

4-9-2012

aprC2012

Robert Kelly
Bard College

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.bard.edu/rk_manuscripts



Part of the [Poetry Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Kelly, Robert, "aprC2012" (2012). *Robert Kelly Manuscripts*. 12.
https://digitalcommons.bard.edu/rk_manuscripts/12

This Manuscript is brought to you for free and open access by the Robert Kelly Archive at Bard Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Robert Kelly Manuscripts by an authorized administrator of Bard Digital Commons. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@bard.edu.

= = = = =

What can who
do to it
to change
a thing into

itself, teach
it to live?
Be alive,
peel away

identity
to find a self
to dissolve
in turn

into sheer
mere being.
Is this an answer
or the question?

7 April 2012

= = = = =

I never thought of myself
as a pious man
just did my job.
What a surprise then

when the halo came,
settled behind my head
a mild irritation
like sunburn on the neck

and you were different
then too, that's
how I knew
that I had changed—

to this day I study
only you, intently,
to understand
what I have become.

7 April 2012

HOLY SATURDAY

Tomb time.

Ceremony of waiting.

Why three days?

Work of the afterlife

each day of it

a thousand years

he was seeing

the future for us

trying to understand

to make us also

understand the need

to turn from deadly skills.

Or three days

inside the stone

to learn silence again.

7 April 2012

THOU SHALT NOT KILL

This feels like Saturday to me
Loki's revenger on Reason
using it to spoil the State
the executioner-in-chief.

7.IV.12

= = = = =

Be lyric, lover,
while the lyre lasts,
be nimble, fingers,
and shape the air

never resist
what wants to sing
even if it insists
on saying so

saying stuff also
does a music,
tuneless often
but you dance to it.

7 April 2012

DIFFICULT POETRY

Make it hard
make them bruise
their soft asses
at the reading task

later you can explain
but by then they knew
more than you did
writing it down

they will look at you
like Botticellis
you will feel proud
and a little bit ashamed.

7 April 2012

=====

Never neglect the obvious—
you might be the only one looking.

7.IV.12

= = = = =

I don't have the money
to do what I do.

Be argument alone
yourself. This is called
walking the dog
when there is no dog.

Be High Mass alone
yourself. This is called
standing in the rain
with your tongue out.

Or walking the tree back home.

7 April 2012

=====

More words more breath more music
don't bother listening it's inside you already.
Or open a can of garbanzos rinsed them well
eat them one by one learn what time means.

7.IV.12

= = = = =

Clear sky old airplane
heard not seen—haiku if I
could carry a tune.

7.IV.2012

SOPRANO

She's dying now. The stage
holds so many deaths
each one a song. And each
death can sing a thousand times.

Yes, this is my hand, and yes
these are the lips that spoke
so many tricky truths to you,
the lips you kissed. The violins

are waiting for my last breath,
music is seldom patient,
I must get on with my dying,
it is mine, it is the most

beautiful thing I will ever do.

7 April 2012

(listening to the Netrebko-Beczala *Manon*)

NATHLIE 2012-4 = (11-29)



Tear the Torah
tear the page
till there's nothing
left to read
then the bible
will tell the truth
that luminous blasphemy
by which we live

silence blue silence
silence the color of rust
silence the color of a word torn in half
then half again

how many times can you fold it and tear it

how many words can you hear in a word

2.

a silence I mean

a silence that means me

is that the same thing as looking
at something that can't look back

we are so hopelessly invisible

in this small world hardly anybody
sees anybody else we move
like elvers in a vast ocean

all on our way to the same place
the marshlands of Atlantis.

3.

They had no money there
only words

the words got written down
and passed from hand to hand

traded for a glass of milk
a cottage down by the canal
with a hole in the thatched roof

to let the rain god in.

4.

Raga Misra Pilu

Ravi Shankar is playing
the sound of paper tearing
to let the light through
Hindustani music knows all
the ways that music knows
and then something else

over the hill
the sound
of the moon rising.

(7 April 2012)

5.

SURVIVOR

The other things
they call me
out of the ocean
swamp the grey
xenoliths from
Atlantis still
covered with roses
on the Massachusetts
shore I will sit there
and know the sea

watch it call into question
my solution of its mystery
this rose unblossomed yet
even the hip of it not formed
will be Atlantis at last
and all that's left of us
who stood once on the seven-
circled silver hill
and told God what to do.

8 April 2012

= = = = =

Now I am only the wind
prospecting through Annandale
unsettling new leaves and
chafing the daffodils. Easter
is the history of Atlantis.
The dead city wakes, streets
will up again with intelligent
mind-merchants mind-dancers
who come from a glad planet
to teach us to move. Not me.
I'm settled in my element,
to be still in movement, wind
is nothing but remembering.

8 April 2012

= = = = =

Behind the screen

I work the dials

I recognize

them one by one

as they come in

yawning, back

to life again

slim-stepped easy

animates, each

tongue a new language.

8 April 2012

HALF A LOAF IS BETTER THAN ONE

Everybody's started writing sonnets
again. Springtime has a lot to answer for.
The savage lust all dolled up as sweet love,
a snake in orchids. Some cyanide in prose.
I set my heel on that fanged head, she said,
I will not rhyme, rhythm is cloying enough
so I break that too (still in love with you).

9 April 2012

= = = = =

What I thought was a chink in the wall
letting light through was gold. Wedding ring
on my own hand held out at arm's length,
pressed again the stone. There are some
darknesses that just don't work,
don't speak the hidden answers we think
only the darkness knows. This is gold
and gold is always answering. I am a gap
in the wall after all, look deep in my gleam
and you will see everything there ever is.
If you can call it seeing. It's more like being.

9 April 2012