

10-2013

octH2013

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Recommended Citation

Kelly, Robert, "octH2013" (2013). *Robert Kelly Manuscripts*. Paper 118.
http://digitalcommons.bard.edu/rk_manuscripts/118

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**Imagine an organ
playing inside you—
your hymn is who**

you only are.

**The four humors the signs
of the Beastway, your
DNA, all our superstitions**

the way things are.

2.

**But you *hear*
yourself thinking
so you go out and do.**

**This is the Lincoln
moment peace or
war, this is Mahler**

**the money of the soul
wept away
*the blue distances***

**the flock of particulars
ambitions make you go
I want you to stay**

**I teach the stillness
called forgiveness,
eleven grown men**

**on a green field
hungry for a ball to kick
past other men**

**we wander in cities
they have stolen the ball
they have taken the grass away.**

3.

It could be random.

It could even be true.

Night is a time of color

**it comes out from to us then
to parse the glum world.
The invisible beings**

**our distant relations
come out then too
and dance in our slow feet.**

4.

**Believe nothing, do everything—
what more can I tell you,
here's a piece of bread**

all the rest is up to you.

24 October 2013

=====

Agreement is the secret vice of science.

A fact is just a fiction

with a powerful godfather.

Most facts are mere concurrences of agreement,

no one dissenting.

But look at a thing and do what it tells you—there fact might one day begin.

24 October 2013

=====

**Can I write a thing
that saves the me
from all the I-ing?**

**Takes us easy to Hawai'i
where the vowels matter
and there are no consonants**

**I lie before you in every way
a gladsome sleeper on the sand
Trungpa Rinpoche reminds us is**

**just the sea's name for dirt.
Lie there with me and count
the waves until the last one comes.**

24 October 2013

=====

**Blue whiskers on the kind of catfish
Büchner wrote about before he came to himself
and scattered what he found onto the stage
by way of words and words by themselves,
Woyzeck, Lenz, Danton. Shakespeare watch out.
I think they were blue. We saw a cat tonight
so that got into the picture the way they do,
the way it is with things we see that say themselves
out loud an hour after. I didn't mean it,
I just saw these fishy blue whiskers floating
towards me in the cold night, and said so.
Do you really blame me? I want something here,
not just the syntactic framework but a thing,
alive if I can make it so, warm, furry or scaly,
something I leave to you to decide. Which
end of the word is the one that really means?**

24 October 2013

DYADS

**Things regularly rapt
remain as shadows**

**A child's mind
knows all**

**Blue is not a color
blue is an answer**

**Nobody ever knows
who is speaking**

**Random numbers
have a secret rule of their own**

**Strangeness is so easy
so hard to find**

**Watch how our shadows mingle
fearsome atonement**

**A door must be closed
before it can open**

**Silence the world
till it begins to speak**

**Count backwards
till there are no numbers left**

**Name them long enough
they'll tell you their true names**

**I don't know how far I've come
because I don't know where this is**

**We call it autumn
but time is nothing but ceremony.**

25 October 2013

BEYOND IDENTITY

1.

Beginning

the clusters of

and then we will

be spirit too

noxious fumes of identity

spread from your smile my hands reaching out

o we're a fine pair

the wind and the air

2.

what would it mean to begin

another, don't you know

what I mean already

why should I keep mentioning

moanin' low the meaning

I mean to find in you

is this some stupid kind of love

**a sparrow and his seed
cracked on the noisy dawn**

**are you really the other
my own personal other
so far away I can't breathe**

**o my hopes and fears
my oats and marmots
and every stone alive alive?**

3.

**Or if it were someone else
waiting inside the door
so that either in or out
I'd have to be him**

**or even her would it be
someone else enough
to justify the deep estrangement
from what I used to think
when I was me the first time
before all the movies ended
and we had to go outside
late afternoon hot sun**

not even California not even
history just the sensory
entanglements of light, who
knew that all colors came from?

4.

Slowly the last symphony
tells all it can
the numbers are always ahead of us
but not so far we can't see
their white tails sporting over

the horizon of the knowable
which is uncountable
and the music takes us by the hands
we're adolescents we're ashamed
to be babied but that's what music is

can you doubt it even now
the embrace of the lower air
the bronze basin in your loins
all full of kindling heaped
and this sly tune to spark you

you're there and you're on fire
just as it's always been

**from even before the father
pretended the mother needed him
in order the begin**

**so every beginning is a lie
because we've always been
and there is nothing around us
older than we are dear
friend dear animal dear xenolith.**

25 October 2013, Shafer

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**And all the fire
meeting in the hand
with one small bead
of quicksilver, quick,
before it burns, discover
the alchemical apart
and withdraw there,
leaving the elements to work it out
while you pray to that
beautiful young woman
you call your father.**

2.

**For this is heaven
and there is no other,
her skirts the clouds
her flesh the meaning of your mind.**

3.

**And now come out again
out from the secret cenacle
and watch what the mercury
has become. A golden shimmer,**

and on the radio a dead man's voice

vibrant and young.

This is your mother.

26 October 2013.

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PROUST

**to live without obligations
except to your own whim.**

**Velleity, as path.
Refined by fear,
he can stare at anything
and calibrate the distances.**

For everything is loss.

26 October 2013.

1.

**It should be joyous as island
but mind needs seed**

**that info from the pleroma
no broadcast says**

**yet we use we use
the scraps of information**

**to build this house
this only house.**

2.

**For there are leopards in the forest
you heard one cough in Kangra,
she saw them crouching in Botswana —**

**I think it is the same beast every time
we carry him with us**

**the world I think is just scenery
for our terrible history.**

3.

**Or admire me sometime
for all I haven't done**

**I've left a little bit for you
to do, and what else should a gift
be but a capacity
to do something more?**

**Here is what I'm not
at last, every image incomplete.**

**But how can I pry
"I" out of these confessions,**

**confusions, the dome of St. Peter's
has swallowed the sky.**

4.

Despondent sunlight

like a wave that rises and will not fall—

after a certain age

the ocean's a man's only mother

tragedy only goes so far

then you run into the mirror,

such a cold, smooth thing,

no friction, no smell, no forgiveness.

5.

**I was in the attic
of the house I don't own**

**have gone in and out all my life
as if I knew the owner's daughter**

**or my prettiest aunt
welcomed me to cinnamon buns and tea**

**every afternoon a baptism,
whispered discoveries, the news on TV.**

**No. All that as-if stuff
is gone away with radio.**

**It's just the attic, a few
early words remembered,**

**there are no stairs
that lead down from such a place.**

27 October 2013.

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But the music's far away.

**The painter sweating in front of her canvas
ordinary space is always warm,
hot even, clothes cling**

**but see the image she has made
something never seen before
on earth or heaven**

**a new one
indifferent to heat or cold or time for me.**

27 October 2013

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In case I lose count

mind me anew

that's the Easter every day

in the renewal of mind

change from the scatter

word over rooftop

flex the left knee

to pump the heart

so that it speaks.

Physiology

meant not men but beasts—

now be me.

Tell what the skin

remembers and the mind forgets

We are between

and never there yet

and always there

the there that is here

We act our witness only

we wet the sky.

27 October 2013