

The letters 'P', 'e', 'r', 'i', 'o', 'd', 'i', 'c' are rendered in a stylized, hand-drawn font. Each letter is composed of simple black lines and shapes, often resembling laboratory glassware or scientific instruments. For example, the 'P' is a vertical stand with a curved arm, 'e' is a shallow dish, 'r' is a small beaker, 'i' is a test tube with a flame, 'o' is a shallow dish with a flame, 'd' is a vertical stand with a curved arm, 'i' is a test tube with a flame, and 'c' is a shallow dish.

P e r i o d i c Poetry

A faded, light-colored periodic table of elements serves as a background for the text. The elements are arranged in their standard grid pattern, with some elements highlighted in different colors like green, blue, and orange.

Janet Kuypers

Periodic Table of Poetry

live Chicago reading 20121121

The letters 'l', 'i', 'f', 'e', 'd', 'e', 'a', 't', 'h', '&', 't', 'h', 'e', 'U', 'n', 'i', 'v', 'e', 'r', 's', 'e' are rendered in a stylized, hand-drawn font, similar to the 'Periodic' text above. Each letter is composed of simple black lines and shapes, often resembling laboratory glassware or scientific instruments. For example, 'l' is a vertical stand with a curved arm, 'i' is a test tube with a flame, 'f' is a test tube with a flame, 'e' is a shallow dish, 'd' is a vertical stand with a curved arm, 'e' is a test tube with a flame, 't' is a shallow dish with a flame, 'h' is a shallow dish, '&' is a small circle, 't' is a vertical stand with a curved arm, 'h' is a shallow dish, 'e' is a test tube with a flame, 'r' is a test tube with a flame, 's' is a shallow dish, 'e' is a test tube with a flame, 'U' is a vertical stand with a curved arm, 'n' is a test tube with a flame, 'i' is a test tube with a flame, 'v' is a test tube with a flame, 'e' is a test tube with a flame, 'r' is a test tube with a flame, 's' is a shallow dish, 'e' is a test tube with a flame.

“life, death, & the Universe”



Nitrogen

#007

I'm afraid to answer the phone today.
Ever since he called me before
to tell me he has AIDS,
I've been afraid to answer my phone
to hear that his condition
has turned for the worse
or that he just died.
His t-cell count has been at zero
for over 2 months now.
He lost his job.
The last word was that he was waiting
for the chance for entrance into a study
where he may get a new set of medications.

And waiting is something he cannot do.

So I've looked at homeopathic options,
but I sound like his mother
telling him to eat fresh fruits and veggies.
Don't eat raw seafood, or raw eggs.
Cook your meat until it is well done
to get the protein you so desperately need.

And I've looked at the chemical compounds
in the drugs that are all too expensive,
and I was surprised to see
how many times I saw Nitrogen
listed in these drug compounds.
Nitrogen. I've only heard of it
as liquid nitrogen for super-cooling.
Dip a rose in liquid nitrogen
And drop it, so it shatters.
I've even heard of nitrogen capsule
"widgets" to carbonate stouts,
or that it's mixed with oxygen
to make laughing gas.

Maybe I need nitrous oxide,
because yesterday was the first day
I hadn't cried.
I might have been fine for a half hour,
and then something would trigger it in my mind.
I thought maybe I'm getting used to the news,
but I just cried again.

On the phone, you said
you can't let the thought of death kill you.
And I was trying so hard
To not just start sobbing on the phone.

You see, this is why
I'm afraid to answer the phone now.

You were on the phone with me
saying that you just have to
get used to the fact
that you're not going to grow old,
or have a family.
You said that some people
feel like they are on death's door
with a T-cell count of four hundred,
and some people can run marathons
with a T-cell count of zero.
On the phone,
you first told me yours was at eighty,
and you felt fine.
A little run-down,
but that was to be expected.
Then it dropped lower.
And now I am afraid to answer my phone,
to hear the next round of news.

So now I sit here and read
about antiretroviral drugs
you may or may not be able to take.
Protease inhibitors. Integrase inhibitors.
And I look at the chemical compounds
of all these drugs, with hydrogen
carbon, oxygen, occasionally
fluorine or sulfur,
And the surprisingly ever-present nitrogen.
I stare at these compounds,
wish I could put the elements
together myself
and give you what you need.
Why did I have to learn
about compounds in chemistry class
if I couldn't make these compounds
to help you live.
Because now I just sit here and read,
and fear my telephone ringing.



Selenium
#034

I have wanted all of them dead.
There's no one else I can say this to,
but I have had this overwhelming desire
for I don't know how long
to see them all suffer exorbitant pain
as they all suffer to their last breath.

I've been researching ways
to extract my vengeance
and commit my final solution.
It has to be something scientific,
something methodical, something so
complicated and convoluted
that no one would ever suspect me.

There's no way I can get used uranium rods
from the nuclear power plant
I saw on my last road trip.
There's no way I'd get into Fermi Lab nearby,
where they discovered the radioactive plutonium
to get trace amounts of neptunium or plutonium,
because spent or not, trace amounts
of these radioactive elements could still be
injected into their food,
slipped into their hair spray,
shot into their shampoo,
and they'd never know what hit them.

So after I scoured the radioactive elements
in the periodic table
that are used in nuclear weaponry,
I glanced back toward the top of the table
and saw Selenium.

Wait a minute,
I remember an episode of CSI
where the actress who was a character on *Melrose Place*
and was one of the women in *Desperate Housewives*
conspired with another woman,
where one of them would marry a rich man,
and would poison him with Selenium
until they died,
leaving the one with a hefty sum of money
to share with her female conspirator.

Okay, time for some research...
Selenium, when discovered, they noted
the similarity of Selenium to the previously-known
tellurium (named for the Earth), which is why
it was named from Greek mythology Selene,
an archaic lunar deity.
Although Selenium is used today
primarily in glassmaking and in pigments,
it is also a semiconductor, with
Selenium's unusual ability to conducting electricity.
But the light went off when I read
that Selenium salts are toxic in large amounts, but
(here's the key) trace amounts are necessary
in all animals... This reminded me
of that CSI episode, where that red-headed actress
worked with horses, which justified their need
for Selenium in their lives.

Because although Selenium is an essential trace element,
excess amounts can be toxic —
more than four hundred micrograms per day
can lead to selenosis.

Acute oral exposure to Selenium
can lead to pulmonary edema and lung lesions;
cardiovascular effects like tachycardia;
gastrointestinal effects like nausea,
vomiting, diarrhea, and don't forget
the severe abdominal pain...
Selenium ingestion can lead to cirrhosis of the liver
and will cause aches, irritability, chills, and tremors.

You know, this element is really starting to look
like the way to go for me.

Add it to their pizzas and garlic bread
(since it leaves a garlic odor on the breath),
and no one's the wiser.
And the thing is, Selenium
has an oxidant mode of action
similar to that of arsenic, which, as I said,
is exactly what I'm looking for.

Selenium poisoning of water systems
has occurred in the past, possibly resulting
whenever new agricultural runoff courses started,
so it could be easy to get it into their drinks as well.

So, now the question for me
is how to get it, to place it
into their food supply.
I know some is needed,
and people who have a Selenium deficiency,
especially for patients with cancer or AIDS.
And if it is needed for animals
(I even read a case where animals were given
the wrong injection levels of Selenium,
causing mass horse deaths in a polo tournament),
a quick Google search
for purchasing Selenium
will lead to many sites
with "no prescription needed"
to get exactly what I'm looking for.
The last step is getting it
without having it trace back to my name,
because once I have it,
I can get it into their food and drink
with no problem.
Because as I said,
my overwhelming desire
for I don't know how long
to see them all suffer exorbitant
and inextricable pain
as they all suffer to their last breath
may finally have that last key,
because Selenium can make
everything come together,
and no one will be the wiser.



Argon

#018

Argonne National Laboratory (the first U.S. science and engineering research national laboratory). was started because Enrico Fermi's Manhattan Project was to create the world's first self-sustaining nuclear reaction. They constructed "Chicago Pile-1", which achieved criticality (a sustained nuclear fission reaction) December second nineteen forty two, under the University of Chicago's Stagg football field stands. But since this experiment was too dangerous to conduct in a major city, it was moved to a spot nearby in Palos Hills, and named "Argonne" after the surrounding forest.

You know, when I was trying to learn about the element Argon, I was really hoping that Argonne Lab, so close to where I grew up, would have *something* to do with Argon (and not a nearby forest preserve)...

Now, the element Argon got its name from the Greek word meaning "lazy", but that's because Argon atomically is stable and resistant to bonding with other elements. And because Argon has about the same solubility in water as oxygen, Argon often displaces oxygen and moisture-containing air in packaging materials, to extend the shelf-lives of the contents. You know, other noble gas elements would probably work as well as Argon for this, but Argon is the cheapest (so I guess the cheap one wins).

Since Argon is colorless, odorless, and —
this is the important one —
does not satisfy the body's need for oxygen,
Argon is therefore an asphyxiant.
And since it's hard to detect,
it's highly dangerous in closed areas.

But on the plus side,
liquefied Argon is used in cryoablation
to actually destroy cancer cells
with Argon plasma beam electrosurgery.

And the thing is, Argon can also be used
to create incandescent lights
looking like blue neon
(and you can just add a little mercury
to make the light more electric blue).

I wonder if that blue light Argon can emit
looks anything like what we see in the night sky,
because the one tidbit about Argon that really got to me
was that Argon is used (primarily in liquid form)
as the target for direct Dark Matter searches.
The interaction of a hypothetical WIMP
(a "weakly interacting massive particle")
with the Argon nucleus produces scintillation light,
and Argon gas can detect the ionized electrons
made during the WIMP-nucleus scattering.

#

Okay, okay, when I was playing cards once,
we decided to place bets
on what the winner of each hand would get.
Since we didn't have any money
and we on an astronomy kick,
the first winning hand won the Moon,
then the Earth, then more of the planets,
then the Asteroid belt, the Kuiper Belt,
the Ort Cloud, the Solar System,
then the Milky Way Galaxy.
We may have even bet on the Andromeda Galaxy,
or constellations like Orion
(even though the stars and the nebula
in the constellation are nowhere
near each other in the Universe)...
Then my opponent suggested
the winner of the next hand
would have dominion over Dark Matter.
Alright, they won that hand, but the winner
of the next and final hand won the Universe,
and since I won that hand, I wanted to say
that I therefore ruled over the Dark Matter as well...

Now, you can't see Dark Matter directly;
scientists believe that this hypothetical Dark Matter,
which neither emits nor absorbs light or radiation,
can take up to eighty-four percent
of all of the matter in the Universe.
Since Dark Matter can't be seen,
scientists can only infer the existence
of Dark Matter by its gravitational effects
on other matter in the Universe.

And they assume the corresponding particle
in Cold Dark Matter
is a weakly interacting massive particle.
A WIMP.

Now, this is all hypothetical,
But think about it:
if the Dark Matter within our galaxy
is made of WIMPs, then thousands of WIMPs
pass through every square centimeter
of the Earth
each second.

Kind of cool.

And if Argon is used to help detect
these hypothetical WIMPs,
that's kind of cool too...
Because this stable noble gas
might be difficult for people
trying to breathe in confined spaces
when Argon can easily displace oxygen,
but Argon can help remove cancer
from our bodies,
can light the way,
and may even help us learn more
about some of those undiscovered details
in the Universe too.

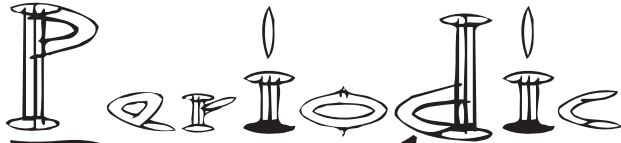


about the author

Janet Kuypers has a Communications degree in News/Editorial Journalism (starting in computer science engineering studies) from the UIUC. She had the equivalent of a minor in photography and specialized in creative writing. A portrait photographer for years in the early 1990s, she was also an acquaintance rape workshop facilitator, and she started her publishing career as an editor of two literary magazines. Later she was an art director, webmaster and photographer for a few magazines for a publishing company in Chicago, and this Journalism major was even the final featured poetry performer of 15 poets with a 10 minute feature at the 2006 Society of Professional Journalism Expo's Chicago Poetry Showcase

She sang with acoustic bands Mom's Favorite Vase, Weeds and Flowers and the Second Axing, and does music sampling. Kuypers is published in books, magazines and on the internet around 6,300 times for writing, and over 2,000 times for art work in her professional career, and has been profiled in such magazines as Nation and Discover U, and was nominated as Poet of the Year for 2006 by the International Society of Poets. She has also been highlighted on radio stations, including WEFT (90.1FM), WZRD (88.3FM), WSUM (91.7FM), WLS (8900AM), Q101 (101.9FM), the internet radio stations ArtistFirst.com, chicagopoetry.com's Poetry World Radio and Scars Internet Radio (SIR). She has also appeared on television for poetry in Nashville and Chicago, and was interviewed on her art work on Urban's CBS station, WCIA, channel 3 10 o'clock news.

Inducted as a Poetry Ambassador during Poetry Month in 2006 & 2007, and nominated to be Poet of the Year in 2007, Kuypers turned her writing into performance art on her own and with musical groups like *Pointless Orchestra*, *5D/5D*, *Order From Chaos* and *The Bastard Trio*, and starting in 2005 Kuypers ran a monthly iPodCast of her work, as well as an Internet radio station (JK Radio), which later became a part of Scars Internet Radio. She ran the Chaotic Radio show (an hour long Internet radio show 1.5 years, 2006-2007) through BZoO.org and chaoticarts.org. She has performed spoken word and music across the country — in the spring of 1998 she embarked on her first national poetry tour, with featured performances, among other venues, at the Albuquerque Spoken Word Festival during the National Poetry Slam; her bands have had concerts in Chicago and in Alaska; in 2003 she hosted and performed at a weekly poetry and music open mike (called "Sing Your Life"), and from 2002 through 2005 was a featured performance artist, doing quarterly performance art shows with readings, music and images. Starting in 2010 Kuypers also began hosting the Chicago weekly poetry open mic at "the Café Gallery" (<http://www.chaoticarts.org/thecafe>).



Poetry

"life, death & the Universe" edition

Janet Kuypers
<http://www.janetkuypers.com>

scarsuopaeajjgnd

<http://scars.tv/kuypers/poems/periodic-table-of-poetry.htm>

published in conjunction with

children
churches
& daddies

the UN-religious, NON-family oriented literary and art magazine

ccand96@scars.tv

<http://scars.tv>

ISSN 1068-5154

INTERNET ISSN #1555-1555

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Magazines:

Children, Churches and Daddies (co&d magazine), founded June 1993, Down in the Dirt, conceived 1994, founded 2000

Books:

Hope Chest in the Attic, the Window, Close Cover Before Striking (Woman), Autumn Reason, Contents Under Pressure, the Average Guy's Guide (to Feminism), Changing Gears, the Key to Believing, Domestic Blisters, Etc., Oowwa, Exora Versus, L'arte, The Other Side, The Boss Lady's Editorials (regular and 2005 Expanded Edition), Duality, Seeing Things Differently, Change/Rearrange, Death Comes in Threes, Moving Performances, Six Eleven, Life at Cafe Aloha, Creams, Rough Mixes, The Entropy Project, The Other Side (2006 Edition), Stop, Sing Your Life, The Beauty and the Destruction, co&d v167.5 (Writing to Honour & Cherish, editor edition), Blister & Burn (the Kuypers edition), S&M, co&d v170.5 Distinguished Writings editor edition, Living in Chaos, Silent Screams, Taking It All In, It All Comes Down, Rising to the Surface, Galapagos, Chapter 38 (v1, v2 & v3), Finally, Literature for the Saaty and Elba (v1, v2 & part 1), a Wake-Up Call From Tradition, (recovery), Dark Matter: the Mind of Janet Kuypers, Evolution, (tweet), Get Your Buzz On, Janet & Jean Together, po-em, Taking Poetry to the Streets, the Cane-Discia Chi-tawa Union, the Written Word, Dual, Prepare Her for This, Uncorrect, Living in a Big World, Pulled the Trigger, Venture to the Unknown, Janet Kuypers: Enriched, She's an Open Book, "40", Seizem and Other Stories, the Stories of Woman, Prominent Pen (Kuypers edition), Elemental, the 2012 Datebook, Prominent Tongue, Chaotic Elements, Fusion, Stability Stability Sheb Sheb Sheb, a Fictive's Worth 1,000 words (2 books: as a color interior page art book and a new interior page art book), Give What You Can, Down in the Dirt v094, Come Fly With Me, Clearing the Debris, Secluded & Sequestered, Six Six Six, Skilled Remains, Out of the Web, Don't Tread on Me, Lines of Intensity, Entering the Ice Age, When the World Settles, Into the Wilds, Along the Surface, Life... From Nothing, the Line to Power, Fear the Forcades, Down In It, Falling Into Place, Wake Up and Smell the Flowers, Unknown, Looking Beyond, Forever Road, See the World Burn, Exploding on the Scene, American the Last, Moving the Earth, Catch Fire in the Treetops, Solphur & Sowerd, Slate & Marrow, Blister & Burn, Rise & Repeat, Survive & Thrive, (not so) Warm & Fuzzy, Torture & Triumph, Oh, the Elements, Side A/Side B, Balance, Chaos Theory, Writing to Honour & Cherish, Distinguished Writings, Breaking Silence, Unlocking the Mysteries, the Book of Scars, We the Poets, Life on the Edge, Revealing all your Dirty Little Secrets, Decrepit Remains, Charred Remnants, Hope & Creation, Bending the Curve, Layers of Creation, Dark Matter, Survival of the Fittest, Crawling Through the Dirt, Laying the Groundwork, Weathered, echo, Ink in my Blood, (boom) (4 editions), Enriched Poetry, co&d Enriched Prose, Enriched with Dirt, An Open Book, Literary Town Hall (2 editions), Prominent Pen (2 editions), 100 Words, 1,000 Words, It Was All Preordained, Cultural Touchstone, the Mission (issue edition and chapbooks edition), Purpose, infamours in our Prime, Anais Nin: an Understanding of her Art, the Electronic Windmill, Changing Women, the Swan Road, the Significance of the Frontier, The Svetasvatara Unpublished, Harvest of Gems, the Little Monk, Death in Malaga, Moments Meri, In the Palace of Creation, X.I.P., Bob the Bumble Bee, Remnants and Shadows, I Saw This, the Drive, Thomas at Tea, Crushing Down Himalavish, Blue Collar Ballet, (response), In Your Heart the Apoptosis's Footprints of God, the Adventurers of the Key to Believing Bear, Anais Nin: an Understanding of her Art (second printing), **Beard Shaver / Charly Brown**, 12 Times 12 Equals Grass, a Marble Round Puddle Barbersh with a Marble Apple in her Marble Hand, Challenge of Night and Day and Chicago Poems, Lighten Up, Not Far From Here, Watershed, You Have Finally Won, Avenue C, Suburban Rhythms, Downs Syndrome, the Dark Side of Love, The pill is a man's best friend, Angel's Syllable is Good Boss of Devil's Spin, Poems and Stories from The Blue Collar Book of the Dead, Cat People, Death of an Angel, Ghosts: A Carmudgeon's View, Ghost Dancers Leaping from a Tank, the 4-D Window, Open Wounds, Anime Junkie, Interstice, Gunther, Cats

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Mom's Favorite Verse the demo tapes, Kuypers the Feed (MPV inclusive), Woods and Flowers the beauty & the desolation, the Second Acing Something is Sweating, the Second Acing Live in Alaska, Pettes & Kuypers Live at Cafe Aloha, Pointless Orchestra Rough Mixes, Kuypers Seeing Things Differently, 50/50 Tick Tack, 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 Row Do I Got There?, Kuypers Contact + Conflict + Control, the DMJ Art Connection the DMJ Art Connection, Kuypers Questions in a World Without Answers, Kuypers SIN, Kuypers WCRD Radio 2 (CD set), Mom's Favorite Verse and the Second Acing These Truths, assorted artists String Theory, Oh (audio CD), Life At The Cafe (3 CD set), the DMJ Art Connection Indian Flux, the DMJ Art Connection Music Degressive 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 Chaotic Collection Collection #01-05 (5 CD set), (audio CD, 2 CD set), Chaotic Elements (2 CD set), Chaos in Motion (5 CD set), 50/50 Something to a Hill (EP), P&K Tea for the Price of One (EP), K&K, Jake and Physick: An American Portrait, Kuypers the Beard Trio/Paul Baker/The Jokeme Powers Trio Fusion (4 CD set), produces the Evolution of Performance Art (3 CD set), Kuypers Live (4 CD set), the DMJ Art Connection the Thing They Did to You (2 CD set), Kuypers Seeing & Psychiatric (3 CD set), Kuypers See Paul's (3 CD set), Kuypers the 2009 Poetry Game Show (2 CD set), Kuypers and the Blkman of South Africa Burn Through Me (2 CD set), Kuypers "40" (amazon.com release), Kuypers Seizem and Other Stories (amazon.com release), Kuypers the Stories of Woman (amazon.com release).