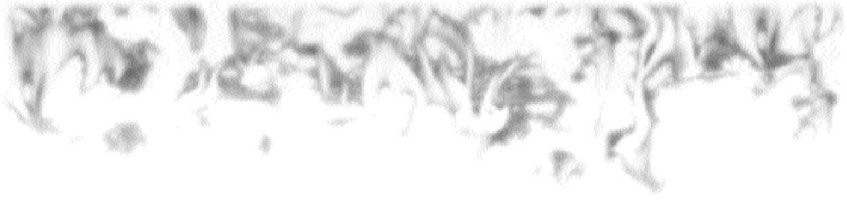


...from scars publications
**matchbook
insert**



(Kuypers)



the effects of nine one one

It's strange when you think about the September 11 crashes, has everyone even thought about the fact that the terrorists decided to destroy greatness on nine one one?

It's strange, how close I came to losing friends and family: my friend didn't happen to go to the Trade Center on business that week, my brother-in-law lost a slew of contacts who died in New York, the Pennsylvania plane landed a mile from my sister-in-law's house, my friend in D.C. wasn't hurt but he talked about how different streets would be closed on different days and that there were so many military guards there you felt like you were in a war zone,

which in a way, you were.

And these terrorists, they had a masterful plan, they were stopped that day from starting at different flights, and one of them was slated, I think, to run into the Sears Tower.

I mean, think about the emotional effects of these disasters. I know different people had different reactions...

I know that for months afterward whenever we were driving toward the loop, taking the Kennedy where you could see the Chicago skyline get closer and closer, I know that every time we drove by, I would be sitting in the passenger seat and I would be imagining seeing a plane fly right into the side of the Sears Tower, toward the top, to the side, exactly like how it happened to the World





9-11

Trade Centers. Like how you saw it over and over again on television, when we were flooded with images of it on the news. I'd see a plane flying right into the tallest building, this landmark to Chicago.

I still see that sometimes, whenever we are driving into the city,

imagining witnessing the destruction,
seeing it all,
and thinking,
what do you do then?





new to chicago

I'm still new to this city
I know, I know, I've been here for years
but I haven't gone to the Sears Tower Observatory
since my Junior Prom

but when I walk by the First Chicago building
the beams along the north side
sloping up, parabolic pillars curving up to the sky


when I walk by the First Chicago building
I walk up along the side
and lean up against one of the sloping pillars
press my body against the cold concrete
feel the cold against my chin, my breasts, by thighs

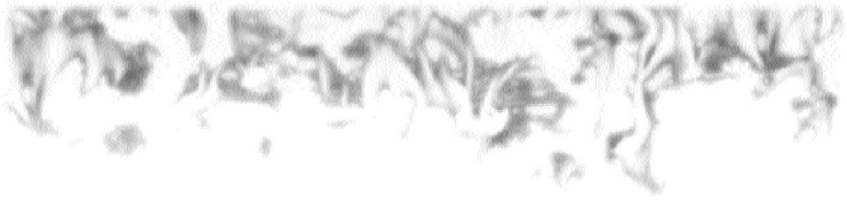
and look up along the curve, stretching up towards the sky

you know, these pillars look like race tracks
and I could see something come rushing down that curve
a matchbox car, a race car
a marble, a bowling ball
a two-ton weight

I see the seed, the power, and it
almost makes me afraid to look up

and every time I walk by the First Chicago building
I do the same thing, I do this little ritual
and it feels like the first time





grab the other's neck

I don't know where to start
I don't know where all these feelings come from
I don't know how to stop them

These feelings seem to come rushing up to me
And I don't seem to have any control over them

And I hate myself for this
And I'm not supposed to be having these urges
And I hate myself for thinking that you may want me too

You know, I don't know much of anything about you
 And I guess you don't know much about me
But I like what I know
Because in some respects you seem like me
Yes, I like what I know
 That you work too much
 And have too much drive
 And you have a wild side
 And you do your best to keep your wild side in check

And I still want to
Be able to straddle you
Take off your glasses
Mess up your hair





So you get strands falling around your eye
touching your cheek
And touching you
To remind you of me
And grab the hair at the back of your head
And cock your head back
Just so I can see your mouth starting to open
Because God, I want to see that
And it would make me know I'm right
And it makes me know that you want me too
And I'd let your hair go
And you would stare at me
And give me a look I just can't explain
 And can't argue with
 And have to submit to

And when I want this
I would wonder
Who would grab the other's neck
For the kiss

I still don't know who would make that move
 Or who could make that move
So I'm begging you to start this cycle
I'm pleading you
I don't want to be the only one with these fantasies





Tell these stories to me
Tell me you've thought these things too
Tell me you know that we're both stuck
Because you know there's nothing we can do

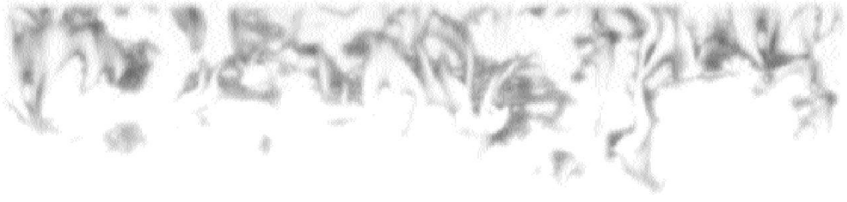
And I know this too

But I'd like to hear you say it
To validate my fantasies, in a way,
Because I'd love to hear you talk that way to me

I'm a sucker for that, you know

But tell me I'm not alone in this
So I'm begging you
I'm pleading you
Tell me I'm not insane for thinking about you
Tell me you have these fantasies too





After 7/11

On seven eleven, I almost died in a car accident, unconscious for eleven days, had severe skull fractures.

After losing my car, my home and my health, all I could do was try to recover.

They even called me Elvira Doe in the hospital because they couldn't find any identification, which was buried under the seat of my totaled car.

But while in the hospital I kept imagining Dave coming to visit me, he came in through another hospital entrance

so no one saw him

and no one knew he was alive, and he was there for me.

And I wasn't alone.

I felt so alone in the hospital all those weeks, maybe it was my brain's way of trying to fill in all the unexplained gaps in my life.

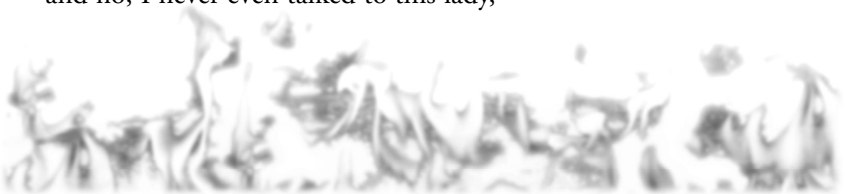
While recovering I even imagined my friend Brian, who now lives in San Francisco,

Dressing up in old woman's clothing and staying in the room like a patient with me so I wouldn't be alone.

And no, he was never in the hospital,

and yes, I shared my hospital room with an old woman who was a patient I had never met before,

and no, I never even talked to this lady,





7-11

While recovering I even hallucinated that I was in my apartment and not in a hospital bed

Because I REFUSED to believe that ANYTHING was wrong with me

I was in pain all the time, painkillers didn't help, my back was sore, my head ALWAYS hurt, my sinuses were terrible. I wanted the Hell out of the hospital but I couldn't take the first steps to do it. I could barely even stand. They strapped me in my bed at night,

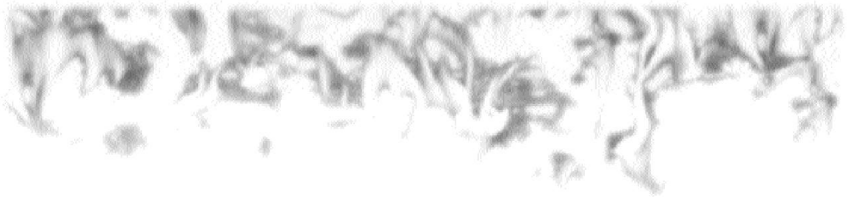
and once I contorted my way out of the harness, wrapped it up and set it on the nightstand; the nurses thought it was strange that the straps were next to my bed,

and when my mother saw how the harness was wrapped, she KNEW that I had to have done it.

I had to fight every step of the way in that hospital. Three different doctors viewing my records even nick named me "miracle girl", but learning to walk was no miracle to me,

I just had to work harder to prove everyone wrong and try to get my life back.





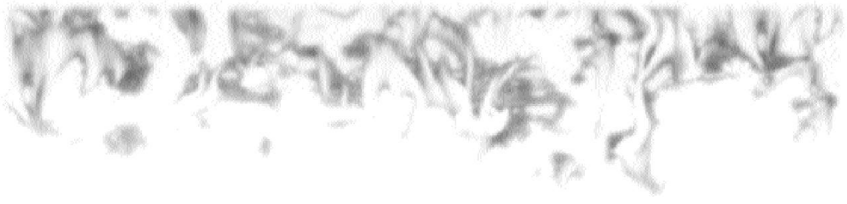
changing garments

Agonies are one of my changes of garments

I do not ask the wounded person
How
He
Feels
Or
Who
He
Is

I myself become the wounded person
My hurts turn livid upon me
As I lean on a cane and observe





After walking, I had to learn how to eat
Because they kept a tube in me while I was unconscious
And after a while it became time for me to eat again
And I thought,

I don't need to eat

I haven't been eating this entire time in here

Eating is really overrated, what do I need it for

So when they told me I could eat

I didn't.

They offered breakfast and I told them no.

They offered lunch and I told them no.

And by the time dinner came along
my stomach was making more noise than I was

I think it started a language of its own

So being a vegetarian I got an egg sandwich
and then I was faced with this task I didn't know how to undertake.

I had to rationalize it to myself.

You've eaten before, I told myself, you can do it again.

I know it seems foreign to you, but you can do it.

Put some food on the fork, put it in your mouth, remove the fork,
start chewing, and then just swallow it. You can do this. I had to talk
myself through every step, the first bite was the strangest thing to me, I ate
only half of the food,

But I did it.

I know that once I got used to eating I ate ravenously, but

The next morning they offered food and I ate an egg sandwich again
and I had to tell myself,

You did this yesterday, Janet.

I had to goad myself into eating again.





death is a dog

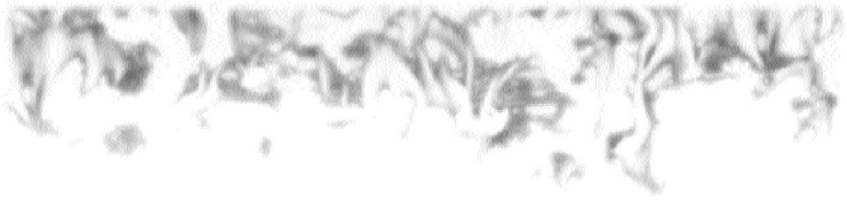
Death is an untrained little bitch
it pees on the carpet and barks through the night
and it's always begging
for scraps at the table
seeing what it can take from you
when you've got your back turned
when you're not looking

when you want it to heal,
well, it never does
and it never rolls over
and it never plays dead

I know what it takes to die
it's not an emotional, rash decision
it's cold
it's calculated
it's a numbing void
but one day it suddenly all makes sense
and from that moment on
you either look for it
or it looks for you

Death is an untrained little bitch
and I've been begging for it, I tell you
but it doesn't come when you call





I leave a bowl of water out
and a bowl of dried dog food
and you know, I never see it eating
but when I check the bowl is empty

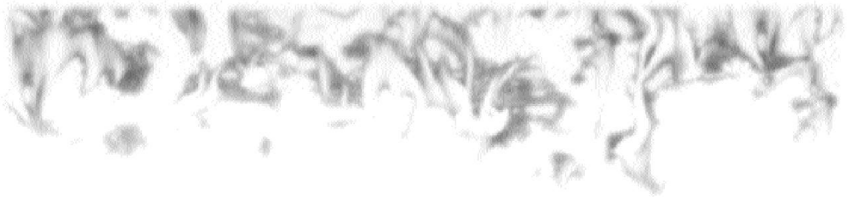
and I still refill the bowl

and vacuum the dog hair
that sticks to the couch
and spray air freshener
in the living room
because no matter how hard you try
you can never get rid of the smell

Death is an untrained little bitch, I tell you
and what it boils down to is this:
you won't get along with her
and she won't get along with you

she'll claim her territory
under the bed,
eating your slipper,
while you try to sleep
and remind yourself
that there are no monsters
waiting for you
to shut your eyes





7-11

My sister started a journal while I was in the hospital for people to write in.
My father, who never writes, wrote down while I was still unconscious,

I squeeze your hand
But you don't squeeze back
But I still love you

And my roommate, a man I dated and loved, was the first to write in the
journal, and he wrote that he remembered me telling him just before the
accident that I had written about a car accident, that he was a fantastic car
crash,

And he wrote,
But it was supposed to be ME.





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

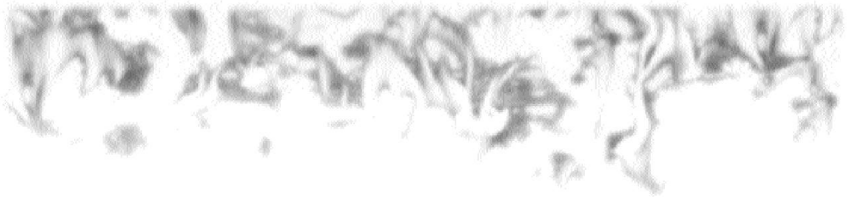
but I know what's inside you and I
know what you're made of. I know
there's no such thing as a calm with you

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






You Know It **(fish)**

so there are these fish in my apartment
and they're gold fish, they're not like tropical fish
or anything
and they just want to rush their little bodies
up to the sides of the glass
and stare at you
and you know, some people have no preference
about these fish

and for some people,
they try not to think about these things
and they try not to tell you much at all
and they try to keep themselves away
from all that
and they try to act aloof
and they try to say all the right things
and the whole time
well, the whole time those little fish
and gawking at you and it's like they are monitoring you

and when the night is over
you've still got those little fish
and you know they'll be there in the morning
and you know you'll have to feed them
and you know
they'll have to depend on you for something
they'll have to
you know it





'Til the Fear In Me Subsides

I can't say I know what you've gone through
That would only trivialize it
and I wouldn't do that to us

But when a person goes through what you have
Well, you seem to brush it off
Until you come to me crying

They called you Elvira Doe in the hospital
Because they couldn't find your identity
And your belongings were stuck under the seat

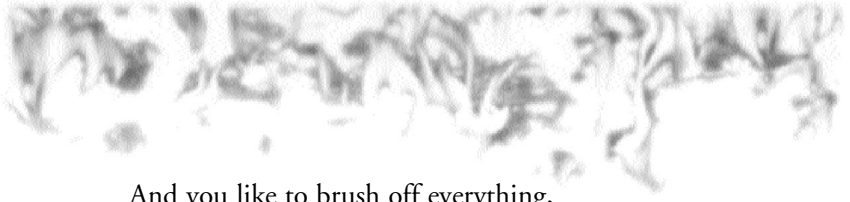
And your family wonders why when you were unconscious
They had to remove your clothes
That your family couldn't find a bra

Hell, I don't know if they took it or if
You just weren't wearing one
You can't remember, either

They called you miracle girl in the hospital
Because no one thought you would live
And just to spite them, you did

Other doctors examined your records
Who didn't even know you
Just to check on your progress





And you like to brush off everything,
Say that you can do everything
You never let people know when something hurts

You just got contacts for your eyes
The doctors said they fit fine
That is when you told me about your hospital time

Three skull fractures is worse than
Having a broken leg
I'll break every other bone first

Medical staff watched when your skull reset itself
to make sure your one eye was okay
because one eye could be damaged from it

And you know, I never wanted to tell you this,
But that scared me
And I wanted to know

That the eye doctors now
thought that your eyes were fine

I don't want to scare you with these details
Because I can't say I know what you've gone through
but, for me, well,

It still scares me to hear the details
And I still want to know when things are okay
And you are that much closer to better



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