

Classic Poetry Series

Joanne Kyger
- poems -

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Joanne Kyger(19 November 1934)

Joanne Kyger is an American poet. Her poetry is influenced by her practice of Zen Buddhism and her ties to the poets of Black Mountain, the San Francisco Renaissance, and the Beat generation.

Overview

Kyger studied at the University of California, Santa Barbara, before moving to San Francisco, in 1957, and becoming involved with the poetry scene around Jack Spicer and Robert Duncan.

In 1960 she joined Gary Snyder (whom she had met in San Francisco in 1958) in Japan. They were married on February 28, immediately after her arrival. She later travelled to India with [Snyder](http://www.poemhunter.com/gary-snyder/), [Allen Ginsberg](http://www.poemhunter.com/allen-ginsberg/) and Peter Orlovsky, where she met with the Dalai Lama. She returned to the United States in 1964 and her first book, *The Tapestry and the Web* was published the next year.

In 1965, she married Jack Boyce. They separated in the early seventies.

Kyger has published more than twenty books of poetry and prose, including *Going On: Selected Poems, 1958–1980*, (1983); and, *Just Space: poems, 1979–1989* (1991). She has lived in Bolinas since 1968, where she has edited the local newspaper. She has also done some occasional teaching at the Jack Kerouac School of Disembodied Poetics of the Naropa Institute, in Boulder, Colorado.

In 2000, her 1981 collection of autobiographical writings was republished as *Strange Big Moon: Japan and India Journals, 1960–1964*, which Anne Waldman has called "one of the finest books ever in the genre of 'journal writing'".

More recent poetry collections include *God Never Dies* (Blue Press), *The Distressed Look* (Coyote Books), *Again* (La Alameda Press), and *As Ever: Selected Poems* published by Penguin Books.

Her most recent book is *About Now: Collected Poems* from National Poetry Foundation. It won the 2008 PEN Oakland Josephine Miles National Literary Award for Poetry.

In 2006 she was awarded a grant from the Foundation for Contemporary Arts

Grants to Artists Award.

[he Is Pruning The Privet]

He is pruning the privet

of sickly sorrow desolation
in loose pieces of air he goes clip clip clip
the green blooming branches fall—'they're getting out
of hand' delirious and adorable what a switch
we perceive multiple
identities when you sing so beautifully the shifting
clouds You are not alone is this world
not a lone a parallel world of reflection
in a window keeps the fire burning
in the framed mandala, the red shafted flicker
sits on the back of the garden chair in the rain
the red robed monks downtown in the rain a rainbow arises

simple country practices thunder
lightning, hail and rain eight Douglas Iris
ribbon layers of attention

So constant creation of 'self' is a tricky
mess He is pruning the loquat, the olive
which looks real enough in the damp late morning air

May 15, 1995

Joanne Kyger

Buddhism Without A Book

Well, you had to find it some
where another person passed simplicity
on to you, the practice of some syllables
the position of a seated body and you believe
a lineage of recognition of 'mind'

not perfect, but intimate
with suffering
and the futility of maintaining
those troublesome states
of fear and hate

'Try this
Lift the corners of your mouth slightly
and take three breaths
this is known as mouth yoga' (* Yvonne Rand)

It has nothing to do with smiling
It has nothing to do with happiness

MARCH 7, 2003

Joanne Kyger

Descartes And The Splendor Of

DESCARTES AND THE SPLENDOR OF
A Real Drama of Everyday Life.

In Six Parts.

. . .

PART IV

I reject as absolutely false all opinion in which I have the least doubt. As our senses often deceive us I assume they show us illusion, and must reject them. As reason is subject to error, and who can offer more living proof of that than I, I must reject the faculty or reason.

Finally I am aware that I am only completely and confidently aware of all this rejection and doubt. This is all I can be sure of, this spinning out of my head. HENCE I arrive at my First Fundamental Truth. I THINK hence I AM. OR I Doubt hence I Am; or I Reject hence I am. You get the picture.

However this I is of the Mind, and wholly distinct from the Body. But then further clear reasoning brings me to this: IN ORDER TO THINK, IT IS NECESSARY TO EXIST. I never saw a dead man think, I never hope to see one, but I can tell you any how, I'd rather see than Be one. Dead men don't think. An therefore, everything we exactly and truly know, like THE REASONING ABOVE is because it is CLEAR AND DISTINCT.

I realize that to doubt is a drag, and a PERFECT BEING would accept everything. But from WHENCE DID I GET MY IDEA OF PERFECTION!!!! PLACED IN ME BY A NATURE, BY A NATURE IN REALITY MORE PERFECT THAN MIND and WHICH EVEN POSSESSES WITHIN ITSELF ALL THE PERFECTION OF WHICH I COULD FORM ANY IDEA, that is to say, IN A SINGLE WORD, MOTHER GOD.

Without this idea of the perfection of MOTHER GOD we should not exist.

Imagination is a mode of thinkin lomed to material objects. AND THE STUFFY MIND ASSUMES IF YOU CANNOT IMAGINE, something, IT DOES NOT EXIST. WHICH IS beside the point and off the argument if not completely irrelevant to this text by which I am following myself

in glory and splendor. AM I A BUTTERFLY DREAMING I AM ME
or ME DREAMING I AM A BUTTERFLY or am I MOTHER GOD
in Glory and Splendor? Our ideas become confused because we are not
WHOLLY PERFECT and our razor sharp reason must be wielded at all
times to guard against ERROR, error of IMAGINATION and error of
the SENSES.

Joanne Kyger

Earlier

Into the party, with engraved invitations, I am bored when
I realize the champagne in the decrepit bowl is going to get
filled up a lot. Well then, on the greens in front of the
Mansion are walking Tom Clark and Ted Berrigan, what chums!
Do you think I could possibly fall in step, as they turn same
to far flung university on horizon, gleaming. You bet your
life not. The trouble, says Ted, with you Joanne, is that
you're not intelligent enough.

Joanne Kyger

From Joanne

'JOANNE is a novel from the inside out.'

what I wanted to say
was in the broad
sweeping
form of being there

I am walking up the path
I come home and wash my hair
I am bereft
I dissolve quickly

I am everybody

Joanne Kyger

From 'Marian Lopez Calixto's Story,' (Visit To Maya Land, Fall 1976)

In the time of the ancients
the earth went dark for 5 days
and they broke many pots
 and the pots spoke
And the demons in the dark came forth
from them:
The lion, the snake, the jaguar
And the people perished from them.

The little children sprouted wings.
'You will die mother'.
And the child went outside
 at once
And changed into a bird
And the children survived.

At dawn, no single person
left alive
Only birds,
Jay, woodpecker, sparrow . . .

The the people were transformed. They were good
 again. The sun came out
in the soft white radiance.
And our father in heaven came down
to make some other people
 First from clay

But they couldn't move well
and he destroyed them again
 Pulverized the clay
and prepared the clay
 and made the clay alive.
And looked for food for them
 But they didn't like the grasses
he gave them
 so he gave them

the delicious part
of his thigh
And they fought trying to take it away
from each other.
'It must be that they like my body then'
said our father.
And the clay
began to talk
and became human
one part man, one part woman.

Hellooooooooooooo

Are you here now?
I am here now

Are you here?
I am here.

Have you come here?
I have come here.

Will you drink a little
to sweep away the fear?

Breathing the gods, getting the goods

I dreamed I went to see the officials
of our town
They were seated at a long table
I was handed a basket
Inside the basket were many flutes
I chose one,
one that was not too new.
I had been given the soul of the flute
That is how I can play
the flute today

Just not too far away, the dreams

just on the other side,
of this lazy after comida dream
the Dutch students playing ping pong
and softly talking on the other side
of the courtyard; Beach Boys from the boys'
room.

Now vast sky of clouds move over
Now the sun warms
the land's dreamy Espanol

my lord
I, Joanne
where, am I in time
Me is memory
through the courtyard door
take me out, take me out

Joanne Kyger

From 'Places To Go'

This is the ghost one I was referring to.

II

My Place was loosing the
great beauty that came on horse reaching out to me as I lay
locked, no I won't and running after, I want I want. Nearly
falling like a ghost, telling it like a ghost, becoming wet.
Waiting.

I'll take it out again, the asking for candy and sweet in
the woods where they go. I know of course, and can't get
through, just skating on thin ice out of danger bringing them
candy and sweet away from the toes, being caught.

So then there seemed to be many things. She almost caught
me, as I looked up and was falling or I was looking down and
was falling. This was there worry.

I didn't know how far
it could extend, where ever the first move is to be made.

They hammer on the trees in the woods those boys, wearing
white shirts, and guns.

III

Now it sours. The things I made, I guess, are all a result,
held away, the latter portion blooms.
Evelyne watched all
the way through, the medium, rattling around, how, was it being
sized up, when it is being left, unattended.

I can see now
whay I cut it away and called it my own. They were cut away, the
swhole world blooms. I cut the dead branch off the honeysuckle,
it started out last June going halfway up the porch.

It is better now the dead portion is cut away. It is still
true that I can fold, I mean the room can tilt, but half and
hald, that's how it blooms.

I don't know it exactly, but he was struck blind when women had pleasure the most that they did not want to hear; or saw wrongly. Was he born one way and then the other. But he knew both as a man, lay dying, along the stream of blood to talk.

One side sleeps, the other awakes. I would not worry of dream, if I were you. It does not lurk, Saying it now, if you care to remember, oh, Did I say that?

Nobody knows what they want. They can plan it out and get thta beautiful construction, I mean mine is the most beautiful but I never get what I want. You can't put the rocks in your mouth on the seashore, rub them in your eyes.

V

Came up on a horse. Those days were like breaking through sunlight, where the sand would bite at the feet. God is with you. I do poems before I go to sleep, these are dream poems, there is Snow White's bottom.

How high are the fences around? There are still areas to play in, washing hair, poor Joanne. Margaret took her first bite by herself.

And the terrible boredom, waiting, in the sun, with a house folded of cardboard and crayon people against the walls. Carrots the girl next door, and we ate them.

Also the stone road goes down perilously, the same pier awash, the water slide into the deep depths.

Joanne Kyger

Here In Oaxaca It's The Night Of The Radishes

Here in Oaxaca it's the Night of the Radishes
Now I wave from the green
balcony above the gardenia
in my shoes without socks the sun
is frankly generous
today when everyone needs
room at the inn Time to put
the buddha back in place
He doesn't mind being `catholic'
in Mexico
Part of the long preliminaries of the days
preparation
for carving through the red skin

DECEMBER 23 TUESDAY

Joanne Kyger

Influences In Poetry

Dream:

In a room getting ready for a party
with Dotty,
Duncan MacNaughton comes in and says
'Stephen Rodefer is on his way here to kill you!
You'd better hide.'
We run to the bathroom
and lock the door.
Come to think of it
Duncan looks pretty strange himself.

'There's only room for one
at the top of the steeple'

-Robert Frost

Joanne Kyger

It's been a long time

NOTES FROM THE REVOLUTION

During the beat of this story you may find other beats. I mean a beat, I mean Cantus, I mean Firm us, I mean paper, I mean in the Kingdom which is coming, which is here in discovery.

It is also Om Shri Maitreya, you don't go across my vibes, but with them, losing the pronoun. It is Thy, it is Thee, it is I, it is me.

Machines are metal, they serve us, we take care of them. This is to me, and this is to you. You say you to me, and I say you to you. Some machines are very delicate, they are precise, they are not big metal stampers, She made enough poetry to keep her company.

My Vibes. You intercepted my vibes. The long shadows, the long shadows, the long shadows. My sweet little tone, my sweet little tone is my arm.

On what Only: The song that girl sang the song that girl sang

Joanne Kyger

Morning Is Such A Welcome Time. It Doesn'T Demand

Morning is such a welcome time. It doesn't demand
much from the pocket- Some coffee, a cigarette,
and the day starts, full of optimism & clarity of hope
While the Muse holds her head, and the crazy Elementals
hold down their wrath
lightly under the earth's surface.
Some vague attention
of wind stirs the golden oats
and Ita Siamese drags her breakfast rabbit over
the roof three
times into the house and escorted out
the door. While Aram Saroyan & W.S. Merwin
debate the paucity of their fathers' feelings
in New York Times reviews,
the deer
coming down the pathway still
are my startled guests as this morning proceeds normally

Joanne Kyger

Night Palace

'The best thing about the past

is that it's over'

when you die.

you wake up

from the dream

that's your life.

Then you grow up

and get to be post human

in a past that keeps happening

ahead of you

OCTOBER 2003□

Joanne Kyger

October 28, Take It Easier

I wonder what the ocean is like today?
Cold and flat, hot and flat?
Cold and whippy,, tide out, in? The sand
 will be warm, I'm sure
for the sun is out today, and although not warm
in the house
It is in the spot I am going to now.

Joanne Kyger

October 29, Wednesday

In a crowd of people I am suddenly elevated. No matter that the crowd follows Ginsberg and Snyder, out on a quick demonstration march thru the halls of a tall building out into the gardens, their faces among the trees as little Chinese sages grained into the wood. White walls, somewhat Grecian in the fancy takes you. I AM ELEVATING! from a cross legged position, I rise slowly off the ground in a crowd of people, easy as can be. ELEVATED! Mr. Ginsberg and Mr. Snyder frown, not so much? As they are on their busy way, as groups of people pour their respect and devotion towards them. Pour, pour-they're busy drinking it up all day in teacups. Do you think we've sent these young ladies and gentlemen in the right direction? That is to say, haven't we sent them in the right direction though.

With my back against a stone wall
in a courtyard, I am closing my eyes and-Now if you will just observe me, I will move up off the ground, hopefully as much as a foot, two feet, grind. In my Tibetan bathrobe.
Silence.

Joanne Kyger

Oh Man Is The Highest Type Of Animal Existing

'Oh Man is the highest type of animal existing
or known to have existed
but differs from other animals
more in his extraordinary mental
development than in anatomical
structure . . .'

Well when I think of men
I think of them in a sexual manner
Otherwise, I don't notice the difference, you know

being absorbed as being one just thinks 'people'
and not 'male' and 'female' so much as someone
to talk to. And how men are all

the same being born from Man and Woman and out
of a woman's body commonly known as 'Mother.'

'And God said let us make MAN in our own image,
after our likeness and let them have dominion.'

And 'Nature may stand up
and say to all the world,
'This was a MAN!'

And then 'I pronounce you MAN
and wife.'

Daddy you is dandy

when you're here. Shrill and soft old Autumnal

wind blow and we are tucked below

the shallow soil where seeds spring
up and wither quickly
flirting madly.

I've got him now,

the beautiful one for my part

of the year here in my dark
and expensive underground
all mine before he is shared

and killed again by the fearless boar
he is hunting and torn apart
and his blood runs out and red roses and anemones

bloom and it is spring and
he is gone again

That man about town gone again . . .

Joanne Kyger

Philip Whalen's Hat

I woke up about 2:30 this morning and thought about Philip's hat.

It is bright lemon yellow, with a little brim
all the way around, and a lime green hat band, printed
with tropical plants.

It sits on top

of his shaved head. It upstages every thing & every body.

He bought it at Walgreen's himself.

I mean it fortunately wasn't a gift from an admirer.

Otherwise he is dressed in soft blues. And in his hands
a long wooden string of Buddhist Rosary beads, which he keeps
moving. I ask him which mantra he is doing - but he tells me
in Zen, you don't have to bother with any of that.

You can just play with the beads.

from *Just Space: poems, 1979-1989* (Santa Rosa: Black Sparrow Press, 1991)

Joanne Kyger

September

The grasses are light brown
and ocean comes in
long shimmering lines
under the fleet from last night
which dozes now in the early morning

Here and there horses graze
On somebody's acreage

Strangely, it was not my desire

that bade me speak in church to be released
but memory of the way it used to be in
careless and exotic play

when characters were promises
then recognitions. The world of transformation
is real and not real but trusting.

Enough of the lessons? I mean
didactic phrases to take you in and out of
love's mysterious bonds?

Well I myself am not myself

and which power of survival I speak
for is not made of houses.

It is inner luxury, of golden figures
that breathe like mountains do
and whose skin is made dusky by stars.

O fresh day in February
Come along
with me under pine whose new cones
make flowers. In a mellow mood
let's take anything
and you're better
in the peaceful flowing

in the bech
in the bird who flies up
out of coyote bush,
bob cat who crosses the road.

For who could think I could see
the grace of other souls born, and reborn
before in crab shells
snail shells, the head of a grebe
molesin, new onions up. Drawn by
your clever sleigh of tortoise
I listen for the melody
to sing along.

Joanne Kyger

Sunday In The Storm Era

'these are extraordinary times'
so we can do whatever we want ha ha

the sky darkens
stitching the white pillow cover

If I had my way I'd sit and watch
the grey and poudy waves all day ...

The candle lights for Cypress
must be down at the channel now
where the tide rushes out
from the lagoon and keeps on going out

way out ... remember?

now the evening sky
looks pretty clear
that
was a history
just happened

DECEMBER 2, 2001

Joanne Kyger

The Crystal In Tamalpais

In Tamalpais is a big crystal. An acquaintance told me the story. A Miwok was giving his grandfather's medicine bag to the Kroeber Museum in Berkeley. He said this man took him over the mountain Tamalpais, at a certain time in the year. I believe it was about the time of the Winter Solstice, because then the tides are really low. They stopped and gathered a certain plant on the way over the mountain. On their way to the Bolinas Beach clam patch, where there is a big rock way out there.

Go out to
the rock. Take out of the medicine bag the crystal
that matches the crystal in Tamalpais. And
if your heart is not true
if your heart is not true
when you tap the rock in the clam patch
a little piece of it will fly off
and strike you in the heart
and strike you dead.

And that's the first story I ever heard about Bolinas.

Joanne Kyger

The Maze

I saw the
dead bird on the sidewalk
his neck uncovered
and prehistoric
At seven in the morning
my hair was bound
against the fish in the air
who begged for the ocean
I longed for their place
Behind the
tall thin muslin of the curtain
we could see his shadow
knocking
and we waited
not stirring
crouched by the fireplace
where the ashes blew out
later we checked the harbor
to see if it was safe
rather hoping
one had gone astray
and flunk itself upon the shore
for all to watch

If I should weep
they would never know
and so I walked
silently
shrugging off hands
in treacherous places
wanting to fall

In Williamsburg, Virginia

my uncle
pointed out the Maze
which grew
in the dead
governor's garden

delighted

I went to it

and stood
poised

inside the
precise
entrance
like a long hallway
the tightly trimmed
bushes
held themselves
pointing each
leaf
and twig
in an unquestioning manner

white gravel
caressed my feet

the sky disappeared
and I
could hear
the sound of water
rushing

I knew each corner
without pausing

Held captive in a cave
Ulysses
sobbed for his wife
who was singing high

melodies
from the center of a
cobweb shawl
of their design

three feathers
I picked
from a stone
in my path

and turning at last
I saw
the speckled bench
and halting fountain
which marked
the end.

She
tortures
the curtains of the window
shreds them
like some
insane insect
creates a
 demented web
from the thin folds
her possessed fingers
clawing she
thrusts them away with
sharp jabs of long pins
to the walls.

1958

Joanne Kyger

The Test Of Fantasy

1.

It unfolds and ripples like a banner, downward. All the stories come folding out. The smells and flowers begin to come back, as the tapestry is brightly colored and brocaded. Rabbits and violets.

Who asked you to come over? She got her foot in the door and would not remove it, elbowing and talking swiftly. Gas leak? that sounds like a very existential position; perhaps you had better check with the landlord.

This was no better than the predicament I had just read about. Now it was actually changing before my eyes. Sometimes it will come to a standstill though, and finally the reflection can begin.

Selfless—that was the proposition. Smiling and moving instantly there was no other purpose than that which brought them there, to be in a particular place.

☐

This time the mule gave its face away. Take your cadillac where you want to go in the morning, convertible as it might be, and enjoy a good bottle of rum.

Running on this way she used various modes of expression that were current. Nothing seemed to bring the woods any closer. What Woods, she was questioned, realizing that as far as the woods went, they were largely inhabitable through the facility of her mind. At the Philadelphia Flower Show, an ideal situation was built up. Here through various regulated artificial conditions, spring grass, waterfalls, the newly-sprouted bulbs completed her ideal concept of nature. The smell was overpowering.

All right then. She had a thing about nature, from flower show glamor and enormous greenhouses the rich cultivated.

A beauty of cultivation—in living? Hastiness did not prevent her from rising quick and ready to misnomers and other odd conclusions, throwing the telephone book to the floor, “OH OH the life I am entangled in.” Four sides of it.

Above was a

paradisical
level, incompleting. With working possibilities.

Below, endless preoccupations and variations were possible. Currently in vogue were shelves, the vacuum cleaner, a new bedspread and color scheme for pillows.

Taste treats were

unresponsive. Glamor do's were out. Conversation was nil.
Languid

she could not even find a place to languish upon that was fulfilling in its own way.

So out of the lifelessness that was around her,
the grape leaves drying out, and even though the avocado was sprouting,

she thought, Why not fantasy? Tugging at this character and that, trying to push a little life in a prince or a charmer, a half-blind bat, dryad, the works of the story teller. Here the four walls of the room and ceiling became apparent again. “I ought to tighten down and make sure I say exactly what I mean.”

And her face took on a tight pinched expression, and thrifty scotch economy gave her shrewd eyes in the prescribed way. Use every tidbit, usefully. Once upon a time there was a princess who had a long white fur coat with a high fluffy collar, and inside the coat were stitched beautiful butterflies in many bright colors. The princess languished. She was not sure where to sit to her best advantage to enjoy herself the most. She could not go in her mind or out. She looked at her long white hand, I am the Queen of the High Mountain Hag, she murmured to herself, still knowing she was a princess. She lay down upon the floor as if it were the garden of eden, the coat spread around her.

No, that poor little house she had built was a bore. It's better that it go up in flames, as it did.

She went down to Grand Central Station and gave away flowers. Some people took them and some people didn't.

☒

I'm glad to get back. I had to repeat a rough discontinuous journey. Questioning myself all along the way. Was I jumping on her because her time had come to an end. Indeed I pounded on his arm all night, over his concern for this soft-spoken individual, I can see nothing but their softness. Me ME, and the time we might spend together, reading and talking, to tear away that putrid husk.

My flippancy is gone. Now I have started my secret life again, in transition, reminding. As the moth reminds, its feeble antenna groping, taken like a stalk of fern, coins of money.

All over I was shaking as the fear and tension made itself apparent. It was a cold night out. It was colder still between the airy gaps, between blankets.

You can see she is thoughtful as she draws the string to the bow. Where to go indeed. The point is brought forward and discussed very cleverly.

A sleeping angel or a sleeping troll? I was rather proud of being used, pushing the clothing hampers up and down the downtown street. Here, pleasant mentors conveyed their anxious solicitations, drawing from their bags, long lists of memorandum due, what I owed. It was a lot, if I hesitated. I choose to go on, saying this is the way I go, owing nothing, being that kind of person. Hung up?

That thought intrudes as the clearly marked vista is not so clearly marked. Certainly one supposes in all honesty, that an essential core of feeling blooms in each encounter. Lost under the weight of the garbage of who are you that you are not making apparent. Thus unhappy, I don't want it to be this way, and so forth. Not costumes, or paraphernalia, the immediate reactions.

4

We of course are in a family situation. Anything I wish might happen, but the larger situations are not real, not to be considered possible, discussable as to what sense of reality they possessed.

In the snow, the wood piled up underneath. Oh those drifting sensibilities. At this point it is scarcely believable that people gather and like each other. Eating chocolate pudding, getting in touch with some other sense of alikeness. The form is no longer obvious to me. Whether they meander or are joined together in their senses in the mechanics or regular grooves they run along.

I suspect that in this house, this place that is musty and left as it was some years ago, there is no real fear; the objects are old and I am not familiar with them, only the sense that the Ghost or spirit world strikes you with its familiarity, pleasurable fear.

Here the familiar is apt to make its presence known, at any moment the unexpected lurk in the hall, into the room. Pieces of leather, old silken fans laid upon the table top, rooms filled with something left unexpectedly terror is the wrong combination of ignorance. It contains its own self with dusty fragments of velvet and fringe. 100 pieces of voice with no name, called it myself, as they spoke all day, sucking the soft slush, admitting their real deficiencies as—
I am never sure; Oh it's that power

and disease of believing in the stale that doesn't demand a real climate, takes its capacity when the demons come down.

5

The night passes in night time. The head moving to the shoulder, the head rising with a frown.

In a firm voice, it doesn't matter if the hair is flying from undue spring breezes, the self has been raptured on the wine that produces

appropriate madness, and sad she says, my dear the bacchanal is a lovely way to be rid of waste.

However, in seeing the house more manageable, one cannot even have fear larger than the unknown portions of the continent which refuses to sink.

There once was a woman who grew older, not that she minded, but the passage of time was always constant. Why does one have to contend with that she said, puzzled, as she got carried along, and constantly had to think up new coping modes of behavior. If he behaved to me thus when he was 40, now that I am 30, I can hardly behave like that to those that are 20, and so forth. There wasn't any model except the one she built, and one could scarcely believe there was no established pattern. This offered wonderful possibilities, but also indecision and gutlessness.

□

You can't see them, all bundled up, all those that choose to move other than where the distance seems appealing. Knowledge has no depth. There isn't any message to be spoken.

Wrangling, she speaks ill-advised my dear, as the cat has no point in laying its head down. She ought to watch carefully.

The claws. It could be the bent hands, as they grow, that as the fur impeaches the rose, doesn't make the thing she hangs her body on any realer. What could it be all about? The necessity to follow, balancing, contemplating words, as the basis of why we move at all.

Just a little touch. The leader cautioned further progression. I could hardly listen to the music for long. Now there seemed to be interruptions, pleasurable interludes, nothing definite, of a fragmented nature.

Certainly I wished the best for all. The sadder soldiers stumbled idly, as I also in the profound reaches of my slumber noted the elegant turns, the twisting statements grooving into the language building something

to listen to. The dress made from silk. Trusting was awkward and not of a nature to ease any further building. Whosoever you revere will come back tenfold upon you and lighten the burden carried as those who desire the warmth and necessity of communication.

☐

I am sure my dreams must have been of the wrong sort. However, as dreams are reflections of inner dilemmas, how did those arise, from a day of relaxation and summer enjoyment of the fund.

Knowledge comes from what purported strike? From that which cleanses, and let us not say "heart" but tissue. Hopefully and helpfully I have built up a language in which to talk myself to sleep. Not for purposes of letting in the cold.

However, I have found that not all blockaded against is the cold, the dreary reign of the dead, etc., and tasteless realm of the mushroom. As much can be denied as the bilious sun strives to cause an enlargement of singing in the back of the neck and the head. That is uncorraled ecstasy. I call it enthusiasm, free energy. But it has no place to land, it is bursting and unfocused; it is a real force and the counterpart of the gloomy depths.

As the pieces of the house ooze sap, blossoms and green twigs burst from the cracks. Whether or not to join in what I was half committed to see and do.

☐

At this point, when Jack picked up the pussy willow branches, I said they can't possibly be ours for the taking, and smiled with dedication to an older Con Edison man. The buildings were like the unexplored garbage in my mind, fascinating and dirty, pulling pieces of cloth from boxes left overnight. Energy as limitless possibility, in the attempt to transmit non-energy situations.

For example, if once I stop to realize what little gets through, I am much more interested in the cover than the contents; it is difficult

to find any interest in anything. Good energy displaces bad karma. And other non entities like that sort, producing flow that in its own place has a good bed, stocked well with what can be called fleet-footed fishes, and approaching places of investigation, such as relations between.

As I saw the blood flow to the surface of his skin, I forgot to watch for the telltale visions that again might come from something I have never seen; more possibly the components of what every man views. If this was a possibility, the rays from every person converging pass through the state of shock to numbness to unity without any mind at all, for this horror fits the cat on the stairs, between the fifth and sixth rung. This is the way people glow and pulse similar to an inlet of jellyfish blocking the way, full of human life; until I who will name myself a swimmer come along and refuse to be blocked on the way, although I turn back gladly, and will again swim through for it is possible they do not kill, the sting's compounded measure is fear, and thus one not need join the broad expanse of human mouths calling people to join their ranks to comfort their newfound recognition or orifices, stomachs and legs.

I reminded myself twice there were several stories that kept continuing themselves. She ignored her face, blotched and red upon times, but fuller. Did you forget to wax and wane? Her head was full of energy brought forward and positively that what was said would turn the obvious into color, but no sense. Sense was for the thinkers. Here the thinkers forgot their word orders or sense; it was better to give them coffee, and those off worse could smoke.

I had felt very foolish when I leaned forward and grasped his hand, with effort, and his cloak slipped down over one shoulder as he shouted, which is the way. And I followed for certainly no one would follow me. As the day is cold and colder, and what comes out of the head is of its own sort and nature. These words, like Nature, and Head, Thinking and Words, repeat themselves, as the lines of landscape, attics and other closed-off sections have reprimanded themselves by repetition. Light

was such an enormous possibility. Taking sight into a frenzy, it was possible that just to look was full of excitement and wonder, for ages at a time, things appeared as beautiful, the sky, the street where cars had gone by.

I worried about certain characters: ones that never seemed to be other than puzzles to me but I was drawn to them with certainty only because there seemed to be no understanding? As when the mysteries were performed, the house then itself became distilled with reason as the pots and pans were used apparently filled with the stuff of continuity. The sorrow that each day sinks into the infertile other side of day, where voice comes out of the dark, and does its rituals. Memory has its own screen across the room to view itself, and the continuous dwelling of conjecture takes permanent form in stiff-legged walks to remind, thus on and on the breathing goes.

New York. January – March, 1967

Joanne Kyger

Tuesday, October 28

It was a beautiful golden day
Now a black split shape
scuttles under
de foot. So long, Sayonara.

The fat cat lays down
dozing. I could use a little rest too
I only slept 11 hours last night,
wrote some letters, swept the floor,
planted 2 rows of onions, snow peas
And now I am looking forward
to washing my hair.

Joanne Kyger

You Know When You Write Poetry You Find

You know when you write poetry you find
the architecture of your lineage your teachers
like Robert Duncan for me gave me some glue for the heart
Beats which gave confidence
and competition
to the Images of Perfection

. . . or as dinner approaches I become hasty
do I mean PERFECTION?

September 17, 1986

Joanne Kyger

Your Heart Is Fine

Our heart is fine feeling the widest
possible empathy for the day and its inhabitants

Thanks for looking at the wind
the top of the eucalyptus
dancing like someone you know
well 'I'm here I'm here I'm here!'

The wind picks up
rush of leaves waving

Wildly for your understanding
apple, plum, bamboo
rooted and flourishing
next to your home
the air awake

without defect

June 17, 2000

Joanne Kyger