Periodically on the Beach

cctd chapbook

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1 H	Janet Kuypers 7/21/13															2 He
3 Li	4 Be	Periodic Table poems performed										5 B	6 C	7 N	8 O	9 F	10 Ne
11 Na	12 Mg	live at Chicago's "Beach Poets"										13 Al	14 Si	15 P	16 S	17 Cl	18 Ar
19 K	20 Ca	21 Sc	22 Ti	23 V	24 Cr	25 Mn	26 Fe	27 Co	28 Ni	29 Cu	30 Zn	31 Ga	32 Ge	33 As	34 Se	35 Br	36 Kr
37 Rb	38 Sr	39 Y	40 Zr	41 Nb	42 Mo	43 Tc	44 Ru	45 Rh	46 Pd	47 Ag	48 Cd	49 In	50 Sn	51 Sb	52 Te	53 I	54 Xe
55 Cs	56 Ba		72 Hf	73 Ta	74 W	75 Re	76 Os	77 Ir	78 Pt	79 Au	80 Hg	81 Tl	82 Pb	83 Bi	84 Po	85 At	86 Rn
87 Fr	88 Ra		104 Rf	105 Db	106 Sg	107 Bh	108 Hs	109 Mt	110 Ds	111 Rg	112 Cn	113 Uut	114 Uuq	115 Uup	116 Uuh	117 Uus	118 Uuo
Lantanidi		57 La	58 Ce	59 Pr	60 Nd	61 Pm	62 Sm	63 Eu	64 Gd	65 Tb	66 Dy	67 Ho	68 Er	69 Tm	70 Yb	71 Lu	
Aktinidi		89 Ac	90 Th	91 Pa	92 U	93 Np	94 Pu	95 Am	96 Cm	97 Bk	98 Cf	99 Es	100 Fm	101 Md	102 No	103 Lr	

Mendelevium
#101, Md

"Once, there lived and existed
a great learned man,
with a beard
almost as long as God's."

Daniel Posen wrote that,
about Demitri Mendeleev,
a Russian scientist
who created the Periodic Table as we know it.

There's even a sculpture
outside the Bratislava, Slovakia
University of Technology —
in the center is Mendeleev's head,
fully adorned with metallic curves
for his flowing name and beard,
as rows of elements
emanate from his head.

Because while other scientists
tried to come up with ways
to *order* the known elements,
Mendeleev predicted
a system of elements,
based on their weights
and explaining their properties —
this idea showed the spaces
between the atomic weights
of discovered elements,
and explained the *properties*
of elements that would only be
discovered in the future.

It's good to know
that just a few years after
the American Civil War ended,
that scientists globally
were able to understand
the relationship between
the elements, thanks to Mendeleev.

And it's sad
that the science community
waited for nearly half a century
after this God-like scientist's death
to mane an element after him.

#

Mendeleev did many odd jobs
during his life,
not unlike Albert Einstein,
with an element named after him
only two spots away
on Mendeleev's Periodic Table.
And the thing is,
Mendelevium is only created
after smashing Einsteinium
with alpha particles...

But it's sad,
that with all of the research
the world has done
to learn about this element,
we still know so little.
Mendeleev taught us
how to research and discover more,
but now that we found
only trace amounts of Mendelevium,
we still don't know what to do...

#

Because once we've found you,
if you don't give us enough
so we can learn,
we're forced to wonder:
will you be more like Einsteinium,
silvery-white, radioactive —
but with an estimated enthalpy
that underlines your danger to us?
Because I imagine that you,
like Mendeleev,
will show us *how* to learn
then leave us alone
to struggle for you.

Roentgenium

#111, Rg

Being in just the right place
at just the right time
is what getting what you want
is all about.

#

Thirteen nuclear researchers
bombarded Bismuth two oh nine
with Nickel sixty four ions
to make the Nickel penetrate
the Bismuth nucleus,
so they'd come together
to make a bigger atom.

So the Nickel had to go fast enough
to penetrate the Bismuth nuclei
(not too fast, but not too slow),
and still, you'd lose a lot of atoms
to
space.

Enough experiments,
enough times,
created more atoms
of element
one one one.

They looked for so long,
and no one knows for sure
what Roentgenium looks like,
so the researchers started
predicting it's properties
because it has such a short
half life.

#

And on the anniversary
of when this all came together
in just the right way,
at just the right time,
that's when John Hinckley,
after stalking the rock star
and watching his habits,
that's when he walked
from the sidewalk
and shot John Lennon.

Because as I said,
you have to be
in just the right place
at just the right time
to make everything
come together,
don't you.

#

But if we got enough
of one one one,
we'd love this precious metal —
even if only for a short while.

Actinium

#089, Ac

So at my old job
we had to work with
this piece of machinery
that in order for it to work,
needed to be powered
by eight D cell batteries.

Yeah, we could have
plugged it in,
but there never was an outlet
in the places where
we actually used
this machinery.

And these eight
D cell batteries
we had to use
were lasting only
like
two to four hours,
so we had to
go through anywhere
from four to eight
sets of batteries a day.

I mean, that's insane,
having to go through
all that battery power,
so I called the manufacturer
to see if any battery packs
had a longer life,
I even asked
if rechargeable battery packs
existed for it.
They said there were no
rechargeable battery packs,
but a sales engineer there
said they had a special
long life battery pack
that lasts several years.
Sounds like a good plan,
so I asked for pricing,
and found out it was
thousands of dollars.

Yeah, this battery pack
could run from
fourteen thousand dollars
to upwards of
forty thousand dollars...

But I was prepared to go
to our supervisor with
these figures, because
yeah, that's a lot of money,
but if we keep using this machine
we'll spend that on batteries
in less time.

So I called that sales engineer
again for more information,
and that's when he told me
sorry, we couldn't buy it.
Now, I know it's expensive,
but I had to know what's up,
and he said they could only sell it
to NASA,
the DOD,
and select US government agencies.

So yeah, I had to ask why,
and found out it was a special
radioactive thermoelectric battery
for use in outer space.

it seems that the
radioactive Actinium
was the fuel
for the work
that I need to do.

I guess it figures,
that the only thing
that could help out my work
is something insanely rare,
and insanely expensive,
and it's best suited
for spacecraft —
not down here,
where I've got work to do....

Yttrium
#39, Y

Recently NASA sent a rocket
to collide with a comet
to gather comet dust,
so they could learn about comets,
which contain the primordial parts
of what started this solar system.

A compact disc bearing my name
was mounted on the impactor
spacecraft shot into space
on this Deep Impact mission.

Although this was the first NASA
mission with my name on it,
it was also the first NASA mission
to learn about what's deep inside
a comet.

The rocket combustion chamber
that shot this impactor spacecraft
on it's collision course
with Comet Tempel 1,
had a silver-colored lining
of an alloy of nickel, chromium,
aluminum and Yttrium.
Yttrium makes sense, because
Yttrium has been used
in places from MRI scanners
(to help us heal)
to CRT tubes on TV sets
(to help us see).

Yttrium makes element
compounds stronger
(good for stellar travel)...
Besides, the fact that Yttrium
is colorless, odorless,
and not naturally magnetic
gives it an added plus
while being a part of the launching
of the rocket I tacked my name onto
when looking for a comet.
It'll help us see more than
what's inside our bodies, or
what a cathode ray tube could —
it may help us see
where we came from
in this solar system too.

Holmium
#67, Ho

Got a set of poetry word magnets
(so you could arrange words on your fridge
to write a message, or write a poem),
and even though I remembered
that magnets have two sides with two poles,
I still took one of the magnets
(I think the word on this magnet was "stick")
and turned it around, to see
how it wouldn't stick to the fridge.

Now, Holmium has the highest
magnetic strength of any element,
so I thought about this magnet's poles —
but I didn't know that scientists
have been using Holmium
to try to discover the widely theorized
and avidly debated "magnetic monopole"
(a magnet that only has one pole).
Grand unified and superstring theories
predict their existence, and these
magnetic monopoles could explain a ton
about space, time, and the laws of physics.
But the theory is that there's so little of it,
and nobody's been able to even find it,
so they'll keep using this magnetic Holmium
to try to find this hypothetical particle...

And it's strange, when it comes to Holmium,
I mean, it's used to color cubic zirconia...
And when it comes to that magnetism,
Holmium can even absorb nuclear neutrons.
But the cool thing is that Holmium
is used for dental and medical purposes,
and it's even used with solid state lasers
to remove some early stage cancers
with only a local anesthetic.

Wow, that
and it can help scientists
understand more about the universe
(even if it's only on a quantum level).

I guess there was a reason why
I was so drawn to these qualities....

Alumium?
Aluminium?
Aluminum?

#13, Al

So back in the day,
this is how researchers
conducted science
when working with things
they didn't know...

So when a Denmark man
in eighteen twenty-five
discovered element thirteen,
(and wanting to know
everything about it),
he tasted the element.
Thinking it was bitter
(and made his mouth
tighten like he ate alum),
he posed the name
for element thirteen
to be Alumium.
But I think the scientists
that formed the
element-naming community
didn't like that name,
so the called the element
"Alumunium".

But the element's name
is Aluminum,
Aluminium is a British thing,
so why is it known
in the states
as Aluminum?

Well, I heard a man
explain that he heard
(now I don't know
if this is true,
but hear me out)
he heard that in the states
when a company
(wait, it might have been
the Aluminum Company
of America, ALCOA,
but I'm not sure)
when it was starting,
it filed it's name
to the federal government,
and when meaning to write
"the Aluminium
Company of America,"
they forgot
the letter "i",
so their name became
the Aluminum Company
of America.

And, well, it stuck,
not only to the company,
but also to the science
community in America,
and because someone
forgot to write
the letter "i"
for registering
a company name,
all American-speaking countries
now say "Aluminum"
instead of "aluminium".

So from tasting like alum
to mis-spelling a word,
Alumium, I mean,
Aluminuium, or
rather, Aluminum,
now has quite a list
of aliases...

Thulium
#69, Tm

Scroll to Medieval times,
and see a classical map.

Look over the Carta Marina,
because there you can find
what some theorized
as an island of antiquity —
through for those who traveled
by boat around Britain,
the Thule was the most northerly
of the Britannic Islands.
In ancient literature, however,
the Ultima Thule
was the symbol for
a far-off land,
something unattainable.

And when Thulium was discovered
in the late eighteen hundreds
(named after Thule,
as a mythical region
in Scandinavia),
the element was so rare that
it's qualities were unattainable...

But even though this is
the rarest of the rare,
and despite the high cost,
it's in the YAG laser, used
for laser surgery, for work
unattainable by the human hand.
It's even bombarded
in a nuclear reactor
for it's use in portable
x-ray devices,
so we can see
what was otherwise
unattainable to the naked eye.

I mean, because of
Thulium's fluorescence,
it's even inside euro banknotes,
to prevent counterfeiting.

Because Thulium fluoresces
with a deep blue hue,
we'll sail the oceans
to learn, we'll go to
the farthest places we know,
just to see trace glimpses,
because we want to go beyond
what we see...

Ruthenium
#44 Ru

I've looked for something
that would pique my interest,
the palladium bored me,
platinum was too expensive
because it was often so rare,
but then I looked around
and that's when I discovered you.

I mean, there didn't seem to be
much of a use for you,
I even heard that a metals company
even offered 100 grams of you
free to aspiring researchers
(hoping that someone
one day may find a use for you)...

Organometallic chemistry experts
were even trying to give you away.

Well, sure, chemists used you —
they mixed you with whatever
they could find, just to see
what you might possibly create.

(Kind of like a bartender,
trying to come up with
the perfect cocktail, they
could mix for decades...)

but I've looked into it,
and you're a cheap dull grey,
probably something
I'd find at a Walmart...

I know, I said I was looking
for something to pique my interest,
and though you come around cheaply,
you're still harder to find.
I'll keep looking for something
to pique my interest,
and who knows, maybe
one day
people will find just the right niche,
and you'll be just what I need.

Technetium

#43, Tc

You're named from the Greek word for "artificial",
because you were the first element man ever made...

We wanted to discover, we wanted to find you out —
we'd even create you if this was the only way.

We can only find you after your brethren
have been broken apart to reveal you. But the thing is,

your name is a bit misleading, though, since
you can be found naturally, albeit in trace amounts.

Though it's funny, we searched for you for so long,
and now we discover that you're a by-product

of our nuclear power stations. Then everyone thought
we wouldn't know what to do with nuclear waste.

You've been put into the environment as
"low-level-waste" for nearly half a century,

but what I've learned is that doctors inject
small amounts of you into patients with tumors,

so they can see exactly where they need to heal people.
People wondered what we'd do with our nuclear waste,

but now you're used in 20 million medical procedures
each year, because your short half-life makes you safe

and the way you decay helps doctors see
exactly what they need to do to save a life.

And yeah, you're nuclear waste injected into a human,
but they need such a small amount that radiation is low.

It's hard to believe that we searched for you for so long,
and now that you're injected into 20 million patients —

in North America alone — every year,
it's good that we finally found you out.

Periodically on the Beach

Janet Kuypers

http://www.janetkuypers.com

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