

11-12-2011

novC2011

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Recommended Citation

Kelly, Robert, "novC2011" (2011). *Robert Kelly Manuscripts*. 18.
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But were they to this
as princesses ascend
leather satchels they
clutch virtue in when
snug-pocketed sin
remembers them one
river never again
not drunk not sober
no friend to living
but we lived? God,
doorways everywhere.

8 November 2011

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So pleased to be you
the man with the dog walks by
sure as a horse or a divorce
once he had two
another time another he
had two wives
not counting their shadows
not counting either
the strange cries in the night
when Princess Turandot
kept trying to go back to sleep.

2.

It is time to know everything again
the portrait on the wall, the weasel,
all the ancestors. the giggling nieces
whose bodies make you think of birthday cake.

3.

I think it's a picture of Dominic,
the Dog of the Lord they called
him, enemy of heresy.

To believe
the wrong thing is worse than
not believing at all. And so

the martyrs tried to clasp
the flames that clasped them.

4.

Means witnesses. They sign
their affidavits in black smoke
that leaves a greasy residue
on white geese in the market,
rigid collars of the clergymen.

5.

The things we do to one another almost
worse than what just happens to get done.
Or fate too comes from all our fumbling,
aching shoulder, molting skin, typhoon.

9 November 2011

STEPS 4: O P A C I T I E S

Early snow mild winter
he made always room
to be wrong a sign
is just a sign

does the diamond remember
its native coal

heat and pressure clarify

a sign

does a sign remember
ever what it signified

a kind of blasphemy
sometimes to think the world is
so pure the sometimes
intentions behind it looks
out from the pale forest

limbs of us sorted in the bed

linden love and yew tree live forever

frail as we are but hard to kill

imagine me another

not a rhythm but an array

synchronous elsewhere

with soft loud mouths

lips of another place

the need to chat a blue flower

hold this in line

a thought to see again

frangipani Waikiki

the doves over
doves surf

the hollow wind that wakes the heart

that winds the clock

to be another always

low-lying land
floods at first time
when the church bell rings

did I dare I did to climb that tower

steeple

so sharp the sky

wounded

and there was Paris like something I held in my hands

listen to the river

rivers always know
rivers divide and unify
rivers save us from the other
till we become ourselves

a river is a crucifix

say why

they called her Sequana
**sek^w-ana* the water of time
and come again
flowed through Lutetia
the mix the marsh the mud

all of that I knew I didn't
know this I know this

now mild sky a signifier

2.

Not long to taste a take

her chariots unhorsed
white and the warrior
sly coaxed into battle

a hero is a man who'd rather listen to rivers and trees
rather hang with his friends and finger a harp
a man who is talked to by the Other
a hero is a man who is persuaded

otherwise the red dragon and the white
struggle beneath the earth
or in the clouds to no purpose

a hero has no purpose

listening to Debussy with his thumb in his mouth

someone else's mouth

is mine

Niemandes Kuss

go be among the rose petals
turn them into scraps of paper
each with words on it

at least one.

3.

Contend beneath the earth
so much to get done

the red

mark on his forehead his mother's name

scorn historically significant novels
no words on their pages only ideas

“not even wrong”

O just be now

this glass handed you long before
drink now while the water's new

old water is the saddest god

the sadness of god

4.

has to be more

coat with a better fit

long arms in it

idol eyes

it was Waikiki the waves

came in from nowhere

from the tower we looked down

and saw the doves below

the white and the red
contending
with the earth

contending with the cloud

we saw this diamond see
we knew how pale the yellow was
our legs unsorted on the bed

the miracle of mud
particles suspended in nothingness

this colloid hymn

walked halfway across
the Delaware in summer season
on pale stones—no mud that river
dryshod children
their heads in a book

you probably think I'm a terrible man
a hero a heartless heath a hood

I am the horseless headman of your dreams

strange music the meta flows

a hero is a priest

a book on two flat feet

5.

coming near

you again

mild sky

afternoon dawn

as if the sun were always there

o do not turn away

the city is so far

sometimes these night roads appall

don't struggle with the beasts

of us go

let them sleep

the spruce is conical

the yew trees untamed

by nature and by nature we

no leaves on whose tree?

10 November 2011

TOSSING LEAVES

It must be birds who humble in the tree
and there some wind plays too
ghosts of all who perished on this block
before and after the freakwit palefolk came,

beast, bird, us. And lust
at least God gave the worms
(Schiller says so, Beethoven
rubs it in), so they have ghosts too

ghost of desire ghost of fear ghost
of just quietly dying here
and the yew tree at this window
big but not so old shows

all my ghosts one time or other
if I bother to look out and see
the intricate green meshes of a sport
I suppose I too will have to play.

11 November 2011

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Leaf loft in high time
who has you now?
No mead to dry cell
or wake fox to

so more so much this
is a kind of gold
one more thing to see
the odd hard oak

still lifts a brown hand.

12 November 2011

ABSENCE MAKES THEE

How much room for any of whom needs some hardscrabble calculation.

Computation means do it with la Puta. A wheeze of a machine or box on rubber wheels for thee, timorous. The farm stands shut late autumn, the heavy standing fans roll only on round iron bases. Stands. They teeter with us to the back lots of some closet, and winter is. The cracked window sings. Hard round bottoms of pumpkins to heft and heave, shoutwise, away into midnight fields, so Sabbath morning's orange with such mash.

O fearful thing the winter is the rich can so enjoy, wine-witted snowbunnies giggling in the snow, toddies hot on terraces for elder types in Stowe. Everything is after us, lazy, in the sense of cold pursuit. I disagree often with me and why not you? Still, still. But nothing wants to say me. Or say me back. Twisted schools of small clouds stalled overhead.

So always it's a local affair, lust, desire diminishes with the square of the distance until it meets another law, the rule of fondness and the sobs on Skype. For when the body has no chance to touch, the mind is free to habit. Have it. Wouldn't you say? You rub your chin and ask yourself, where is the man with the dog today, the blonde joggeuse, the thing on stilts. As if the chin could wag what the tongue won't lip, lovely. Local! It all fits like a finger in a hole. A steel box is safer for your gear be sure you locket. What? Don't you ever listen when I sleep? Can't I dream you as a moist moon in a lost sky, does it always have to be grass and silversides and blue fish? What about eating without swallowing? Have you ever done it with a bottle? A bench beneath the cross, rest there, impatient, as if a

cemetery is a place where things also grow we came to reap. Hold hands lest hands go loose to pluck forbidden wheat. We need to get to word. Irk. Erg. You confuse me with your looking. Search me. And once there were no lights to tell you this. I'm turning now, the road you see may be your own. How night you are today! Have you soon come back,

12 November 2011

MATHS

Поэма для Маши

1.

A lattice curve
is squaring
the circle to begin with.
Begin with him.
Turn him around
again. Let him face
the empty mystery.
Now construct
a rhombus such
that its area is equal
to the circumference
of someone else.
Someone you love,
standing there
not even close
just looking at you.

2.

A spill of reason
over a collect of wishes
each one
smooth as an egg—
an image in the mind
a germless kiss.

3.

Numbers are the way
we cope with the hollow
inside everybody else.
Of all the loves
we count the shells.
Multiply by desire
like schoolchildren.
Divide by fear.
When the outcomes's zero
the pianist closes her eyes.
Another dream begins.

4.

Each vertex
a life
and you need four

to make the soft
welcoming plane
you have in mind.
That's where love
that insolent outsider
breaks in. The fourth
vertex. The god.

12 November 2011

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Go find the easiest way
then tell me.

Tell me.

These are the matters
lost in mythology—
a pinecone, a girl
dripping with honey,
a nest of swans—
but they help you
when you find them
mount into the sky
riding only
the horse of your thigh.

Tell me, lift
a current of words
till you blot out the sun
or stand behind it
even, love,
then we can sleep.

12 November 2011