

9-2013

## sepG2013

Robert Kelly  
*Bard College*

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**The moon makes a noise  
when it comes up through the trees  
I hear it clear  
but wonder how it can be**

**the trees are talking  
anyhow all the time  
especially at night  
when other things**

**things like me with feet and wills  
hurry this way and that  
so sometimes even I  
can see them pass**

**but the moon, the moon  
comes up only once  
in any night  
imagine how they**

**must hear it  
there. The sound  
of all that light  
breaking through**

**the shapes and silences  
just like a word  
but none of us have  
language anymore.**

**23 September 2013**

## WONDERING

Wondering about the crucial necessity of inserting one object into another, or one object engulfing another, or two objects side-by-side pretending to be equal, or two objects becoming one object while someone else looks at them and wonders but says hello anyhow.

There is so much wondering to be done in a world of objects. When I think about objects I think about leaving. When I think about leaving, I want to go into a very very large boat, a boat so vast that I don't know I'm on the boat, but nonetheless the boat moves quietly relatively smoothly, over the surface of an immense sea. The ocean, I suppose. Or all the oceans of the world, all of them belong to the boat and it to them. As the boat moves I move around the boat like a man walking around town, looking in this window and saying hello to people I know and wanting to know people I don't dare to say hello to.

And this is the world, I suppose, and not so different from what everybody else moves around in, on, we're all in the same boat as they say, and the boat goes... Who knows where. Going isn't the point. Being there is, to be honest, I mean, being right there with all the moving parts suddenly still, around you, I mean around me, at rest, and only me talking. And you listening. Are you?

23 September 2013

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**They point in those directions  
but do not go there.**

**All around me I see them  
pointing but standing still.**

**I can't point that I can go —  
I move in willing ignorance  
drawn to the unspecified  
truth locked in every gesture..**

**24 September 2013**

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**To be the age of myself  
and Tuesday again  
and born again  
this time with no mother  
to suffer from my arrival.  
Can I be born this time  
without hurting any other?**

**24 September 2013**

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**Measureless aptitude  
I heard and said What lab  
studies such turnings  
of the body in the glad  
of feeling?**

**No answer**

**but the newspaper,  
that broken water-clock  
still dripping.**

**24 September 2013**

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**As if someone were waiting  
Shell station about to close  
what do I do? No eyes, no wheels  
and the road squirming with wildlife?  
How can I save her now?  
I will change the story and be a dragon,  
I will grow roses between my claws  
I will rise into the sky,  
fly over and snatch her up to safety  
as the lights flicker out on the gas pumps.  
And what has your night been like?**

**24 September 2013**



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*smon-lam*

**We have to be monsters  
just to be men  
I do what I have always done  
listened to sunlight  
and made it rain.  
Pray God you  
are wet with me now.**

**24 September 2013**

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**Try harder. Cold  
but grass keeps growing  
the crow goes by  
it is yesterday already  
your hands are full.**

**24 September 2013**

## MÜNSTER

As if I could offer anyone  
a new roof on an old house  
— it's still only me

sitting here dreaming of rebels,  
radicals, terrified  
of the cruel destinies  
society has in store for them —

religion's savage reprisals  
on those who pray apart.

The iron cage where John of Leyden's  
tortured and mangled corpse  
was hung from the tower  
of St. Lambert's church  
still hangs there,  
empty of his bones,  
a warning not to think,  
not think much about God.

24 September 2013

## **TO BE**

**Finally nowhere again  
that port of speakers  
where the peach tree grows.  
Yes, there are fruits I like,  
peaches, ripe pears, cherries,  
green grapes, berries  
blue and black. Yes,  
I sometimes like the sun  
to sit in on chilly days,  
yes, outside, my back,  
against the wall,  
watching nothing. Then  
I am almost there.**

**25 September 2015**

## INTEGUMENT

Let the house breathe—  
in Provence  
roof tiles are set loose  
imbricated, to keep  
rain out but let air in  
and out, the lift  
of heat, the settlement of cool.  
Rainstorms *tectum* roof thatch text  
text means words woven  
like threads on the loom  
or thatch on the roof  
or set in place like tiles  
loosely to let  
the idea breathe.

The work of weaving,  
*tantra*, a loom,  
weave the body's energies anew –  
letting the mind breathe.

25 September 2013

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**Forgive this caution —  
a word needs to be sealed  
— the mountains of North Jersey  
are hard-to-find  
outside the mind.**

**25 September 2013**

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**So many houses  
and so many chickens  
as if we lived on air  
and needed feathers  
only to sleep on, in —  
my ignorance is screaming  
like a zither by the Danube  
the flow flickers in the fingers  
and I hear the sound  
of something small-footed  
walking on the roof  
come down out of the air.**

**25 September 2013**

## ELEGY: READING WATER

the mind produces  
captured fleets of random visions  
towed into page.

I confront you.

Hunger, she encouraged,  
the red light never changes  
figure out by appetite  
another way to get through.

Turn and turn again,  
be devious, be obvious,  
the way the sun climbs the lawn.  
Be dawn,

the quality of light,  
inexorable brightness of common things,  
keeps saying I love you,  
banality of love  
the old shoes that have brought us so far.

And infant's lechery drowned in ink,  
the child angers his lead soldiers into dirt —  
trench warfare was my specialty,  
sores on the mucosa, I shuddered



like a cathedral, deepest  
ground swell of the organ,  
I sang the mass of Berlioz,  
blasphemed desire.

But the lawn  
endured that blonde investigation,  
yellow sheen almost to the dark trees now  
we're speaking reality here,  
song of the Chattahoochee, oboe concerto,  
eagle swoop low over river  
where our little stream pours in,  
down the cataracts of the Metambesen  
I claim nothing but your wet hair.

Hunger I thought again  
what does hunger mean,  
isn't it the shadow that falls  
between us when one person  
looks upon another?  
The car is moving, the bicycle slower  
soon seen only in the rearview  
mirror, that person too,  
someone I knew, wanted, lost  
if only to distance,  
distance that mother of the mind.

Handed me a poem soaked in water —  
I believe everything I'm told  
otherwise I'd have to make it up all by myself  
this world all over again,

I said

I accept the omen,  
I am devious as springtime in the trees  
(yesterday gave me flowers,  
a woman at the door, blue  
my favorite, and the balcony  
sudden with hydrangea  
the roar of water down below)

don't you love the emptiness of all this,  
you can think as you please  
between the words,

this mint makes music

like one billion copper pennies gleaming of the sun,  
warm to your fingers,  
sweaty in your pocket,  
you walk around knowing  
you are special

for what you hold,

all you hold,  
there is a secret fire and you,  
a cluster of hard symbols

no man can touch

now toss them in the running water

a pagan prayer

to everything there is

because it is suddenly

all around us

plain as video

— she picks the shadow up

and divides it,

spreads it out

across the warehouse floor, says

When you come again you'll be a person,

you will remember your mother on Father's Day

but mostly you'll do it right,

will tie your shoes,

follow up the stairs, listen to the radio

like a century past and fall asleep

while the words and music still go on —

the shadow heard!

and celebrated

in that dusty way they do,

pouring a magnum of light

into a shot-glass of pure listening.

By then the page was dry enough  
to lay out along the desktop  
and I read it  
but the words kept saying different things  
the way human skin  
so terribly does,  
Touch me don't touch me  
and ever more refined contusions of clarity,

I don't know what you want  
and you don't too,  
and that's the song  
for both of us,  
which is why anything,  
and why religion got invented.  
trellised vine to hang our doubts on  
let them dry out in the Valley air

be careful,  
be thoughtful even after church,  
did you ever go into one,  
and why, answer in your own  
words better than mine,  
and harder, harder,  
not a cloud in the sky,

is it time to meet our ancestors,  
the ones in what we call the Civil War,  
that rebellion of slave owners against the free  
— and no one knows who won.

We meet there years ago,  
our mouths dusty our clothes muddy  
and our skins so hungry,  
hunger, she said,

what were they up to,  
the ancestors, the literal, those DNA stallions,  
those queens of mitochondria  
who made us —  
do their nerves run in our bloody minds?

Do we live forever  
and I am the same man  
who fought at Gettysburg  
only I forgot  
and here I am again  
dumb, stripped of all memory  
except this trick they call history  
(he sang)

or am I even you?  
If you're so you where are you now?

**Why am I rapping to the sunlight and no applause?**

**Hunger, she said, try hunger,  
we're born already, get over it,**

**hunger, but the sunlight  
put it back on the shelf,  
the universal solvent is language,  
so are you finished yet,**

**wet as Moses's sandals**

**or Aaron's Rod, who *are* those people,  
shambling out of that thick old book  
Aunt Florrie read from silent afternoons and wept.  
I opened it once but nobody home.**

**Call it a critique of everything.**

**The image: kids playing stickball in an old movie,  
the one your father shot on Haring Street  
when the yellow elm leaves were slippery underfoot  
and you throned on the fire hydrant  
and somehow that was a temple too  
nothing ever changed,  
wisdom is wet between your fingers,  
wisdom cast a shadow on your knees,  
wisdom sat there on you**

**in you,**

**you sat in wisdom,  
you with the god, the goddess,**

the temple all around you  
in autumn sun,  
confused again,  
but we're used to that bewilderment,  
it is our food and drink —  
silent film of course  
what other kind worth studying so hard  
you hear the shadows start to talk  
let alone the trees —  
we're getting there because she did,  
we are mothers to each other,  
we're the baby they take candy from,  
we are sinners,  
you have confessed it  
and gloried in your confession  
on the mountain tops, the brave  
new granite of Innsbruck, the snow  
so wise in the sun,  
  
we know how to make  
all things connect, or try,  
harder, she said,  
we are spinners who teach the spiders  
how to weave,  
we know how to read  
a spill of water on a tabletop —  
memorize this wet for me,

**the little lake, the island,  
the long  
arms they claim of the sea,**

**a piece of water  
you picked up and gave me,  
what else could we do?**

**Water is always telling us to be gone.**

**To be like it, to find  
the merest entrance and go in.**

**To be everywhere at once  
by being here.**

**Endless exile of being where you are.**

**26 September 201**

**(9 October, 18 October)**