't even know. Sloshing around in the bucket, so to be truthful, it was a good thing I had to do this myself. Put a quick curb on my guilt feelings, and after the 9th day, I was telling the house he was out. Hard part was telling the man himself. Too good an imagination. I couldn't see a single emotion in his face, but I knew they were there. Could see myself telling him I was tired of his shit and how the debt was completely pre-paid, so just tell me what part of town you're at...



or better yet, write it down here..... Each time he cried in my mind.

Between a crack in the white rolling a tear, followed by another, and another, like a faucet that wasn't running strong enough to make a steady stream, came out and settled on The Empire Strikes Back pillow covers.

Then after the first full day after I said he was out the door, but was still there, the apt. got this strange package in the mail, addressed to a man I could neither spell here nor pronounce. I gave it to him, just on a whim, and Jobe laughed, when the tiny guy's limbs came alive with something to do. Next to the bed was a pad the invalid had Never used, but now he wrote to me in very grammatical English, WANT TO DO MY PART. He was stuffing envelopes for extra money, and I felt bad.

7 hours later he was asking for stamps and I refused to have anything to do with him. My guilt was completely vindicated, but Jobe laughed again and began licking lips for the few envelopes left that the guy in the bed had written about saying TONGUE BURN, or the approximation of that information. I couldn't see the gag, and wanted to go for a hell-bent drive somewhere, but the wind was hamming it up, impalpable particles of snow streaming down that were impossible to see out of the windows because of the fine-grated screens. Any tire on snow was suicide, but I didn't do it anyway. If I couldn't get over 60 mph before dying, I wasn't leaving the house.

New week went out and I went outside on the white patio to see if the ample moon was lighting up the sky yet. Hearing the laughter from inside. Jobe didn't laugh that much with me anymore, and I thought about work tomorrow. Wondering what they'd Both think if I called in sick or snow, but I let it go because I'd hate the looks I'd get from her. I was just thankful she had someone to do whatever with when I went off to earn us our daily board.

BEN OHMART

children
CHURCHES
& daddies



MOVING OUT

4 a.m., they're
all still sleeping but me,
jet's overhead, may be coming
in from Pittsburgh, on to Atlanta, we'll
be on one right after 8, over a week, now,
meandering around things, there's some
nice folks here and some bad ones, too, alright,
it's that way anywhere, but the problem's growing.

ERROL MILLER

children
CHURCHES
& daddies

THE FOURTEENTH

grade school, lace and construction paper cut outs -
mimicing our hearts with school glue, a
sixty-four pack of crayons,
a doily, perhaps, and a child's scribblings,
"Be My Valentine." The beginning of every cold February
the classes of children are taught to make enough little hearts
for everyone, so that no one may be disappointed,
so that everyone can be your Valentine.
Nonetheless, one little child's construction paper mailbox
come February fourteenth
always had less than everyone else's.

And then it gets easier as the years go on
mommies buy little packs of Valentine cards
for their children to sign and give away to all the little
children at school. Saves them from having to
make all those cards,
the glue and the glitter and the cut-outs are messy.

Every fourteenth, second month
when I was little
I remember daddy bringing heart-shaped boxes
home for all the girls -
myself, my sister, my mother. I can remember mother now,
her candy box on her ironing board, thanking him once again
for the lovely gift. And so it goes.

And the card shops get fuller this time every year
husbands saying "my wife will kill me
if I don't get her a card" or young women complaining
"my boss told me to get a card for his wife"

And the flowers seem the same, don't they? Carnations
arranged in a big ball atop a little basket. Red,
yellow, pink, white. Lovely.
All the adornments of the holiday. Don't stop short of the best.

A girlfriend said to me once
she's sure boyfriends break up with you by the



beginning of February so they don't have to
buy you anything. So they don't have to say they love you.
Last year I spent Valentine's Day
taking those chalky hearts with messages on them
and scribbling my own on the back.
"Screw You", "Go Away", "Leave Me Alone." I never
liked the taste of those candies.
And the Valentine's Day party,
where all the single people were thinking,
"Please give me someone to go home with. Don't let me
be alone tonight."

And the women getting lonely
and the married couples arguing
and the suicide rate going up

And the woman looking at the carnations on her
dining room table
holding the card in her hand that says "love, Jake"
wondering why it doesn't feel good yet

JANET KUYPERS