

the Cana-Dixie Union

Janet Kuypers cc&d chapbook
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Couldn't Reach It

I know I was loved
I've never thought I wasn't
but

but I think that by the time I came around
And all the other kids were grown up
all the love was up in the air
for those adult kids to catch
and feel
and reciprocate

and I grew up
with all this love
up high in the air

I could see it up there
I knew it was there
but I couldn't touch it
I couldn't feel it
I couldn't reach it

Wondering Why

in the movies and on tv
you see them close the eyes of the dead
but those eyes won't stay closed, you know
that's why they put pennies over your eyes
in early america

when Katie died
her tongue even fell out of her mouth
and it wasn't like she was sleeping
her eyes were still staring at us
giving us that vacuous stare
wondering why

Canned Condolences

I held her

and couldn't control my crying

we were waiting
for the doctor to deliver the drugs
to inject them into her
to kill her

once we were waiting
we knew there was no going back
our decision was made
and now only moments
were all we had left

the doctor kept saying
that we were making the right decision
that she had suffered so long already
and I wondered if that doctor
 had these prepared responses
 these canned condolences
to make anybody feel better
when a loved one's about to die

when a loved one's about to die
because of our choice
our decision to end her suffering
to kill her

we stroked her head to calm her
and when the doctor
 squeezed the syringe
 and forced the fluid
he held her head
and I could only watch

like a passenger in a nearby car
careening toward a crash
I could only watch the spectacle
from my car window
try to catch the carnage
see a glimmer of death
see what death looks like
while the car kept carrying me away

What Have I Won

There is so much
That I have wanted
And there is so little
That I have actually
Received

And there is so much
That I have hated

And there is nothing
I can do
And there is nothing more
I can ask
I know that much

they have tried to take away
my brain from me
but lucky for me,
I fought to get it back

and lucky for me
I won

But what have I won
What

The Answers

Someone there
doesn't have the key to
getting answers for this now

Sometimes you kick and you
scream
for information
and no one
will give you any help and you'll
have no place to turn

That's what
the world is like, you know

Childhood Memories five

I was in the fifth grade, and I had
Mr. Roop for spelling and english.
He was a great teacher, but there

is something I'll never forget from
his class. You see, he had this
honors spelling team called the

“tough ten” and once we had to
learn the word “pneumonoultra-
microscopic silicovolcanoconiosis.”

It was a form of black lung disease,
the longest word in the english
language, the second largest in the

world. I still remember it to this
day. And when giving us weekly
spelling tests, he would say a word,

then use it in a sentence. Whenever
the word “doctor” came up, he
would say the word, then recite

the lyrics: “doctor, doctor, give me
the news, I've got a bad case of...”
and he'd get embarrassed and laugh

and wouldn't be able to say “loving
you.” And we'd laugh too, write the
word down, and wait for him to say

the next word.

Childhood Memories seven

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

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

and I thought

that's strange

a diamond

most of the world lived in desolation
there was only a few remnants of old fires
that once burned down things that could have been good
Imagine
a world where you'd see a diamond. In
all the darkness and desperation
there would be one loose random
stone that glittered more than anything else on the planet
Could you imagine a world like that
Could you imagine a simple diamond

Fulfill Their Deepest Vocations

*Necessary emphasis should be placed also on
those ordinary women
who reveal the gift of their womanhood
by placing themselves at the service of others*

*For in giving themselves to others each day
women fulfill their deepest vocation*

Letter to Women, Message of His Holiness POPE JOHN PAUL II, July 10

of course, according to your religion women
should be your servants, they should answer to you
women can't be preists, or fulfill their dreams
women have to rely on men to protect their rights

of course, god was created in man's image
and, according to you, woman came from man
just so she could churn out all his kids
and that's probably why you ban birth control, too
keep pressing your thumb down a little harder
so that no one can get out of your control
you, being the man, the ruler, the leader, the pope.

Other Horizons

I live in the basement
it's all I can afford
nothing grows there

but I would have a little plant
at my office desk
every morning
water it watch it grow

I'd take on all those tasks
I'd even have my own partition

I live in a room
with no view
but I don't need one
no oceans, no skylines

when I make it
I'll look out the window
at the whole damn city

Tribal Scream

I know what goes on in your head
I know all those characters you've created
I know all the Hell in your past
I know the mishmash of everything
 crammed into your head

& I know a part of that is killing you
& I want you to let it out
& I want you to just open your mouth
& let out a tribal
 never ending scream

because I know you
I know you've got too much life in you
I know you've got a carbonated soul
& I know that one good scream
would let you pop the top
of you,
 like a bottle of Coke-a-cola

bubbles of compressed air
would be coming out of your mouth
 in your tribal scream

I wonder what characters you would spill out
I wonder what you would do
when you saw what you rejected
 what you screamed out

I wonder if you'd see parts of your past

& I wonder if you'd know they were a part of you

& try to stuff them back in

Gas Stations and Gun Dealers

there are more gun dealers
in america
than gas stations

in california, more children
are killed by guns
than by car accidents

the rate of violent crimes
went down last year, but
the number of deaths
by guns increased

gun shot wounds
to people under sixteen
doubled
in the past three years

a young person
commits suicide with
a handgun
every eight hours

five hundred thirty-eight of
four thousand, nine hundred
ninety-eight
gunshot deaths last year
were accidental

my niece was over
at her grandparent's house
she saw a rifle
sitting on the hallway floor

and she said to me,
hey, that's a gun
and i told her
not to touch it

guns scare me
but she was fascinated

and i was more scared

there are more gun dealers
in america
than gas stations

St. Anthony's Medallion

“A father brought his ten year old son to the cemetery where his mother was buried about a month earlier. It began to rain, and lightning struck the boy dead on the scene. It is believed a St. Anthony medallion worn around his neck acted as a conductor.”

The sky is weeping again.
For me. What have I done,
this is my punishment for
what? You did this to me,

didn't you, you unfair God?
Didn't I tell them I loved
them enough? I went to the
school play, remembered

our anniversary. How am I
supposed to go on now? My
wife first, take her from me
first, then take the only thing

in this world that looks like
her. That has her nose. Her
chin. Why couldn't I rip
that medallion off him, set

him free? Did I not watch
him enough? Did I not love
them enough? Why wasn't it
me? Why wasn't it me? Why?

No Consequences

the average child,
watching the average
amount of television
in their lifetime

witnesses eight thousand
murders
by the time they leave
elementary school

by the time they are
eighteen years old,
they witness
two hundred thousand
acts of violence

and they laugh
when they hear
their leading man say
"consider this
a divorce"
then pull the trigger

or
"do you feel
lucky, punk"

suddenly there's no
consequence to violence

no pain, no remorse

we're the mtv generation
we feel no highs or lows

we've learned life by watching it
not living it

"have you killed people?"
"yeah, but they were
all bad"

how funny, what wit

they witness
two hundred thousand
acts of violence

what are we teaching them?

suddenly there's no
consequence

This You Don't Hate

From the picture window
the snow drizzling down
fell effortlessly, silently:
I wondered if outside it

was as quiet as it looked.
The snow blanketed the
grass, past the pier his father
made last summer, out

over the lake. Everything
glowed in an untouched
whiteness. No footprints
yet. Just falling snow.

From the couch I looked
at the larger-than-life
snowflakes fall, one after
another, all gently gliding

down to the ground. I could
not look away. And you said:
This is why I like winters.
See, you hate winter in the

city, but this, this you
watch for hours and don't
get tired of. This makes you
smile. This you don't hate.

Holding My Skin Together

is life pre-ordained?
i've been trying to remember
all the little details
that i'm supposed to take care of
and i know i'm not even getting
half of them done
and i wonder if you feel what i feel
is it just me
is the stuffing falling out
of my insides
through the stretched seams
holding my skin together
because i keep finding
bits of stuffing fallen out
and i try to put it back in
but damnit, i don't see the holes
and i just have to work faster
so that maybe
i'll have a better chance
of not losing my insides

is it just me?
probably
but i'll keep frantically trying
to hold myself together
so i can be a bit more normal,
no, wait,
so i can be a bit more like myself

Know How the Truth Is

How many times do you fight the same battles
and lose your battles against the world

How many
times are you going to keep fighting for the same causes,
knowing that no one is going to attempt to listen to you
and knowing that all of your efforts will be to no
good
that no one will notice or care or even act
like they're interested...

Let's not fool ourselves
let's just say it like it is
let's not try to get our
hopes up over all that normally goes wrong with the
world

We all know how the truth is
we all
know that each time we try to get anywhere in life
which is just this one big fantasy
this getting
through life thing
but
what i was trying to say
is that when you try to do well with your life and
you try to accomplish things that you never thought was
possible
when you try and try and try
well
it's usually at that point when someone tries and usually
succeeds at kicking you in the teeth and making
you feel like there's no hope in the world

Well
at least
they could be telling you subliminally that
well, there is no hope for you
even when you try and try

Well, you get what I'm getting at here
and sometimes
I'm not the best with words
but maybe I've said enough
without saying any more than I have to

Twin

they tell me i was born
two months premature
the first of twins
they tell me it was difficult
my birth
i still can't hear in one ear
i have an indentation in my chest
on the right side
where they had to run a tube
in me
to keep me alive
they tell me they kept Douglas alive
for three weeks
but he just couldn't survive
i wonder what it would have been like
to have someone look just like me
we could switch places
fool everyone
we'd be inseparable
my family doesn't talk about
him much
but sometimes
i still think of him
maybe with the medical world
today
he would be alive
sometimes i feel
like i'm not whole

Watching You

a strand of your hair
falling into your eyes

you brush it behind your ear

you move your head
lean over

it falls again

it curls in just the right way
it makes a perfect tunnel

it directs me
my eyes are drawn
to your beautiful blue eye

Accounts for the Need of Gun Control, January 1995

One day a man decided to kill people.
A shooting spree. So he went into a
gun shop, picked up a pair of assault

rifles, a number of rounds, each of
one hundred bullets. And he bought
these things, he didn't need a

permit or a license. Just walked in
and out. And he went to an office
building to take out his revenge

on the world. My wife was there,
took five bullets in the back. I wonder
if she suffered before she died. We went

on a ski trip together last Christmas.
She looked so beautiful with the
snow in her hair. This man didn't need

a license, and yet I needed a permit to
retrieve my wife's ashes from the
crematorium. He didn't just do this to

her, you know. Or to the other victims.
He's tortured me, and our baby girl. Our
girl is darling. She's blond, like her

mommy. We have to live with
this trauma forever. This should not
be how we have to live.

As my girl's second birthday approached
this year, I asked her what she
wanted. She said she wanted

to see mommy. Guess what
she is going to want for her
third

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 her and I was
never good enough
thin enough
pretty enough
I got a perm
straightened my
teeth
bought a wonder
bra but it wasn't
doing the trick
I bought slimfast
used the stair
stepper ate rice
cakes and wheat
germ but I wasn't
thin enough I
only dropped
twenty pounds
so I went to the

spa got my skin
peeled soaked
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 doctor got 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

the State of the Nation

my phone rang earlier today
and I picked it up and said “hello”
and a man on the other end said,
Is this Janet Kuypers?
and I said, “Yes, it is, may I ask
who is calling?”
and he said, Yeah, hi, this is
George Washington, and I’m sitting here
with Jefferson and we wanted to
tell you a few things. And I said
“Why me?” And he said Excuse me,
I believe I said I was the one
that wanted to do the talking.
God, that’s the problem with
Americans nowadays. They’re so
damn rude. And I said, “You know,
you really didn’t have to use
language like that,” and he said,
Oh, I’m sorry, it’s just I’ve been
dead so long, I lose all control
of my manners. Well, anyway, we just
wanted to tell you some stuff. Now,
you know that we really didn’t have
much of an idea of what we were
doing when we were starting up
this country here, we didn’t have
much experience in creating
bodies of power, so I could understand
how our Constitution could be
misconstrued

and then he put in a dramatic pause
and said,
but when we said people had
a right to bear arms
we meant to protect themselves
from a government gone wrong
and not so you could kill
and innocent person
for twenty dollars cash
and when we said freedom of
religion we included the separation
of church and state because freedom
of religion could also mean freedom
from religion
and when we said freedom of speech
we had no idea you'd be
burning a flag
or painting pictures of Christ
doused in urine
or photographing people with
whips up their respective anatomies
but hell, I guess we've got to
grin and bear it
because if we ban that
the next thing they'll ban is books
and we can't have that
and I said, "But there are schools
that have books banned, George."
And he said Oh.

I've Done That, So Have You

It's funny when you get used to life
being a certain way, and you assume
that nothing ever changes
and that's just the way it is

well, as time wears on
and as you're not thinking about the
details it's not hard to fall into that cycle
and it's easy to care about watching the weekly news show
and it's easy to take care of all the work
that is on your mind that is in your
thought
and it's easy to fall into that rut

i've done that
so have you

and my point is, it's easy
to just let life happen
and not try to change it or anything

i've done that
so have you

well, what i'm wondering here

when you get used to life being just
that way, the, well, the
just the days going by and just the work
and occasionally the movie you rent
at blockbusters so you don't have to
have another night out with the guys

well, when life becomes that big rut, when
life becomes just one big cycle, well, maybe
some people can't handle that rut
and maybe some people want something different
and maybe you don't mind the rut

and maybe the people that mind the rut
will just have to get used to having it

well, what if life is just one big rut

what i'm wondering is this:
will you be used to that?

Making Sense Out Of The Insane

There are many things that I have needed
And there are things that other people call mere wants
But to me they are the same thing

I have had too many things happen to me
And I am supposed to take the good with the bad
And I am supposed to see the silver lining for every cloud

And sometimes I can't see the silver lining
Sometimes I only get to see the dripping blood from
The wounds that were cut poorly

And haven't had a chance to heal

That's one of the things about modern life
Sometimes there is no happy ending
And sometimes you can look and look, but you can't find it

And sometimes making sense out of the insane is pointless
Because sometimes the insane starts to make sense
Maybe you can't understand that

Maybe you can't understand that because you haven't done what I have
And you haven't gone through what I have
And you haven't learned how to bottle up all the hate

I don't know where the silver lining is supposed to be and
I don't know where to look for the things
that are supposed to make me happy

Because I'm getting pretty tired of looking

I've changed all my goals in life
The short term ones and the long term ones too
And after a while that has an effect on you

After a while you start to feel like a prisoner who
Is just getting the life kicked out of you
By a bunch of other prisoners who for the moment have the edge

While all the other guards are paid to look away
It's funny how the prisoners get the coin from their

Drug deals to pay all the good guys off

When you start to see that
And when you start to feel like that
the line between sanity and insanity becomes blurred

New Vacuum Cleaner

Elizabeth was only five
she thought she was doing the right thing

She accidentally sucked up the goldfish
when she knocked over the aquarium
as she was vacuuming the floor

She was going to surprise mom and dad
with a clean carpet, but now it's covered
with aquarium rocks, shattered glass and
fish water

But she had to try to save the fish before
she could clean up the mess, so she poured
water into the vacuum cleaner to try to give
the poor fish something to breathe

Now mom and dad have to get a new carpet,
a new aquarium and a new vacuum cleaner

Too Much Light

too much light makes the baby go blind
and too much light makes the moth
rush into the flame
and die in a glorious blaze of glory

and I have seen the light
and I have seen it

what is my choice:

burn in the flame
to burst quickly
to die young
or to slowly slip away
to die slowly
day by day
to let people in darkness
pull me in
inch by inch
until the light
kills me

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Compact Discs: *Mom's Favorite Vase* the demo tapes, *Kuypers* the final (MFV Inclusive), *Weeds and Flowers* the beauty & the desolation, *The Second Axing* Something is Sweating, *The Second Axing* Live in Alaska, *Pettus & Kuypers* Live at Cafe Aloha, *Pointless Orchestra* Rough Mixes, *Kuypers* Seeing Things Differently, *SD/SD* Tick Tock, *Kuypers* Change Rearrange, *Order From Chaos* The Entropy Project, *Kuypers* Six One One, *Kuypers* Stop., *Kuypers* Masterful Performances mp3 CD, *Kuypers* Death Comes in Threes, *Kuypers* Changing Gears, *Kuypers* Dreams, *Kuypers* How Do I Get There?, *Kuypers* Contact • Conflict • Control, *the DMJ Art Connection* the DMJ Art Connection, *Kuypers* Questions in a World Without Answers, *Kuypers* SIN, *Kuypers* WZRZ Radio (2 CD set), *Mom's Favorite Vase* and *The Second Axing* These Truths, *assorted artists* String Theory, Oh (audio CD), *Life At The Cafe* (3 CD set), *DMJ Art Connection* Indian Flux, *DMJ Art Connection* Manic Depressive or Something, *Chaotic Radio* Chaotic Radio Week #1, *Chaotic Radio* Chaotic Radio Week #2, *Chaotic Radio* Chaotic Radio Week #3, *Chaotic Radio* Chaotic Radio Week #4, *Chaotic Radio* Chaotic Radio Week #5, *Chaotic Radio* the Chaotic Collection Collection #01-05 (5 CD set) etc. (audio CD, 2 CD set), *Chaotic Elements* (2 CD set), *Chaos in Motion* (6 CD set), *SD/SD* Screaming to a Halt (EP), *PB&J* Two for the Price of One (EP), *Kiki, Jake and Haystack* An American Portrait, *Kuypers/the Bastard Trio/Paul Baker/the JoAnne Powlers Trio* Fusion (4 CD set).