Janet Kuypers & Beach Poets:



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Writing Your Name

I sat there in the shade I took a stick I wrote your name in the ground preacher says the number one sin is lust then I am condemned to Hell for Ι want you and I don't care what preacher says for if the elements wash away your name tonight I will be back tomorrow to write it again.

Under The Sea

I'd like to be Under the sea To see the fish go swim, I'd like to squish A jelly fish And then let go of him. I'd like to grab A soft-shelled crab And take him for a walk I'd like to hurdle Over a turtle And teach dolphins to talk. I'd like to see A manatee And then go play by him, I'd like to do All of these things If only I could swim!

you once so confidently

I found you at the pool hall with your excuses for friends taking a drag from your filtered cigarette I don't even think you inhaled

I hurled my anger at you the flames from my eyes struck you but your sculpted hair wasn't even singed and you remained as cool as you imagined yourself to be

and as I turned away and stormed toward the swinging door the deafening silence was broken by a feeble cough I looked back and saw you and immobile emotionless statue with beads of sweat running down your forehead

as I cocked my head I closed my eyes and the flames I once hurled were extinguished as quickly as the cigarette you once so confidently smoked

All Men Have Secrets

all men have secrets and here is mine. Strength is my weakness and now my shoulders don't stay in place. You ask me to open my eyes but they are. At least I think they are. Why don't you take me in your arms? Why don't you seduce me? Tear me in half. Rip me apart. Just don't cast me aside. I don't want to be strong. Be strong for me, so that I can adjust my chin and not have to worry about whether or not my eyes are open.

moonlight

moonlight is a hypnotist putting people in a trance whenever you look at it it takes over your soul no one can stop it but no one wants to

I Just Waited

As I laid in the grass as the breeze rolled past my face you slept like a baby and I just waited

I don't know what I was waiting for a change that wouldn't happen a smile of appreciation a warm kiss in the cool afternoon breeze a change that wouldn't happen

I could tell you I love you but I'd be lying to the both of us. I could tell you I need you but you wouldn't listen. Sometimes I need to sleep while someone watches over me.

I could just walk away and let you sleep yet I can't help but hope that soon you'll arise from your slumber and actually notice that I'm still there. And be happy that I'm still there.

Children, Churches, and Daddies

And the little girl said to me, "I thought only daddies drank beer." And I found myself

trying to make excuses for the can in my hand. I remember being in the church, a guest at a

wedding of two people I didn't know. My date pointed out two little boys

walking to their seats in front of us. In little suits and cowboy boots, this is what

is central Illinois. And my date said he was sure those boys would grow up to be gay. And

the worst part was their father was the coach of the high school football team. I think I

laughed, but I hesitated. I remember being in the church, it was Christmas

Eve, my date's family went up for communion, and all I could think was that singing the hymns was

hard enough, I don't know the words, what am I doing here, what am I supposed to do? And I stayed seated, and everyone else slowly walked to the front of the church. Little soldiers in a

little line, the little children in their little dresses walking behind their mommies and

daddies. And the little girl said, "I thought only daddies drank beer." And I found myself

trying to make excuses.

Slate and Marrow

Ι

No one could understand, it was like every morning I couldn't find a reason to wake

up. The world felt cold, like slate, like the marble tiles in the front hallway of my

parent's house, that floor was always cold, oh, how I'd like to feel the cold against my feet

now. But there I was, in some eleven by twelve apartment, room, running from my past, my

present. Every morning I would wake up, and I would wake up from that night again -

when he came uninvited, or did I invite him? The haze of the drunken nights from then on,

wearing the dress, knowing the faceless faces couldn't care less, as long as they could have their way

with me later that night. What would my parents think of me now? I'm no longer their little girl.

I could feel myself getting older by the minute, I could feel my skin wrinkling, my joints getting stiff. I could feel my bones, the marrow drying up, my bones crumbling away. And every morning

I still put on my clothes, got my work together, headed out the door. Could I ever get out of this

cycle? And it was if I had never realized that all this time I was looking for a purpose. And it was

you.

II

When I strolled up to the street singer, I stopped because I saw your face. Why on earth did you

think you could tell me your secrets when we only met fifteen minutes before? And just being in your

presence made me break down, made me hate everything , made me love everything , made me want

change. I'd hit you in rage, I'd lean on you, my slate, and you let me. And it was as if the marrow was back.

I could just lay in bed at night and feel the blood running through my body, I could feel the oxygen as I

inhaled hitting my bloodstream. I could even feel the marrow, all the cells in my body moving faster and faster. My skin would tingle. I suddenly had power - I could make blood move to any part of my

body, I could make a pain go away, I could turn myself into stone, not so I was cold and unfeeling, but so

I was strong, immovable. And I did it for me, but don't you dare think for a minute that I didn't do it for

you.

last before extinction

Now he has so many opportunities. He has nothing to lose. Why not come out of the wilderness, attack everything it sees. Kill something. Suck the blood out, make him feel alive for once more. Let them try to restrain him. He has nothing to lose.

And for now it can fly to the highest redwood, look out over the world. Despise the world, the world that made him be alone, leaving him alone. Who will carry his name? Who will care for him when he is old? Who can he read bed time stories to?

Now it can feel death creeping upon him, closer and closer. He wants to scream. He calls upon nature; the tides rise, earthquakes shatter homes. He does not feel vindicated. He has lost.

And for now she can swim to the deepest darkest cave in the Pacific, hide from the solitude, swim lower and lower; can she find where all of the other animals of dying species hide, can she find them. There must be others. They can understand, they can live together, at the bottom of the earth. Could they show their pain for their species, share what is left of their love, create a new race? Soon they will be no more and we will be taking their bones, reassembling them, studying their form, rebuilding their lives, revering them more than we ever did in life. This is what it all becomes. This is what it all boils down to. Study the bones. Study the mistakes. Study the bones.

everything was alive and dying

Ι

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

and then a raccoon came right up to me she had a few little baby raccoons following her, it was so cute, I wish I had my camera

and she spoke to me, she said, thank you thank you for not buying furs, I know you humans are pretty smart, you have to be able to figure out a way to keep yourselves warm without killing me

and I said, you know they don't do it for warmth, they do it for fashion, they do it for power. And she said I know. But thank you anyway.

Π

Then I walked a little further and there was a stray cat she still had her little neon collar on with a little bell and she walked a few feet, stretched her front paws, oh, she looked so darling and then she walked right up to me and she said thank you

and I said for what? And she just looked at me for a moment, her little ears were standing straight up, and then she said, you know, in some countries I'm considered a delicacy. And I said how do you know of these things? And she said when somebody eats one of you word gets around and then she looked up at me again and said, and in some countries the cow is sacred. Wouldn't they love to see how you humans prepare them for slaughter, how you hang them upside-down and slit their throats so their still beating hearts will drain out all the blood for you and she said isn't it funny how arbitrary your decision to eat meat is? and I said, don't put me in that category, I don't eat meat and she said I know

III

And I walked deeper in to the forest managed to get away from the picnic tables and the outhouses that lined the forest edges the roaring cars gave way to the rustling of tree branches crackling of fallen leaves under my step

when the wind tunneled through the wind whistled and sang as it flew past the bark and leaves I walked listened to the crack of dead branches under my feet and I felt a branch against my shoulder I looked up and I could hear the trees speak to me, and they said thank you for letting the endangered animals live here amongst us we do think they're so pretty and it would be a shame to see them go and thank you for recycling paper because you're saving us for just a little while longer

we've been on this planet for so long embedded in the earth we do have souls, you know you can hear it in our songs we cling with our roots we don't want to let go

and I said, but I don't do much, I don't do enough and they said we know but we'll take what we can get

IV

and I woke up in a sweat

V

so tell me, Bob Dole so tell me, Newt Gingrich so tell me, Pat Bucannan so tell me, Jesse Helms if you woke up from that dream would you be in a sweat, too?

VI

Do you even know why we should save the rain forest? Oh preserve the delicate balance, just tear the whole forest down, what difference does it make? Put in some orange groves so our concentrate orange juice can be a little cheaper

did you know that medical researchers have a very, very hard time trying to come up with synthetic cures for diseases on their own? It helps them out a little if they can first find the substance in nature. A tree that appears in the rain forest may be the only one of its species. Or one like it may be two miles away, instead of right next to it. I wonder how many cures we've destroyed to plant more orange groves. Serves us right.

VII

You know my motives aren't selfless I know that these things are worthwhile in my life

I'd like to find a cure to these diseases before I die of them and I'm not just a vegetarian because I think it's wrong to kill an animal unless I have to I also know the excess protein pulls the calcium away from my bones and gives me osteoporosis and the excess fat gives me heart attacks and I also know that we could be feeding ten times more people with the same resources used for meat production You know, I know you're looking at me and calling me an extremist but I'm sitting here, looking around me looking at the destruction caused by family values and thinking the right, moral, non-violent decisions are also those extreme ones

VIII

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

and you tell me I'm extreme

and these animals and forests keep calling out to me the oceans, the wind

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

we live through the guilt by taking caffeine, nicotine, morphine and we keep ourselves thin with saccharin and we keep ourselves sane with our alcohol poisoning and when that's not enough maybe a line of coke

maybe shoot ourselves in the head

in front of the mirror in the master bedroom or maybe just take some pills walk into the garage, turn on the car and just fall asleep

in the wild you have no power over anyone else

now that we're civilized we create our own wild

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

and so we do

philosopher at the blue note

he seemed so interested in philosophy, which seemed strange, sitting at a bar at about one-thirty in the morning, it didn't seem the time or place for philosophy. but i asked questions anyway, so do you believe in a god, and if so do you believe in a monoor polytheistic religion? and he answered by saying that everyone has a god, whether it be their soul or an icon they pray to every night before they go to bed. and that it doesn't matter what form the god takes for a person, because the moral values are similar in most every religion, what matters is that we have a god of one sort or another. that most people don't pay attention to their spirituality, who they are or what they really want.

no, they don't, i thought, and was amazed that this drunk man was able to formulate cohesive thoughts at two-thirty in the morning. but then, of course, he had to mention something about sexuality, and then i realized that it was all one long, drawnout come on, then he asked me for my phone number and i gave him a fake one, and then he tried to kiss me, and i pushed him away and he ended up running out of the bar. so much for philosophy, i thought, and i went home once again, alone with my morals, or values, or whatever the hell you want to call them, wondering if there is anyone out there like me.

precinct fourteen

it was a long night for us, starting out at your apartment with your roommate's coworkers coming over and making

margaritas until two in the morning, but of course we then decided that the best thing to do would be to go out

and so off to the blue note we went, found some interesting people to talk to, closed the bar, i think that was the

first time i ever did that, closed a latenight bar, i mean, and at four-thirty you drove me home down milwaukee ave

and i know it angles, and you can see the traffic light for oncoming traffic as easily as you can see your own light,

but i'm sure the light was green, and not red like the cops said, when they pulled you over. you could have been in big

trouble that night, no insurance, no city registration sticker, a michigan driver's license when you'd lived in illinois for over a year now, a cracked windshield, running a red light, probably intoxicated. so they brought us to the station at five a.m.,

and all they did was write you a ticket, and they gave me a business card, said if we had any problems to give them a call.

you drove me home, and the cops met us there, too, hitting on me again, and although we both agreed that the night

was a lot of fun, even with the involvement of the fourteenth precinct, i still believe that damn light wasn't even red.

too far

When he met me he told me I looked like Kim Basinger long blonde locks but as time wore on I knew I wasn't her and I could never be herand I was never good enough thin enough pretty enough I got a perm straightened my teeth bought a wonder brabut it wasn't doing the trick I bought slimfast used the stair stepperate rice cakes and wheat germ but I wasn't thin enoughI only dropped twenty pounds

so I went to the spagot my skin peeledsoaked myself in mud wrapped myself in cellophane bought the amino acid facial creams but I knew they didn't really work so I went to the doctorgot my nose slimmed my tummy stapled my thighs sucked

thought about getting a rib or two removed like Cher but I figured they've got to be there for something and hey, that's just going too far

bizarre sexual stories in the news

from the los angeles times: two gay men, during sexual activity, decide to push a live hampster into the anal cavity of one of the men. however, after they realized they couldn't get the hampster out, they tried to figure out what to do. the man without the hampster inside him decided to light a match to see if he could see where the hampster was. so man-without-hampster is perched underneath man-withhampster, and lights a match right under man-with-hampster's anus. at that time man-with-hampster passes wind, and it causes a small streak of fire to jump out and singe the man-without-hampster's eyebrows and facial hair. however, because there was gas in the anal cavity, the fireball then shot into the man-with-hampster, circled around the hampster, burning the inside of the man-with-hampster. Furthermore, the gas change and pressure shot the hampster out of the man-with-hampster's anus and into the man-without-hampster's face, breaking his nose.

And I'm Wondering

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

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

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

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

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

And I'm wondering why I felt the need to take your cigarette and inhale, exhale while the filter was still warm from your lips, there just seconds before And I'm wondering if a year or two from now, after we've been going out and should have gotten to the point where we are bored with each other and sink into a comfortable rut

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

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

When I glance up and catch your eyes from across the room, when I see your eyes dart away, when I feel this chemical reaction, well, what I'm wondering is, can you feel it too

i'm thinking about myself too much

all of my life it has all been about you what do you need what do you want how can i help you what can i do for you and now for once i start to live and now you tell me that i'm thinking about myself too much and i think back to all the time i've spent with you and all the care i've given you and now you tell me that i'm thinking about myself too much and i've cooked for you and i've cleaned for you and i've made sure everything in your world made sense and now you tell me that i'm thinking about myself too much and all i can think is that you're only angry because i'm thinking about me at all

The Way You Tease Me

What I think I like the most about you is the way you always leave me wanting more. When you kiss me, and we start to pull back I want to cock my head and kiss you again but I never know if you'll let me.

What I think I like the most about you is the way you roll your sultry deep voice over me like a wave of heat on a summer afternoon. You use a pause to tease me with your words until sweat dances down my hairline and tickles my neck.

What I think I like the most about you is the way you slide your arms around my waist and make me just want to collapse in your grasp and run my hands up and down your back until I hear you moan and sigh.

What I think I like the most about you is the way that absence makes the heart grow fonder and when we touch you say we should take it slow, take our time, enjoy every moment and you know, you couldn't be more right.

What I think I like the most about you are the things that make me think I have to fight for you are the things that make me second guess myself because nothing's ever easy, not you, not me, not relationships, not sex, not love.

What I think I like the most about you is the wondering, is the waiting, is the teasing. That's what I like. This high-charged guessing game. The flirting. The first touch. The first everything. Thinking about the possibilities. Yeah. That's what I like.

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

Freedom just past the Fence

After working for the Army for years on repairing jet engines I ended up being stationed in Pennsylvania one summer repairing air conditioners and refrigerators. I'd only do a little work and then have nothing to do for a day or two. But the thing I remember is that at the time Cubans were defecting to the United States by boat. They'd sail to Florida, most of then dehydrated and all of them malnourished. The U.S. government didn't want them spreading diseases in our country, so when the Cubans would appear off the coast of Miami, the military would be waiting to make sure they were healthy. Well, all I knew was that they got all these Cubans into trucks we called 'cattle cars' with only a few benches and trucked them up to Pennsylvania, where I was, and the military gave them some shots to make sure they weren't dying. So these people, after escaping their country in a shoddy wooden boat were taken by the U.S. military, herded into a boxed-in truck and shipped up the country so they could be given shots

and detained. These Cubans, who came here wanting freedom, now had to wait in a fenced-in area until they were tested and given food. And it was my job to make sure that their fridge and air conditioner was working. So I sat there for a day or two at a time, drinking cans of beer, and looking out my window. I had a view of the razor wire fence and all I remember was seeing all of these Cubans leaning on the chain-link fence, wondering if this was what it was like to be free. holding on to the metal, looking out to what they were sure was freedom.

To The River

I lead myself to the river to cleanse myself to strip myself of all evils I touch the water with my hand I watch the gentle rippling waves contort my image and change me

I wade into the pureness my toes my heels my ankles emerged in the water it pushes against my skin it tingles at my nerves

the sand at the bottom slides through my toes the coldness of the water numbs me I stand paralyzed to the feeling immobilized by the sensation

my tolerance grows and I continue to wade my calves my shins my knees they feel like ice they are changed by the water changed by the feeling

I need the river

I cannot wait any longer and I dive

my hair ripples with the waves as my hands part the water as I swim downward further and further to cleanse myself

as the light slowly disappears

and I am flooded with new sensations and new emotions

but as I rise once again to the surface as I emerge from the river

I emerge from the cleansing

and the air once again contaminates me with the evils of life

dive

The water has always called to me. I had to go, I know you don't understand, but it was the end for me. You stand on the edges of the cliff, waiting, hoping, but I'm gone. I left. I was gone before I dove into the murky water. The pain that was inside me is now in the water. The tides are now stronger. They will pull the next one in with even more power. It may be you. The birds are chirping in the trees. A car will soon drive by on the road not far from your path. Life will go on, even without me. My spirit was here, in the water, before I left. I had to go. Try to understand.

The Beach At Night

it is getting dark the day is slowly transforming itself into night the beautiful, colorful sunburst of colors sinks into the waters of the ocean the slow, steadu lapping of the waves accompanies you the soft, cold sand is pressed against four feet look around enjoy the beach at night

Sun & Sand & H₂Poetry

Janet Kuypers

jkuypers@scars.tv

scarsuopenjiqnd



http://scars.tv

Freedom & Strength Press



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