

and it's good for you, too

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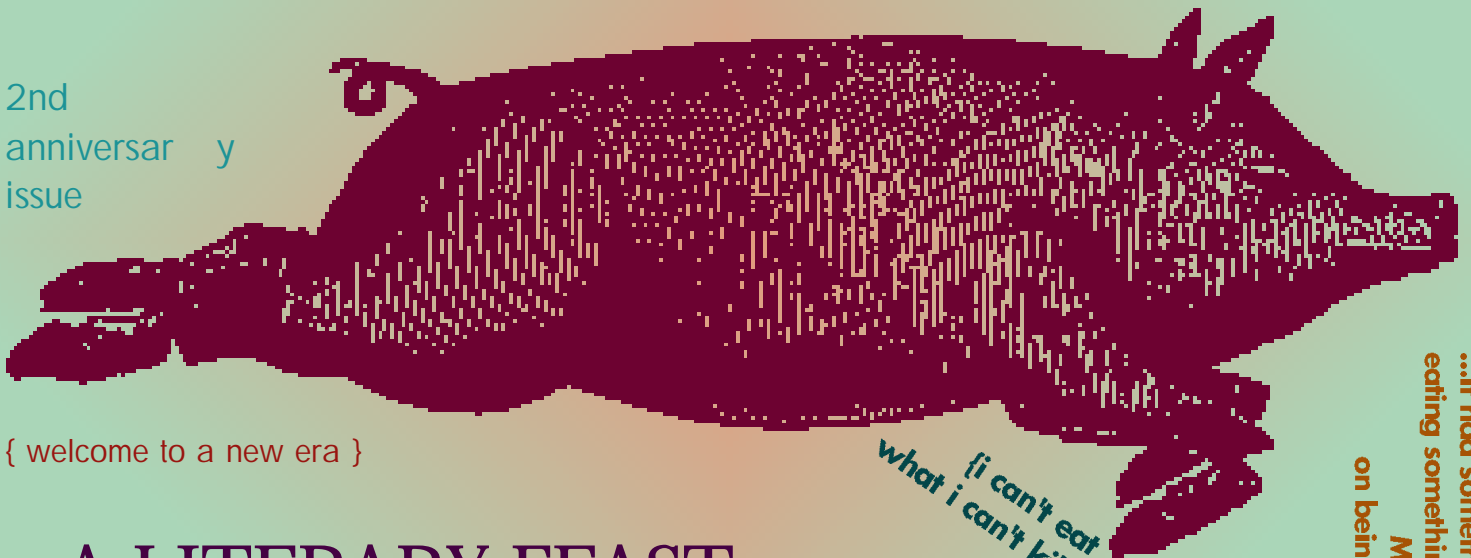
children churches & daddies

the non-religious, non-family oriented literary and art magazine

M

good to the
last drop

2nd
anniversary
issue



{ welcome to a new era }

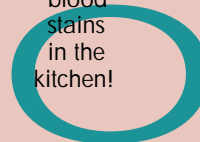
{i can't eat
what i can't kill}

...It had something to do with
eating something with a face.
Mr. Fred Rogers,
on being a vegetarian

A LITERARY FEAST - WITHOUT THE ANIMAL FLESH!

volume 55

no unsightly
blood
stains
in the
kitchen!





edit
editorial

I'm thrilled to say with with our second anniversary issue, volume 55, we have also become biweekly! We've had such a great response here at cc+d, and such a great set of submissions, that I'm confident we can produce a quality magazine not once, but twice a month. Thanks for all the great writing and art!

I hope you all like the new look of the logo, too. The redesign of this magazine has been put off and put off until the staff here was sure our audience knew the name cc+d so well that a redesign wouldn't affect our audience negatively. We're finally up to speed design-wise, and I hope you are all as thrilled with the new look of cc+d as we are.

Thank you to all of the people who have been a part of cc+d in the past. We're not bigger than ever - producing the poetry box, poetry sampler brochures, and even more chapbooks than ever before. May the second half of the decade be as successful and productive as the first. On to the last five years of the century!

Janet Kuypers

children, churches
& daddies

the non-religious, non-family
oriented literary/art magazine
published since 1993

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publishers of
children, churches & daddies
reverb
aaa poetry
the burning
god eyes
poetry sampler
poetry boxes
the annual poetry wall calendar
down in the dirt
mom's favorite vase newsletters

No racist, sexist or blatantly
homophobic material. No orig-
inals; include SASE & bio.
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email given special attention.
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janet kuypers. all rights of pieces
remain with their authors.

and geez,
recycle this.
do i have
to tell you
everything?



useful phrases in foreign languages

FRENCH

Je suis terrorement du tout les produits du lait.
I'm frightened of all dairy products.

Pourquoi no fittez-vous pas votre outfittes, Monsieur Poseur du Vanitie?
Why do you ware small children's clothing, Mr. Frontman?

DUTCH

We koed noot zee U bijk bezween onze bus and het kanaal.
We couldn't see your bicycle between our bus and the canal.

GERMAN

Deiner Film mit den explitzit insectenschadenfreude sehr interessant war.
Your film depicting insect surgery was very interesting.

ITALIAN

Reppulscètto.
I smell bad.

Perchè sonno nos pontante e crianne?
Why are they pointing at us and weeping?



Don't Ask Why

Don't ask why
ask who what
their habits
where they live
how if they want it
done any special way -
if you look at the photo
and as
why do you want to hit
such a cute babe kid guy
you're dead
don't ask why

lar ry blazek



my god,
not
another
one of
those
damn
poems!

memorial day

Not immune to graveyard magic: stand for instance
Where my friend's boy, dead the day he was born, is buried.
Under a faultless blue sky and a breeze like a phantom lullaby stroking
Yesterday's flags as softly as fingers in an infant's hair:

Things

Change

For instance and may be forgotten as a storefront where
The shadows glowed once, throbbled with passionate voices
And then reverted to simple darkness and the silence
Of a crowd of shrugging standers by, myself included:

Strange

Things

Don't last for instants: gone in a day like my friend's boy,
Disappeared like a cloud in a rainbow, moving north and east
Like friends I'll miss: yes, I remember, not immune
To a future that looks like a wall of ice on a day in June.

changing the locks

and the children
got older, borrowed the car
or got picked up by friends
to go out

and when one was leaving
mom would joke around
and say

she was going to change
the locks
or mom and dad were going
to move away
and leave no
forwarding address

they never did that, though
they were always there

janet kuypers

charles ardingner

how do you want to die?

I'd like to die quickly, say, in a plane crash. But if they're going to get me, they're going to get me, even in church. Remember the time we were attending Mass in Hyannis Port and the whole pew behind us was filled with reporters? I turned and asked them, "did you ever stop to think that if anyone took a shot at me, they might get one of you guys first?"

Now, Jackie loves that bubbletop because it keeps her hair from getting windblown. But there's no way around it. They put me in a bubbletop and I can't get to the people. I want them to feel I am the President of The United States, their President of The United States. I belong to them — they don't belong to me. You can't stop a guy, can you? If someone tried with a high-power rifle and a telescopic sight during a downtown parade, there would be so much noise and confetti that nobody would even be able to point and say,

"it came from that window". If this is the way life is, if this is the way it's going to end, this is the way it's going to end. God, I hate to go to Texas. I hate to go, I just hate like hell to go. I have a terrible feeling about going. I wish this was a week from today, wish we had this over with. We're going into real nut country.

david cooper

ATTRIBUTION: A composite of President John F. Kennedy's private remarks to Florida Senator George Smathers, Peace Corps Deputy Director Bill Haddad and White House aid Ken O'Donnell as quoted in Ralph G. Martin's *A Hero For Our Time* (NY: Macmillan, 1983) pp. 539-540.

in the courtyard

Old Teresa sits in the middle of the courtyard waiting to die. Her head falls out of her hand now and then and her mouth emits strange painful sounds. The courtyard is silent except for the fountain in its center, the fountain which Teresa's husband built by crossing two boards together which swirl like a ceiling fan and wet all around. In a corner of the yard is a young girl with her back turned to Teresa. She sits at a cherry wood desk, writing intensely. It is to her that Old Teresa has confessed that she is awaiting to die, today, in the afternoon heat. Once in a while, the girl turns to look at Old Teresa who sits in her green velvet armchair in the middle of the courtyard. She sees Teresa's hand slipping away from her head incessantly and her large body slowly approaching the ground.

A man with dark wrinkled skin enters the yard carrying a brown paper bag. His name is Pepino. His body is unbalanced by his bulging pants pockets which cause him to be wider than he is long. He walks unevenly to where Old Teresa is sitting and sets the bag at her feet. He taps her shoulder. Old Teresa opens her right eye slowly then her left. She first looks over to where the girl is writing then to the short man bending in front of her.

"Here they are, can I go now?" he asks. His face has become sprinkled by the water of the fountain next to him.

"I'm waiting to die today," Old Teresa says.

"Can I go now?" the man repeats, then leaves without awaiting an answer.

The girl has turned her attention to Old Teresa who is struggling with the brown paper bag. Finally, she retrieves a large pair of worn out army boots. She smiles.

"Come here," she says to the girl.

The girl quickly moves near Old Teresa.

The old woman's movements have become fast and excited. She puts the boots on and lets the braided string fall to the side. The girl follows her movements.

"I love them. Now I am ready for war," Old Teresa says.

"War?" the girl asks.

"War with death," Teresa answers.

The girl returns to her desk.

"It sure worked for my husband and my three boys. It was long ago, I know. But believe me every time they slipped into these boots, for sure, they died. "

"The same boots?" the girl asks with her back turned once again.

"Yes. They always brought me back the bodies and the boots. The least they could do for men who served their country, they used to say."

Old Teresa waits for a response and looks in the direction of the desk. The girl continues writing. Her floral dress falls below her knees and her long black hair is loose on her back.

The afternoon sun has set behind the large wooden door. The courtyard is submerged in green golden light amongst the green fountain, the green chair and Teresa's green dress.

Old Teresa has once more fallen asleep. She slowly slips off the chair and pulls herself

back up again. Her loud snore echoes throughout the courtyard. Her thick legs spread apart in the glory of her oversized army boots.

When Old Teresa awakens, the courtyard around her is dark and she is cold from the fountain water which has switched direction and entirely wetted her small head of hair. The girl is still at the desk writing under the glare of a rusty oil lamp. Old Teresa has slept with her weight on her hip and mumbles under her breath while readjusting herself. The girl does not turn.

“Christ and all. I haven’t even died yet!” Old Teresa exclaims.

The old wrinkled man appears again from behind the wooden door.

“You missed supper, Teresa,” he says standing in front of her with his hands behind his back and his eyes focused on the wet pavement.

“Well, just bring it out here,” she says

“It’s cold now.”

“What difference does it make? It makes no difference,” she says.

Pepino leaves while mumbling under his breath and closes the door loudly behind him.

“You figure he could put all that money in the bank sometimes. All that money, he just carries it around in his pocket like it’s bird food,” Teresa says while looking around for her cane. “Do you realize that man has never once gone to the bank.” She bends forward and starts to wander her hand all around the pavement as though she were blind.

“Nobody does he trust,” she places the cane in front of her and leans all her weight into it. “It’s all the money he’s ever made, just carries it in his pockets. Just in his pockets. Never washed those pants. God!” She raises her large body groaning like a wild animal. She stands on her three legs looking at the fountain and shaking her head. “Damn thing!” She leans into her cane and looks down at her boots.

“I love them,” she utters.

She begins to walk around the fountain with great effort. She circles it many times before the wrinkled man appears again. He carries a large tray which he sets on the ground. He leaves again and comes back with a small table. He sets the table in front of the green velvet chair and places the tray on top of it.

“I’m going to bed,” Old Teresa says.

“What?” the man cries.

“I’m going to bed, I said. Bring my cot out here. I want to sleep outside tonight.”

The man turns mumbling heavily under his breath and shaking his head violently from side to side.

Old Teresa walks over to the table and looks at the food, “Oh well,” she says.

Pepino comes back with a folded cot. He wheels it loudly into the yard, speaking over the sound of the wheels. “You wore me out today Teresa. First those damn boots than this. All of it I do it. I just get paid to clean the courtyard”.

“You crazy old man!” she says walking over to her chair.

Pepino turns and shuts the heavy door behind him.

Teresa picks up a small slice of yellow cheese from the tray of food. She looks down at the small mound of rice with green peas in the center of the plate. Next to the plate is

carafe of red wine, a small glass and a peeled apple. Old Teresa pours wine in the glass and drinks quickly.

“Well, I guess i’m not going to die today, “ she says speaking in the girl’s direction. Such a strange girl she thinks. Two weeks ago she appeared at the door of the courtyard with a pen and a book and asked to come in and write. “I just need a place to write for a while,” she said. It was a strange thing to ask but Teresa was not able to drive the girl away, so she asked Pepino to find a nice desk for the girl and a chair and a lamp. Since that day, she has sat at the desk writing endlessly. The girl told Teresa that to show her gratitude, she would write Teresa’s life. She would sit there for as long as Teresa wished. Teresa would let her know when to end. Teresa was flattered instantly. She throws her body heavily on the cot causing the mattress to touch the ground. She looks at the dark sky above her then moves to her side. “For sure, tomorrow, i’m going to die, “ she mumbles one last time under her breath.

Teresa awakens under a burning sun and Pepino shaking her violently. She sits on the cot and brushes her gray stringy hair away from her face.

“Is it time for breakfast?” she asks Pepino.

“Breakfast? You foolish old woman. It is two in the afternoon.”

Teresa remembers when there was a time she did not awake before afternoon. When her husband kept her in bed past lunch time. She was a young girl then with eternity facing her. Everyday her husband would say to her: “Don’t go yet Teresa. What in the world is waiting for you but me right here?” So she would return to his body, inside his inescapable embrace because she knew that he was right, there was nothing awaiting her aside from him. It saddened her sometimes. Since his death, she has never opened her eyes before afternoon.

Pepino is still standing, facing her.

“Lunch then. Bring me my lunch. i’m hungry.”

Pepino walks through the courtyard and exits through the large wooden door.

Old Teresa looks to the far angle of the courtyard where the girl still sits writing at the table. Old Teresa rises and moves to the girl. She walks slowly on top of the pebble stones with her heavy black army boots still on her feet. When she reaches the girl she leans over her shoulder. She steps back in surprise and lifts the girl to her feet.

“But it is blank! How can it be!” Old Teresa screams while shaking the girl like a rag doll. The girl remains expressionless. She looks back at the table, glares at the book unable to stay away from its presence, needing to return to it.

“Speak, you silly girl, speak.”

“It is not blank, Teresa. It’s full of words.”

“Are you crazy? What words? I don’t see any words,” Old Teresa screams in the girl’s ear raising the book to her face.

“You just have to look closer, you’ll see. The words are there,” the girl says.

“Ah! Ah!” Old Teresa screams letting go of the girl and of the book. “You sit there all day long and write and write but it is blank! I better forget it all or i’ll go mad.”

Old Teresa returns to her chair and awaits her food. She does not know when this death of hers will finally come but it is making her angry. She pulls her dress higher above her knees and pats her belly gently with her hands. She massages her large breast inside their eternal brassier. It occurs to her that perhaps she has not yet died because there is something which has been left undone. She thinks that perhaps God will not let her go until she has made love one last time. She knows that her body will not be a pleasure to touch or that her skin will not be so wonderful to smell but after all it won't be so bad, someone won't mind it so much. Yes, indeed, she would make love one last time and then die. Pepino walks through the door with his pockets still full of money and the tray of food in his hands. It occurs to Old Teresa that Pepino is not so sweet-smelling himself and that his body is as scaly and old as hers.

"Pepino will you make love to me?"

The tray of food falls from Pepino's hands and resonates loudly throughout the courtyard. He does not look at Old Teresa and instead begins to run toward the door.

"Pepino!" Old Teresa orders.

Pepino slowly turns around and walks towards her with his head bent to the ground.

"It'll clean up the food," he says.

"No need, i'll be dead soon."

"i'm going to leave now," he hesitates towards the door again.

"Come here, Pepino. You need to fold my cot."

Pepino moves to the cot and bends to release the springs. Old Teresa watches his buttocks as he bends further. Not so bad, she thinks.

"Leave it there now," she says.

"Listen Teresa, this is too much for me," Pepino's face is lost in desperation

"How long has it been for you?" Old Teresa asks signaling for him to come closer.

"Since my woman died. But that's not the point."

"Don't you want to? It won't be so bad. You may like it. My old man sure did!" she says slapping her knees. "Listen i'm going to go upstairs. i'm going to wash up for you and make myself look nice. You'll see, i'll surprise you," Old Teresa says passing her hand through her hair.

Pepino raises his eyes from the pavement and looks at her face. Teresa's smile has become soft. Her eyes are sparkling like a young girl's.

"Give me ten minutes then come up," she says rising from her chair. She moves to him and touches his hair. "Maybe you can clean yourself up a bit in the fountain. She bounces quickly across the yard carrying her weight behind her while her large rear end moves to some unknown rhythm. She can be heard breathing restlessly as she disappears up the stairs. One last time, she looks down at Pepino. He has removed his pants and is lying motionless in the fountain with his hand plugging his nose and bubbles coming through his mouth.

The bedroom is dark at this time of day. The sky is filled with wind and Old Teresa can smell the rain approaching. She sits naked on the bed. Her hair is wet and combed close

to her scalp; her skin smells like moss. Her breasts fall like two wrinkled fruits to her thighs. Her hands rest behind her back awaiting to feel a man one last time.

It is not long before Pepino walks through the door. He stands half in the shadow, half in the light. Teresa unexpectedly feels the need to cover her body somehow. She moves her hands to her knees but realizes that she will never be able to cover it all.

Pepino closes the door behind him and walks to Teresa. He removes his shirt, his pants filled with money and his shorts. He stands straight in front of her, allowing her to look at him, to see him, to still change her mind. He is a thin man with dark, cracked skin from head to toe.

Old Teresa can almost see his heart through the translucence of his skin.

Pepino walks closer to Teresa, falls to his knees, and places his head on her naked thighs. Teresa touches his hair, it is softer than she had expected, much like her own. She lifts his face and looks into his eyes and realizes that he is no longer Pepino but only a man.

In the cave-like room, waiting for the rain to arrive, Pepino and Teresa move their bodies close to one another on the bed. Pepino restlessly kisses her cheeks, her head, her chin, but never her lips because in her lips he would taste her age. He is moving fast, almost frantically on top of her. Teresa lies still with her eyes shut. Pepino touches her skin as though he were kneading dough, his hands wander all around. Pepino's body soon becomes hard and it isn't long before Teresa opens her eyes wide and screams and sees the cat on the window sill. The cat appears to be fascinated with the way Pepino moves up and down, raising his body so high above Teresa, almost touching the low ceiling, and then throwing himself back down crushing her skin on all sides. The cat sits shameless watching the two bodies rub one another like two giant pieces of leather.

It is not long before Pepino's body falls one last time and rolls off the side of the bed, falling flat on his back with his eyes fixed on the ceiling. Old Teresa, realizing that Pepino has made quite an extreme move, looks quickly on to the floor. "Pepino," she utters while wrapping the sheet around her. She leaves the bed and moves to his side. "Pepino, what are you doing now?" Pepino's eyes ignore her. Teresa puts her head to his chest then his stomach. "What are you doing Pepino?" she asks again. She taps him lightly then shakes him from side to side but he remains limp in her arms.

Teresa stands and wraps the white sheet closer around her. She opens and closes the door and begins to descend the stairs with her long train following her. Her face has become long, her eyes filled with rage, her fists tight on both sides of her body. She descends slowly realizing that death has once again betrayed her.

The girl is still at her desk with the lamp lit next to her moving hand. Her hair dances all around in the wind. Writing nothing again, Teresa thinks. Teresa places herself fully on her chair, sitting straight like a queen ready for war.

"I'm sorry," the girl says without changing position.

"What the hell are you sorry for?"

"I'm sorry for Pepino."

"What do you know about that man?"

"I know what you know."

“What are you writing for Christ’s sake?” Teresa yells across the courtyard to no one in particular.

The girl slowly turns to Teresa and covers her with her eyes. Teresa thinks that the girl appears older tonight, as though she is slowly aging just by sitting there and writing at her desk. Teresa wonders if she really is writing her life and how long it will take her. She rises from the chair and carries her body and her long white sheet to the desk. She bends over the girl’s shoulder.

“Incredible!” she shouts.

“What is it?” the girl asks.

“What is this ink you use?” Teresa asks taking the pen in her hand.

“What are you talking about?”

“It can’t be ink,” Teresa says shaking the pen up and down in front of her.

“You will break it that way,” the girl says taking the pen from Teresa’s hand.

“You must be a fool to think that you are writing something when it is always blank,”

Teresa says making her way back to her chair.

“And you must be a fool not to see,” the girl shouts back writing on the last page.

“And you—” Teresa turns violently. But the girl is no longer at the desk. Teresa’s eyes circle the courtyard and return to the desk. The girl has vanished. She has not taken the book with her and has left without a sound. “That silly girl. That silly, silly girl,” she moans under her breath.

The wind has gained strength and Teresa knows the rain will arrive soon. She thinks of Pepino lying naked and cold on her floor with the cat still gazing his way. She raises her eyes and sees dark clouds moving closer to the courtyard. “You must have misunderstood me!” she yells to the sky.

She slowly makes her way back to her chair with the book in her hands. The pages follow the wind and flip between her fingers. She lowers her head and finds the thick black letters sinking deep within the fiber of the paper she carries. But her eyes are old and tired, and no longer have the youth to dance across a page.

The thunder shouts loudly above the courtyard, and Old Teresa knows that death is finally in the sky.

manuela barbuiani

The Patriot

On Independence Day
and other times
as appropriate to the occasion

I fly the flag
from the deck
of my split level home
with wall-to-wall carpet
and the president's
autographed portrait
and a washing machine.

I'm keen to support my president's
wars and our ten basic rights
but it's a shame
there are those
who misuse them.

I wave my flag
my president
and really think that
those who oppose
don't deserve the same rights
as patriots who
like myself would never abuse,
let alone use
them.

john hayes

remember
father
sitting
w/ me
and older brother
said
drunk
all drunk
sprunk w/ brother
drunk w/ friends
"hey," he said,
"my dad
told me
on death bed,
i don't love you,
i never loved you."

my dad said
drunk
"i want you to know,
your daddy loves you,
god, your daddy loves you."

Later
years,
sober
dad says,
"it's dan i feel sorry for,
i had money before
been laid off ever since,
ain't been able to buy him
what i bought richie,
but then again, richie is my first son,
& there is something special
about that,
i could never love anyone
like i love him...
my first son.

first son

daniel crocker

D

“but jane, i
never knew
he could do
that with his
tounge.”

hard contract

Some lives the gods grant
only one chance
at pure happiness
but with a hitch:
that during this brave
rainbow bubble of
existential bliss
each occupant is
tragically unaware of all of this.

So when the magic
is burst beyond a kiss,
each man each woman
shall look back look back
upon a golden age
unrecoverable as mist.

john alan douglas

cocktail hour

I remember when I was little
when dad would come home
from work, mom would always
have two gin martinis ready
for them. She'd put the glasses
in the freezer, with ice cubes
in them, an hour before he was
due home. That was their time
to sit together, talk about their
day.

Sometimes they'd joke, is it
cocktail hour yet?, and they'd
look at the time, 4:55, close
enough.

So little vermouth that some-
times they'd pour a capful of
vermouth in, swirl it around
in the glass with the ice cubes,
then pour the extra vermouth
out.

I never liked gin; the smell is
too strong. But I always think
of the end of the day when I
smell a martini.

And at restaurants, too, dad
would always order for them.
two dry martinis, on the rocks,
with a twist. You know, some
things just flow off your
tongue when you've heard them
said enough. two dry martinis,
on the rocks, with a twist.

janet kuypers

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

picking time

In fifth grade, I learned a lot about math, spelling, and ostracism. Mr. Romani taught me about math. Mrs. Simmons taught me about spelling. My classmates taught me about ostracism.

Throughout grade school, I tried to remain inconspicuous, the reason being that my shyness, studiousness and short stature opened me up to all sorts of teasing — although any one of the three traits would have been enough. It seemed like the more my classmates saw of me, the more they could find to pick on. I got by with a few friends and a burning desire to grow up and break loose from the miserable prison of pre-adolescence.

But there were several times when the spotlight shined on those of us who were trying to duck the wrath of our tormentors. Our status was exposed whenever the gym teacher lined us up against the wall and commanded two of our more popular peers to “pick teams” in order of who was the most skilled (or, more commonly, who their friends were). A few of us were, as happens in most elementary schools, always chosen last. But there were even more reasons for concern outside of gym, because often in other classes, our teachers would make us to pick partners or groups with whom to work on various class projects. It always seemed to me that in elementary school there was entirely too much “picking” going on.

There is one incident that sticks out in my mind. It was Mrs. King’s class, fifth grade, and I spent the first six hours of the day cringing in dread of social studies, which was always the last subject just before school let out. I knew that we were set to begin a unit in Latin America that day, and that our teacher was going to tell us to pick groups with whom to do a report on a Latin American nation of our choice.

The thought gnawed at me all through science, while everyone else was concentrating on a nature film. I put my head on my desk and watched as a bear ran toward a group of wildebeest. He managed to attack one of them. The other wildebeests immediately bounded away to safety without looking back.

The film ended, and I pulled out a pack of gum that I’d brought on purpose because of social studies. In elementary school, candy was the greatest friend-magnet ever invented.

“Can I have some?” asked a girl named Jodi Mason, who wasn’t a good friend but was nice enough to me sometimes. I gave it to her quickly, knowing that she was my only hope. Having gum would increase my market value if Jodi Mason remembered about it during picking time.

“Does anyone have any questions about the film?” Mrs. King asked us, and as usual, nobody said anything. “Any comments?” I hoped that somebody would generate a huge discussion, and we wouldn’t have time for social studies. Carol Anderson raised her hand.

“Why didn’t all of the wildebeests stay and try to help their friend?” she asked.

Mrs. King said that it was probably in their nature to run, and then it was time for social studies.

Mrs. King walked to the front of the room. The butterflies in my stomach went into a frenzy.

I tried to will her to say that we didn’t have time to start groups today. I did a lot of willing in elementary school, and many times I prayed for ESP. One time I’d silently put a curse on the bicycle of the girl across the street from me after she’d gotten her friends to make faces at my little brother

on the bus. She fell off the bike and twisted her ankle the next day. I got scared after that and decided I that I would limit my curses to minor cuts and abrasions.

But today, it appeared that my psychic powers were not with me.

“Okay,” Mrs. King said. “Alyssa will pass out lists of Latin-American countries for you to do your project on. I need everybody to get into groups of three or four people. We only have ten minutes left, so for today just decide on a country. We’ll do more tomorrow.”

At once the calls went out. Harriet Ballentine, Kimmy Shipman, and Beth Craig pushed their desks together, and motioned eagerly for Lisa Wallace to join them. Clusters formed like in a chemical reaction. I just didn’t have the courage to ask someone to join their group and risk the humiliation of being rejected. But if I didn’t think fast, I would have to endure the slightly more bearable humiliation of going up to Mrs. King and mumbling, “I’m not in a group.”

I looked around the room. Only one other girl wasn’t in a group: a shy, southern girl named Jennifer Pratt. Jennifer Pratt was the most common target of teasing in our class. Her main problem was that she was, to put it euphemistically, overdeveloped for her age. The second most common teasing victim in my class was a short, quiet student named Sylvia Gomez, who unfortunately was absent that day, making me feel even less secure. Within the ranks of the taunted, I was thankful for Jen and Sylvia, because they kept the attention off me, and kept me from being last-picked.

I did have some friends in my grade, but none of them had ended up in my class that year. Besides, they were a minority, and wouldn’t exactly stand up to the popular kids.

I thought for a second. There was still hope. I opted for my second favorite defense mechanism, after the ESP trick: the bathroom escape.

I asked Mrs. King to let me go, and she did. I walked down the white halls to the bathroom and entered the first stall, which was the only one with a lock that worked. My plan was simple: when I eventually returned to the classroom and had no where to go, it would be obvious to everyone that I had simply been in the bathroom during “picking” time, and Mrs. King would quickly put me into a group. No embarrassment, no sitting in the corner looking friendless and lost.


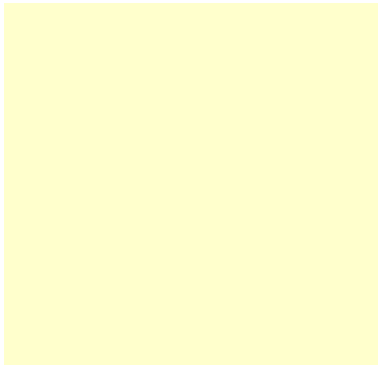
I crouched on the toilet for several minutes, straining to read the writing on the walls that revealed that Heather loved Mike forever and that Van Halen was #1. Then I stared at the ceiling and began to think. Why did Mrs. King leave the selection of a Latin American country up to us? Couldn’t she see that everyone would pick Mexico? No one had even heard of Ecuador and Paraguay.

After a while, I left the stall and trudged slowly down the empty hallway, testing how loudly I could squeak my shoes against the cold floor. It had begun to rain, and I stopped to watch the raindrops chase each other in zigzag patterns down the hallway’s large glass windows. I stood for a minute, watching them.

When I finally returned to the classroom, Mrs. King was in the corner talking to Dawn Forrest’s group. I unsuccessfully willed her to look at me. Everyone seemed busy, except Jennifer Pratt, the aforementioned puberty queen. Jen was doing her math homework so as not to be obvious. She looked up, and we sort of looked at each other, wondering if either of us would have the guts to ask the other to join her.

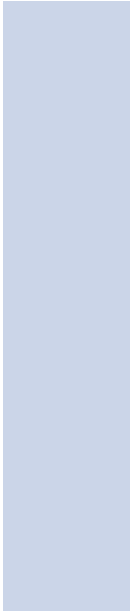
But we were both shy and insecure, and the bell rang. I ran to the closet, grabbed my blue raincoat and headed for the bus. I knew I would have to face social studies again the next day, but I tried to concentrate on other things.

When I got home, I helped my little brother with his kindergarten homework. My father was sup-



posed to be the one to help, but he said he'd had a tough day. I wondered what was so tough about any day an adult could have. If you didn't like the people you were with, you could leave. If you didn't want to play a game, you didn't have to.

The next day, social studies started an hour before school was to end. There was no way I could stay in the bathroom for a whole hour. I looked back at Jennifer and Sylvia, who were both alone, glancing around quickly and pulling out work to do. I decided that I would tell Mrs. King that all three of us needed to be put into groups. Probably, she would get up and direct the three of us to form our own group, which would be fine. In fact, it would be pretty good. I arose from my seat and slowly made my way around the clusters of desks toward the front of the room.



On the way up, I passed Jodi Mason's group. She was with Allison Lord and Vicki Donahue. They weren't the most popular girls in the class, but they were semi-popular. I had been in a group with them once before, and I had ended up doing most of the research, while the three of them worked on the cover.

Jodi looked up at me, and then smiled. "Hey, you're not in a group?" she asked. I replied that I wasn't. Jodi exchanged glances with her friends. "We only have three," she said. "Remember last time you worked with us, and we got an A?"

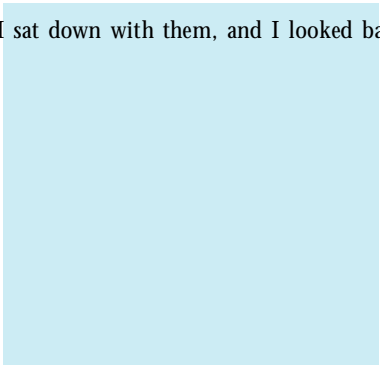
All three of them smiled sweetly. I looked at Mrs. King, who was sitting at her desk concentrating intently on her gradebook.

"Come on; we're doing Mexico," Jodi said to me, motioning toward an empty spot.

"Yeah, come on," Allison purred.

Vicki smiled and nodded.

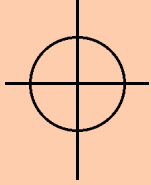
"Okay," I said, pushing a desk together with theirs. I sat down with them, and I looked back at Sylvia and Jen, and I felt a lot like a wildebeest.



car en m. lissner



mark blickley



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!

alan catlin

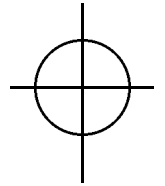
robert kimm

janet kuypers

c ra mcguirt

errol miller

john sweet



ben ohmart

gary a. scheinoha

john sweet

cheryl townsend

paul weinman

mary winters

the nineteen ninety five
poetry chapbook series

cry for me

she never like to see her daughter cry
it would make her cry too

“you go in there, talk to her”
she would say to another daughter

i remember once
crying at my father
and running upstairs to my bedroom
i was laying on my bed in the dark

my sister tried to come in
i told her to leave me alone

then my mother knocked
and i couldn't tell her to go away

she came in, sat on the bed
started crying
“you see, i always turn into a mess”

but it was nice
to see you cry
for me

janet kuypers

strong
enough
for a
man

S

another 2
a.m.

another night
wraps around me
and I'm all there is
alone
watching reruns of
Taxi and Cheers and
The Mary Tyler Moore Show,
popping sleeping pills with Pepsi,
smoking cigarettes and
trying to decipher all this
but I only find I'm unsure
and I want to do something that matters
but nothing matters
Oh, numb this soul,
quell this burning swell of passion
so that I may sleep
and dream
dreams I won't remember

gary jurechka

50 YEARS AGO
TODAY ANNE
FRANK WROTE HER
LAST DIARY ENTRY

the sky heavy as lead

“we are quite as mice”,
she said after days
of waiting. Some

thing, sudden as
boys who stand up
in the back of a pick

up truck, not realizing
it is about to go
under a bridge

slashes light. The
footsteps for once
not imagined. Crumbs

of rye bread on the
table still. Some
where in a drawer,

daguerreotypes
of some Shoshanna's
eyes before the

bayonets. Anne's,
“the atmosphere is
sleepy”, still

wet on paper

lyn lifshin

like flu that just
won't go away

many of my friends
are either afraid
they might have AIDS,

or glad
they had the test
that proves
they probably
don't.

apparently,
no one's
told them yet:

the reports are back,
and we all tested positive
for DEATH

damn, that was good.

damn good.



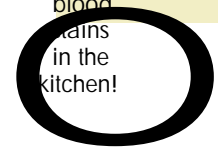
c ra mcguir t

please go home

there is no tree
no buddha
& no contest

please go home

no unsightly
blood
stains
in the
kitchen!



delbert' s debut

It's disaster time, something I had avoided for decades, a family reunion. My sister had insisted I be there for her grandson's one-year birthday party. Since the whole family would be at her house, I as the oldest member of said family, had relented. So here I was in a house full of kids, babies, and people I didn't remember ever seeing before. I figured I would stay awhile, say some hellos and beat it.

Being naturally shy I found a corner and dug in.

Sipping my drink I thought, God, times sure have changed.

"Uncle Jim, how are you?" Screamed a young lady.

"Jeff, look it's Uncle Jim."

Another stranger came over, shook my hand and asked.

"Uncle Jim, what are you doing now? It must be tough since Aunt Gert died?"

"Nothing," I said. " Yes, I sure miss aunt Gert. Excuse me, there's someone I have to see." Holy jeez, I thought. Who the hell were they, and who the hell is aunt Gert?

A thoroughly ugly young man came up and said, " Hello Uncle Jim, I'm your nephew Charles. "

"Yes, yes Charley," I said. "How are you? "

So this was Charley. I remember my mother saying, on learning of his pious ways, "why the hell can't he be like the rest of us?"

Getting rid of this sanctimonious dude, I thought I would say my good-byes and scam.

"Uncle Jim, here's the birthday boy," cried another demented soul.


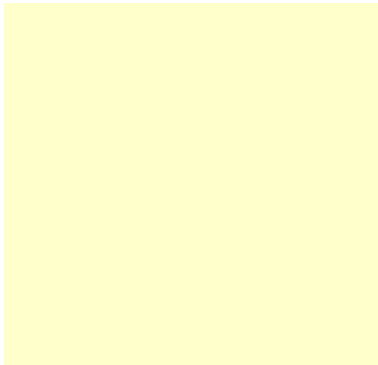
"Yes, yes fine boy, fine lad," I said.

"Here, hold him," said the strange person. " I have to help mom in the kitchen." Thrusting the baby in my arms she ran off.

"Well, partner," I said. let's sit down."

Getting a look at the guest of honor. I thought, "He has the coldest eyes I ever saw on a human being. This baby looks like a vicious W.C. Fields."

It grabbed my tie with a death grip, yanking with all its compact might. Leaning over, I whispered into the little fiends ear. "Let go, or I'll break your nose."



The baby let go, looked at me with those deadly eyes, and with his lip curled, he gurgled something in ancient Gaelic. Then he smiled and put his arms around me.

A man's voice above me said, " thanks Uncle Jim. I'll take Delbert now."

"Who the hell are you?" I snarled.

"I'm Jack," he answered, "you know Marcie's husband."

I started to hand the baby over to this nerd, when little Delbert wrapped his body around me.

"You'll get this kid over my dead body," I said as I stood up and left whomever he was standing there.

"Oh, there you are," said the woman who had given me Delbert, who was now nuzzling my ear. Reluctantly, I handed the cold-eyed villain over.

"Well, I have to go, see you," I said. As I reached the door, the woman holding Delbert said.

"Uncle Jim, would you like to baby-sit Delbert?"

Looking into Delbert's hard, ice-cold eyes, catching the perpetual sneer on his lips.

I said, "you bet I would."



james v. bur chill



Around the Bend

"Bury the bygone South."
Stephen Vincent Benet

Where Mama wept the porch is quiet
a woman's woman her hands dance
in Tidewater bars across the ravine
we are talking about history and religion
and feudal small-town regions over there
the old me contained in time capsules
buried in Montevallo, I am two different
individuals, I am too different, I am made
from New York City's cosmo-clay, I am
sending my son to poetry school
in the northern hills of Louisiana
next door to the creosote plant
where he'll have a chance to endlessly study
Anglo-Saxon nouns and verbs in overalls
through the blue parlor of time I have moved
forward to this place looking out upon
this faded pastel photograph of pink larkspur
and wisteria, oak and elm, sifting
my frail pulse to the wind
all I ever wanted was a little country place
an order of things, a swing, a firefly
and the valley's wood smoke overhead
through the dark night of life a beacon
of hope: nobody has ever walked
through the parlor until now, another mile
to go, to the apple orchard, to the fires
of those who have gone before
who waded barefoot through
the rushing limestone streams
flowing into infinity, into Urbana's
lumbering shrouded mill.

errol miller

especially at breakfast

mom was always cooking things, eating the
strangest things, especially at breakfast.
some mornings, felling especially groggy, i'd
walk down the stairs to find mom eating a
plate of cold pigs' feet. only my mother.

squid

once i was sitting in the living room,
i just got home from school, and i
said i need to go wash my hands. so i
walked upstairs, went over to the
kitchen sink. mom, sitting in the living
room, didn't mention that the sink
was half-full of raw squid for her dinner.
I shriek. mom laughs.
"are their beady little eyes looking
up at you?" she asked.
the little devil. i'm upstairs, in the
kitchen, shrieking, and she's laughing.
it is kind of funny, looking back.

janet kuypers

janet kuypers

waving goodbye

Left me
the sea,
draining my flesh,
leeches in rivulets,
letting
gelation
set in.
Beached
like a whale
I let waders
walk over me
peck their way,
on pink legs
racing
down runnels,
water rushing
past them
to the salt sedge
of estuary.
Slit down the vein
I am breached
on the edge
of like;
in the spume,
the Boss Man
cleans his knife.

geof f
stevens

and it's good for you, too

t



oh, yes,
yes,
yes!

cometh

The trees are bare
of the curl of leaf,
provide no cover,
stand stark & slender.

And all the stretched-out
contours of the land
are pure white,
soft and snow-like,
leave route memories
where he travels.

Yet, still,
under the ice
pools are green,
and look away
when he tries
to skate on them.

How does a man
love a maiden
when she will not melt?

c.c. russel

all women lie out loud

all women lie out loud and here's how.
Weakness is my strength
I let women want to mother me.
Lead them into my lair showing need
showing my hunger for suckle
my baby eyes and sweet smiles
want that cuddling, hugging up tight.
And women will give that
and more with promises of care
with assurances of love and support.
But then, when I've led them
to suck me in, their real selves rise
raises up that spector of control.

low baller

I ache to feel you again
sense your presence
its sexual seepings

I shiver with longing for your touch
both of your fingerprints trailing my skin
and mine doing the same to yours

I stiffen with heat of smell
that exudes
which enclouds
smothers sense of reasoning
your sexuality

our skin has to merge
with all its ins and outs
let's get down

paul weinman

O How I Love Nice Pairs

0

I just don't know anything original
to write when I know the words
of the song on the radio.
The tuner's worn bald like a tired tire
on my set.
Up between the windows I'm feeling pink
and I'm not quite sure if I could still
see what I saw two seconds ago.

And on the day her breath was clear to me,
my heart beat like a little lower down.
It smelled like scratch and sniff stickers.

1

Right now it sounds like someone's
whispering at my window, but I'm on story
2 and there isn't a ledge.

Perhaps it's the xylophone getting me
again: it's loosening a tooth,
a fat yellow molar.

I can almost pry it out with my tongue.
I can taste the blood that's sneaking
out from under it: root blood.

I'll make it into a meal.
Haven't had the chance to eat all day.

ian grif fin

SUBMIT

CHILDREN, CHURCHES AND DADDIES
POETRY, PROSE, AND ART WORK TO
SCARS PUBLICATIONS

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bondage

I.

The empty promises they gave me
flickered like neon signs
in Times Square
where I waited for them in the art gallery

One woman played the guitar
the other sang
but their sweet music
was nowhere to be heard here

Late night: the gallery closed
and they still weren't there
"Was it me?", I wondered
or did they go off
on some kind of acid trip

The one I wanted to relate to
sat there at the last coffee house
with such a sense of apartness
Head down in her hands
Crying
Smothered by the poisoned fumes of cigarette smoke

I wanted to approach her
perhaps to comfort her
but she was far too melancholy and morose
and I felt like the mate of a black widow spider
approaching her on the web
afraid of imminent death
I retreated

As I fell out into the open air
flickering embers of the Great White Way
lay scattered
Stores shuttered down on 42nd Street
waiting for some kind of rebirth

only a few porno shops remained

I passed by the strip show I had visited

years ago

on the day

I first went on medication

I remembered

scrambling up the staircase

past walls splattered with paint

I was immediately

mother like taken in

by a stripper

who took all my money

and then pointed the sign stating,

“No Refunds”

as the song chanted, “I’ve got the power”

enclosed in an isolation booth

watching her spread

the pink essence of her cunt

I realized

that walls have two sides

The strip show burned down a year later

and the remains

are covered with sheet metal barriers

I passed by

Entered an X-rated video store

and picked up a video simply entitled, “Pain”

It was made in Germany of course

and the translation of the captions

described a man getting tattooed

and promised the viewer plenty of blood

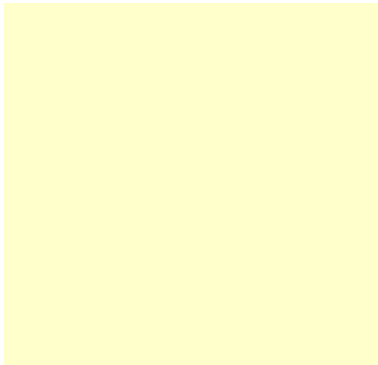
I’m no stranger to pain

for I’ve been seduced the Stellazine

fucked over by Haldol

only to be raped by Lithium

Pain



Its my fix

Pain

Its a way of like

for the three women I know

who are incest survivors

each one living a different lie

Suddenly I'm awakened walking down Forty-Deuce

by a conman

who promises me his women

Instant companionship

Fuck me; Fuck me; fuck me

then pay the price

The only one who chose to meet me at the art gallery

was a friend of mine

She's a dominatrix

and she came in her tight pants and cheap blonde hair

She's quitting the business, she says

Going to see a shrink

but I long for what she is leaving behind

Yeah man

I wanna be tied down

tied down like a mental patient

tied down like Sylvia Plath receiving insulin shock

tied down like a political prisoner of war

II.

Now I'm wandering around Main Street

as the night creeps in

I see the comforting Thorazine blue glow

of television


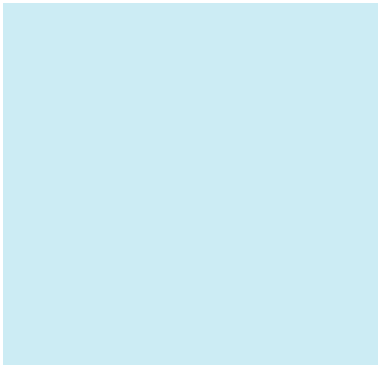
suffocating the dwindling lives of the elderly


trapped in their apartments

The homeless man with the matted dreadlocks


heads for the supermarket with his collection of cans

and the elderly Hasidic Jew






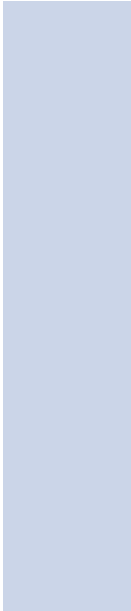
who prowls ominously in front of the 7-11 all day
goes home to his world of redemption and ritual



The bus spills over with humanity
fat black women with seething thighs
Korean women with faces



shriveled like rotten apples
betraying the toll of time
and old Jewish women
who paint their faces like whores
wearing dead animals on their backs
dragging their husbands who hack and spit
their last breaths




School buses
have gone home
letting off hordes of Catholic school girls
who hike up their skirts
revealing pale white flesh


Somewhere my friend who is retarded
comes home from the day treatment center
provoking disgust among fellow travelers
who avoid the hands clutching at
handrails with that tell-tale shake
Melaril does that to a person

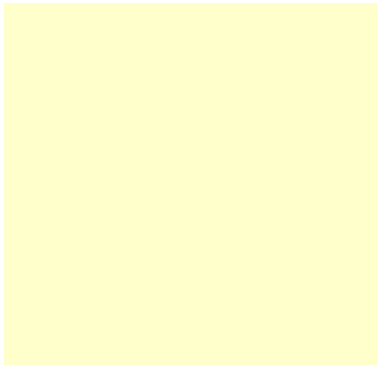
I come home in time for my obese flatulent roommate
to come shuffling into the house
wolfing down McDonald's and Cheers
and the Sports Illustrated Swimsuit Issue

The couple next door
scream hat words
and their poodle yips in anxiety



I open the window
and the faces of children
appear at the window across the courtyard
trying to peer into my window
My room stifles





like an isolation room in a psychiatric ward

I have few respites
from this life
for I grew up schizophrenic in a schizophrenic town
The elementary school I attended
was abandoned and is disintegrating
along with all hope I ever placed in the town
I only found peace in the library
watching the sun set over the bay
and listening to electric church bells
cry over the lost virginity of Catholic school girls

I watched the train pull away from the town
to a place without oppression
Once my mother took me on the train
to visit my piano teacher


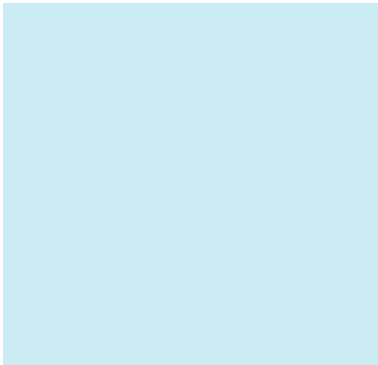
Dave Brubeck was playing "Maria" from West Side Story
Big wet snowflakes fell
I sat on his waterbed
and stared at his antiques and foreign trinkets

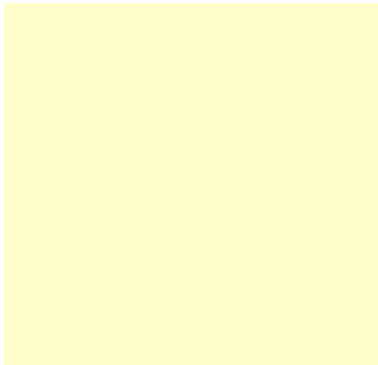
He gave me a pre-Columbian bird of jade
worth hundreds of dollars
I later found out he had given me part of his life
for six months later he died of AIDS

I vowed to find a niche in this world
and one day I took the train there
and saw if for myself

I know my parents were proud when I entered Vassar
but I left the home of the liberal fascists
and wandered around
the battered remains of the Lower East Side

At a hard-core matinee
in Loisaida
I came to see
God is My Co-Pilot





I stood watching
transfixed
in the basement
covered with graffitied cryptic symbols

Others in front moshed
moving like free radicals
No one stared at me
though I'm far from punk
and for an instant
I was part of their community

and I've been hospitalized a couple of times
since my days of wandering
but it didn't do shit
and I'm back in college
didn't do shit either

Someday they'll be a high school reunion
What the fuck will I tell them then
when they ask me where I am today
Will I be the poster child for Psychiatric medication
the avant-garde artist
the freak
or just somebody people want to avoid

My true being is neither here nor there and
someday I'll learn
the people I thought were following me
were following their own illusions
and the people I felt hated me
were experiencing isolation and confusion
for only when you've been dead inside all your life
and you've escaped this burden
can you experience true freedom
and life as it should be



carl her r

Published since 1993 • Janet Kuypers, Editor

children churches & daddies

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stupid,
boring,
technical
crap:

chapbooks:

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.

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.

1995: things i saw alone, proud to be a part of things, love letters, scratching, still had to breathe, wrinkles in the palm of my hand. Upcoming chapbooks: house of slavs, come into my garden, texas, new york, in these desperate times, before the storm, some things instinctively hurt, the house is a ship, circling overhead, six stories, this is what it means, louisiana poems, quiet madmen, she thinks/he thinks, singular memories.