

6-2012

junF2012

Robert Kelly
Bard College

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

Recommended Citation

Kelly, Robert, "junF2012" (2012). *Robert Kelly Manuscripts*. 243.
https://digitalcommons.bard.edu/rk_manuscripts/243

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.

SEED EATERS

Beak crack

husk even

the insides have fight

redbird grosbeak waxwing

as a kid I wore a mackinaw against the cold

but an orphan now I walk out in my shirt

I have been hulled

and swallowed by the bird of the world

every part of me cracked

but nourishing withal,

and of books I ask

are they the husks

of what was me

or I the hull of them?

Eat me, pour

across the river into Paradise,

that Brooklyn over the bridge.

12 June 2012, Cuttyhunk

= = = = =

Mysteries of sunrise
island life wake
when you wake sleep
when you're sleeping

what would it be like
if love and art
were this way too, and money

that breeze from afar?

13 June 2012, Cuttyhunk

=====

The lymphatic history
of a swollen economy
about which I know nothing
but paycheck and anxiety
as if in a dragon's gorge
we lived and there really
are no dragons are there?

13 June 2012, Cuttyhunk

=====

Tumescent telegrams of old
I cherish the news
said I will be there
at midnight, count
your adjectives
till I come.
After years pass
it's enough to say the noun.

13 June 2012, Cuttyhunk

= = = = =

Let spirit talk about what spirit tells
a long book beginning with a war
a boy sitting sixty years in a café
shyly watching the other customers
or in love with the slim barista or
thick notebooks piling up on the round table.

Tell me again the part where he comes home
and thinks his wife is a sea cave and all his friends
seagulls screaming at him and flapping away.
Oh we who live bent over an ever-expanding Talmud,
every word we read proliferates another, oh we
who crept out of daylight to discover
the broken stones that Moses left all over the Earth
in every cave and tumulus and tavern—
we find them everywhere we read.
For once the Bible told the truth—the fragments,
the fragments! The tablets of the law are everywhere.
So here in the steam of the espresso machine
the boy fits the pieces together, saying them out loud
one by one, but softly, so only the notebook hears.

13 June 2012, Cuttyhunk

= = = = =

at the old anchorage
a taste of pie
a food nobody eats
the fish falling out of the sky
and the gulls waiting down below

apple and cherry
sometimes I will eat rhubarb
a woman keeps her man by she says
learning to cook and keep

but I hate that, I am a gull
waiting for the sky to open
no woman need apply

for I am a statue of myself
and content myself with the long weather

13 June 2012, Cuttyhunk

= = = = =

So many near
and there's almost enough.
The soft rain
the headland sliding
across the sea—
subrisio materiae
a smile in matter itself, the long
ancient endless
glee of thing.

13 June 2012, Cuttyhunk

= = = = =

Lift the sea up
and read what it's hidden
all these years,
mountains and valleys,
ancient citadels
books made of coral and nacre
who put all this water here?
Who drowned a dry planet
where people lived
on oxygen and hydrogen unmixed
not shattered into water.
Is that what Heraclitus was remembering,
death for the soul to be wet?

13 June 2012, Cuttyhunk

= = = = =

I live in a forest
I come to the sea
the landlords of earth
are loud in my ears

the hum of their long habit
—autumn and equinox
blackbirds and spring—
is my drone or thorough-bass

like a certain woman
walking through the trees:
the sea.

2.

So it is for liberty I come
the wash-out of expectation
in the flood of the ancient
freestanding bluetailed actual.
As if I were a sailing man
a Portuguese or sleeping child—
all manner of supposes

fit my shadow
neat as flame fits a fire.

3.

Now the long part begins,
the song, the sound, with *you* in it,

the master tone,
the zone of intermittent ecstasy
pinup on the wall
waiting for it to be light enough
to be seen, we all
want that, the cavalcade
and royal summons, the bluetailed yammer-bird
to mind our clamor,
when we touch each other
we become celebrities—
isn't that better far
than your seders and high masses?

4.

Do you think the girl knew
how ancient she seemed,
a half-naked dryad on an Attic cup
running away so that we'd follow,

did she know how old the words were
that she was speaking, did she remember
Chaucer's hand caressing the back of her neck
or Jack Donne panting on her breast?

How do they know?

That's what young men wonder,
how do they know the core?
Is everything inside out?
Do they really think with their skin?

5.

Vocalese. Means
the no-word song
of voice alone
stripped of all the other
meanings hums
just its own.

14 June 2012, Cuttyhunk

= = = = =

The blackbirds come first.

That's what you learn
by getting up at dawn.

The miracle has happened,
you can see again
and there they are,
the fluency of everything out there.

14 June 2012, Cuttyhunk

= = = = =

Delicious fog resumes its bay
a man climbs down his steps—

we are ladders, Hildegarde,
and we are climbed night and day

sometimes I feel your absence
when you're on your way to things

things you never write about
the car the kids the leprosy

or whatever the ailment is
we secretly suffer so and cherish

and a dog runs after him
because that is what we do

I loved your new book
but it scared me

Hell is getting closer these days
not just the drones and Syria

something smaller and quieter and very mean
lean as wrinkles in an old man's face

when the devil signs his name
you can hardly make it out

water dribbled on a napkin
cute waitress flouncing away from me for good.

14 June 2012, Cuttyhunk

= = = = =

Big surf on the headland

wind calm.

Everything surprises.

Trim the cloud

till it shapes something

Arabic letters

water snaking through sand.

Obvious, almost true.

The way a book

can almost be.

14 June 2012, Cuttyhunk

= = = = =

Bring the empties home
and use again
the glass tunes
Schubert left unfilled—

there's always room
for music, easy
as bones inside the skin,
the old game

measuring each other's spines
by language alone.

14 June 2012, Cuttyhunk

= = = = =

Footsteps of the dancers
heard under the music
thrill the body-self
of the spectators—
each soft or firmer footfall
on the hollow wood
is the old story,
the Eden of our skin,
the faith of touch.

14 June 2012, Cuttyhunk