poetry on sexism, life and death from the other side of the world

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s c a r s u o 1 1 e o 1 1 q n d



Building Houses out of Pallets

Janet Kuypers 5/12/12

I've heard that in poor places
in South Africa
They build houses out of extra pieces
of scrap metal.
But here in the Dominican Republic,
I saw them
building houses out of pallets.

I thought for a second about
artist paint pallets,
and of course, I came back to
these large wood pallets
for hauling mass product from point A
to point B,
and all I could think was:

Hmmm. Houses made out of pallets. Hmmm.



on the back of a touring bike

Janet Kuypers 9/26/14

I'm not a biker bitch.

I know I've gone 155
on his ZX11...

I know I rode
(by choice, mind you)
for I don't know how many miles
at night in the pouring rain
on the back of his cycle,
and I've been told
that initiates me
into some unwritten club
as an official biker.

(don't ask me about the clutch, or actually *driving* a motorcycle, but apparently I'm an official biker.)

But one sunny summer day riding on the back of his touring bike, some pissy little car cut right in front of us knocking us into oncoming traffic (yes, there were cars driving straight towards us, we almost crashed) so they could cut off a motorcycle to get to the left turn lane first. Well, since they forced us into oncoming traffic, we were forced into that left turn lane too, so we stopped at the light right behind them, and the bike rider swung his leg (while I sat at the back) and told me to wait there as I watched him walk toward that car.

And I was thinking, wait, he left me on a running motorcycle, I don't know how to make this thing move, and what is he doing?

So I watched him (wait, I have to first let you know, he's like six foot four, he's a double black belt Marine, he's an

imposing looking man)

So I watched him walk to the driver's side of the car that cut us off, then knock repeatedly with almost enough force to shatter that window before he started yelling at whoever was driving that car. I couldn't hear if the driver was yelling back; I only heard him screaming that they could have killed us. and they should watch for motorcycles. And you know, I can't really remember the details of what he said, I had a motorcycle helmet on, it was just a little freaky to watch before he walked back before the light changed.

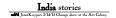
And I was still in stunned mode, but when that light did change, that car then tried to hit us again, so I pushed with my hand against the car and he put his foot to the car (like our limbs would block a car, but cut us some slack. it was instinct, what were we supposed to do), and the car started then chasing us. Apparently after we took turns through a random subdivision, the driver apparently got tired of the driving taunts and decided enough was enough and left us alone.

Not a half hour later, there was a knock on my door. I opened my front door to find a cop asking for the motorcycle driver by his full name.

I asked him to wait.

I *told* that motorcycle driver and all six foot four of him came to the front door —

but when he did, the cop asked him who he was, he confirmed his name and then he asked him if it would be okay if he sat on the stoop (because being so tall, he didn't want to look imposing to the cop).



He did his best to rationally explain what happened.

The cop then asked if he pounded on the glass, but he wanted the cop to understand that the *driver* was the instigator. But then the cop said the driver of the Pontiac Sunfire had said that the motorcycle driver yelled, "Get out of the car you nigger cunt so I can kick your ass!"

Which stunned my motorcycle driver, so he responded, "Excuse me?!? There was a woman driving the car? I didn't know that."

And the cop said, wait a minute, you were pounding on the car,

you had to see...
And he said yes, he knocked on the window, but the driver never rolled down the window, and he suggested to cop look at those windows, which were so heavily tinted the he couldn't see into the car.

The cop said he didn't notice that. Then he took some notes.

I think the cop realized that this motorcycle driver was *far* to aware of his surroundings to get in trouble with the cops.

The cop then told him that the woman wants to press charges. The cop then asked him, "What would *you* like to do?" Then he responded, "As far as I am concerned, it's over, nobody got hurt, everything is settled. But if she wants to press charges, fine. I would like to press charges of assault with a deadly weapon and attempted murder. Ask her if she wants to continue."

(Because what she did was a felony, he also suggested to check her car for his boot print and my hand print in self-defense, and he reminded the cop to check the tinting on her windows.)

The cop then said there are a lot of crazy people out there, and suggested that the driver could have had a gun...
But then the cop left, and we never heard from the cop again.

I don't know what the lesson is from this. To not succumb to road rage, to see motorcycles, I don't know. But I have to admit, from sitting on the back of a touring bike, it was kind of cool to see a man defend our collective safety by fighting a car with his bare hands.



unmarried women and dead bodies everywhere

Janet Kuypers

the Ganges River in India, the most saced river to Hindus is still religiously renowned

but on one day not too long ago, at one tributary of the Ganges river they discovered twenty-eight bodies

the locals first spotted the corpses when vultures surrounded those bodies as they piled up along the shore

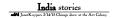
online news sources explain that bodies may have been left there when families couldn't afford a burial

and at those same online news sources, lucky you, you can see videos of dogs eating at the flesh of the dead

but I was there, I read those newspapers as the Star of India came to me daily, while locals discovered more bodies:

before they found one hundred and four the local papers explained that this 'tradition' of "jalpravah"

is a custom in some cultures —



when unmarried women die their bodies are dumped in the river

unrecognizably decomposed, more and more bodies of unmarried women

kept floating to the surface in just a few days, in the sacred Ganges river

I kept looking for an explanation, and all I could think was that this river was supposed to be sacred

and I wondered if this is their effort to give these women a family in the afterlife, putting them in a river

they call sacred

because I know how they view women in India, cover their skin, they don't talk back, because even though women

are treated like nothing to men there, they'd be less than nothing if they're not married



Visakhapatnam

Janet Kuypers 1/19/15 (from the India haiku series)

destroyers, frigates swarm Visakhapatnamís bay patrolling beaches

poor

Janet Kulypeys 1/19/15 (from the India haiku series)

employ poor — make them hand-paint curbs, tie fronds to lights so streets look nicer



unless

Janet Kuypers 1/19/5 (from the India haiku series)

feel warmth from the sun touching legs, shoulders, your skin

unless you're woman

don't

Janet Kuypers 1/20/15 (from the India haiku series, with bonus word)

> don't drink their water, never show legs or shoulders. or go out at night

alone



cover

Janet Kuypers 1/19/15 (from the India haiku series)

cover shoulders, legs women are second class, so cover your spirit

imprisoned / ignorance

Janet Kuypers 1/21/15 (from the India haiku series, with bonus word)

I am imprisoned on earth's dirty side, due to their ignorance



extend

Janet Kuypers 1/19/15 (1/20/15 IST, from the India haiku series)

doctors found gene to

extend life; plan to use for anti-aging cream

Quoting twitter with a found haiku

Janet Kuypers started 3/9/15, finished 3/12/15 adapted from @PrezBillyJeff 3/7/15

What will save us from isis? Water with fluoride, vaccines, fewer guns?

Janet Kuypers 1/19/15 (1/20/15 IST, from the India haiku series)

our only choice is to destroy ourselves. it's our choice. and so we do



Us Creative Types

Janet Kuypers 5/17/12

I'm angry with you.

I know us creative types are self-absorbed,

but only if you're so destitute that even shelters or food banks can't help should you ever think about it.

I mean, I know we're really all so selfish, and selfishness is a virtue, but I swear to god, this is the wrong kind of selfishness.

If you think this will make you happy, this lack of existence, think of how much pain you've caused by this one selfish act.

Is that how you want to be remembered?

I know us creative types are so self-absorbed, so wouldn't you rather be remembered for your talents, and not have your cut-short creativity be so overshadowed by the pain you've caused?

###

Because screw you,
I know pain,
I've been where you've been,
I think I've been closer than you,
I think I've had more reason than you...
I don't know how long
I was on that edge, and
I struggle to this day
with the knowledge that
I should have just done it
and gotten it over with.

Trust me, I know.

But all us creative types have these demons haunting us, and it's supposed to be our creativity that gets us through it all.

So yeah, I'm angry with you.

Because you said you're a creative type, so you should have been strong enough. Test your brain and your soul by testing your creativity more. I mean, Kerouac may have tested himself by bathing in bathtubs of liquor, people have tested themselves with anything from drug overdosing to auto-erotic asphyxiation. And yeah, those creative types were selfish, but they aren't as selfish as you.

And I'm angry, because you took the easy way out.

And I'm angry, because you caused so much pain in this world with this one selfish act.

And I'm angry, because now, what you've done, the pain you've caused, that's the only way I am forced to think of you now.



JY asks

Janet Kuypers 11/05/14 "two haiku" poem

philosophers ask, "if all we are are chemicals, why do we cry?"

he thinks after a loved one dies, and he is filled with questions and angst

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India

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BOOKS Rope Chest in the Artis, the Window, Class Cover Belves Striking, (Woman.), Autumn Reason, Contents Under Pressure, the Average Gay's Golde (to Framinian), Changing Gears, the Key to Edinving, Domestic Blatter, Dr., Owere, Exero Versse, L'ert, The Others Side, The Bests Ledy's Editorials (regular and 2005 Expanded Editional), Doubly, Serial Planes publicated (Pressure), Death Canada, Serial Strike, The Middle, Serial, Size Ledy Caldron, 1997, 19

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