

8-2012

augA2012

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Recommended Citation

Kelly, Robert, "augA2012" (2012). *Robert Kelly Manuscripts*. Paper 159.
http://digitalcommons.bard.edu/rk_manuscripts/159

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POEM FOR EMILY

She

learned to sing

by being elsewhere

far away

and looking back.

1 August 2012, Cuttyhunk [dreamt]

= = = = =

Sneaking up on the sea
a lightless boat
stained onto sun glare
and the asthmatic bard
out-shouts the shore—
why is one word spoken
louder than all the waves and wind?

1 August 2012, Cuttyhunk

= = = = =

Someone calls
along the sea.

Sometimes seems
every spoken word
just asks for mercy

or a basket
to carry the world in

or a world to carry.

1 August 2012, Cuttyhunk

= = = = =

Don't think about what is only there.

The rest needs you,
the aching *noumena* waiting to be known,
thought into entity

by you and only you.

And that is what you give
the thing that only you can think

say all the words that come to mind
and then the unthought will come
summoned by the sudden vacuum of speech.
And then you will say. And then you will know.

1 August 2012, Cuttyhunk

= = = = =

Left over from the night
the day tries its best—
all this blazing light
children trotting around

crisp wind, fleet birds.
Blue flowers too—
but take my word for it
it's just one more dream.

1 August 2012, Cuttyhunk

INCIDENT

Means what fell. Fell in.

A falling out can also be
an incident.

How many words
swallow themselves.

Or where
is the window in the word.

The boat is always leaving
when you speak—

the tide
of talk is always running out.

Search me, I just repeat
what the words said.

You'd call it channeling
but there's nobody there.

At the other end, I mean,
I think. Just telling
and whatever gets told
must be the truth.

1 August 2012, Cuttyhunk

POLYGRAPHIA SEXUALIS

or

the licentious of ancient poesy

or all kinds

writing anything you please—

the words let you

handle them at will

whatever comes to mind

but from where do they come?—

but sometimes they resist

—but what is their resistance

finally worth, when by some

“timely compliance” they

tumble onto the white sheet of the page

and there you are

and something said?

O this loquacious lust!

do sometime clean the mind

by staring at an unmade thing

a tacit understanding

say with a flower—

no names yet, a flower—

until the seeing stops

the talking, and the lily

finally has its yellow say.

2 August 2012, Cuttyhunk

The sick sparrow

tries at the feed.

No one bothers her

whoever comes down

feeds beside her

peaceably

and she doesn't flee.

A haze

of sadness round her

she is protected

by what ails her

is my guess

I know nothing

but her soft quietness

her little hop or step

from seed to seed

on the rough wood

railing of the deck,

How empty the sea

in all our suffering.

2 August 2012, Cuttyhunk

= = = = =

Eager to repose
in secret villainy
he listened to her words
bending each to fit
as best it could
his urgency
to infest her body
with his touch.
Infest. Infect.
Desire makes
lepers of us all.

3 August 2012, Annandale

=====

Foreshadow
of an impending star
arriving—a breeze
a easing of air
after July's incarnadined—
helps to breathe.
Could this be
our own sun
standing up through the trees?

The wise student
turns to the back of the book
to read all the possible answers
before the meaningless
questions start arriving.
In this way he can choose
his mistake or perchance
score an actual congruity
between what he says
and someone's distant mind.

Questions and answers
are dancers
at a debutante ball
in a poor country

and all the young folk shy.
But rich people move among them
insolent, pretend they know
who belongs in whose arms
and what that music is up there
the tired old men are playing.
Are we rich or poor?

3 August 2012

ELEGY FOR THE WEATHER

Chemical ring
 mystery bond:
 coupled at the level of the hip
 who cares if nobody reads this
 everybody is welcome
 and welcome is all that matters
 to welcome and to praise—

hier bin i ! cried Bruckner
 that's all a word can say,
 here I am ! loud and boisterous
 at your door, a bottle
 under each arm, threaten
 to stay inside you for days
 or years —my endless
 opera— words are the true
 invaders of the house,
Occupy your mind.

I touch each one
 I am the dancing master
 of this disaster, I ripen
 consequences on the leafy
 stems of what you think,
 I interfere.

Be quiet, *vates*,
 your tune will come,
 your drone become the epic
 children suffer through
 in school, your radiant
 imagery their tediums—
 can that word have a plural,
 are you even listening?

This is about the doubt
 resident in saying anything
 the bluebells on Betty's lawn
 her tumbled columbine—
 it makes you think, *ça*,

it puzzles you with otherness
 that smells suddenly
 like your own skin—
 remember skin?—

the touch

he rants about
 is more quick than silver,
 tarnishes, doesn't last,
 isn't even toxic, or not very,
 but stains the brain
 like walnut juice from hard
 green pebbly rotundities

used to rain down on the lawn
before the hurricane
and my poor tree went down.

Reminds me of your voice
on the phonecall from midnight
promising emotion's
slow eternity—I remembered
deer tiptoeing on the lawn
always afraid, always vanishing.

Believe them, tumble
into language as into
the arms of a lover
who promises everything, who
might one day even be a friend,
endure.

Endure. The policy
of the stone is best—
listen to pure reverberation,
accept thirstily unchanged—
o god the thirsty stones

accept what is poured out
over you, the hand

that picks you up
or lets you fall

back where the world—that
presumptuous gravity—
wants you to be.

Glisten

while you can.

Wake up, stone,

I summon thee

and who better to wake
than what is firm and certain
made of many elements
all turned one?

Word,

be stone. Stone, be man.

Now the caravan can start
splay-footed in the desert.

Camels, lions

leaping onto The Woman

hurtlessly boisterous

—that word again

that can't be me—

intermediate rapture

postgraduate *ecstase*

the kids leap off the dock
as the ferry hauls away—

I'm thinking of all her perfumes
the mere disclosure of chemic bond
—read the manual—
scattershot glad-to-be-home
in you, I love your lap—
so many martyred
for being other—

motherless despots
alarmed at the merely human world,
teach them to be meek, breezes,
teach them milk.

Is there any way to anything,
a road to learn all this?

Sparkling stardust you call sulfur
I call dull yellow she calls
her cat peeing on the rose bush root
he calls getting even with the world's cruel thorns
that spike our joys with intoxicating pain

—meek danger!—begin to lay on
the antidote, lovesick art, bring
Prussian blue crayolas and rough paper

bring graphite chunks and fumes of turpentine
bring lipstick from your sister's drawer
and grand dad's ancient Zippo lighter—
now you're talking—wheel flint to flame—
smear color on the tepid world
by minutest observation
of particulars—songbeat
heard on leaf—stilled
in conversation—listen
between what's said—
waterfall turns into Nile
can reach unlikely oceans
—landlocked philosophy
of rational men—Engels
in his heart knew better
for Compassion without Wisdom availeth not
—let him praise at least
the comforting angels of the lower air
those girls

—I watched the wake
turbulent spread wide-wedged
in the bay behind us, the view
haunted by spray from windward,
daunting tomtom of the engine
churning us through the *formless*
accurate, the sea—

that's just memory,
what else is in your wallet—
tense the word, brace it
but the shank of the screw snapped though,
a fresh breeze, steel bears our weights
reluctantly—mirrors
are the strangest of all metals
they hold us all—
but if once the sight of her
shatters glass as it breaks my heart—
pish-tush, you have scant
heart to break, amigo—
por favor lo hacer sin corazon

enough border-talk, give me moon-oil
give me gratifying Friday midnight
and spoonfed Sundays—belle
époque come very day—
nesselrode pie and busy aftermaths—
wake in clover—time for prayer
to keep this sorry craft afloat
headed straight to New Jerusalem,
clouds my sails
the crows my captain.

Something had to change
the debilitating habits of his dream

spilled into matins, reflections,
all those dark prequels
the night is full of

and then the phone rang—
it was a mystery story
yearning to be told—
about hang-gliding and Christ on Corcovado
and how to spend money
in poor countries ethically,
how to solve equations with two unknowns
and no bedspread—
look, a lizard on the ceiling!—
in Delhi that time too hot to breathe
you mean you sweated
with the effort of each breath
yes, that's more like it
but where are the birds today
I've seen not one—
call the doctor—add ambergris
and oil the pulpit
that old dry wood
needs all the jism it can get—
oil of semaphore, grease of separation—
but I did hear crows
they were excited they were giving warning
they were loud they were here—

be still while I catch your breath—
clouds shield us from disaster
in blue transparency our lives are sealed.

3 August 2012