

8-2012

augL2012

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Recommended Citation

Kelly, Robert, "augL2012" (2012). *Robert Kelly Manuscripts*. Paper 253.
http://digitalcommons.bard.edu/rk_manuscripts/253

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Woke in the dark
so quiet I could hear
the saliva drying in my mouth
a soft assortment of
the roaming tiny creatures
that make up me.
They play as I sleep
the way mice celebrate a house
when no one bothers them—
small moves, small sounds,
the huge dark.

30 August 2012

= = = = =

Let us be afraid of one another
for we have power
and the power you have
overwhelms me when I try
to treat you like a person in the world—
the same for you about me.
We damage one another
by trying to be natural.
We have to work this through
or wind up one more sad old myth.

30 August 2012

= = = = =

We have so little access
to the ancestors.
Even their language is lost
in us. Maybe only the breath
keeps track of them
a little. Maybe some of them
some of the time breathe in us.
Maybe they say what we say.
But how do you know
a grandfather is speaking,
or which one, how far back,
when you wake with a strange word in your mouth?

30 August 2012

= = = = =

Because you never
and I never

the sun's reluctant
to come out

but then it does
a blaze of it

scorches us
with forgiveness

and I can be at peace
with all I didn't.

30 August 2012

= = = = =

Let them be lonely
while they last
the prince decided
before his mirror—

only men—and none
too young at that—
know how to use that glass,
they see what is to come

and let it, or turn
mindfully away
to some poetic
consolation prize,

art, religion, love.

31 August 2012

= = = = =

Wield the body
as if the mind
had just come down
to live in it—

awkward grace
faithful as a shadow
walk that way
and never leave the stage.

31 August 2012

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What we learn from our devices:

update the mind at waking

check to see if any

part of me has left a message.

Any new applications for the brain?

Adjust brightness of the eye,

make sure the soul is connected.

Delete the water residue of night.

31 August 2012

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Castigate the mirror? I will not give it the satisfaction, I have not looked at one in days. One, I say, as if all mirrors saw, or showed, the same. Hypothesis readily doubted: I never look the same. Always a different me. Or is it the wall or cabinet the mirror's on, the room, the tawdry ethnic washrooms, the gleaming plate glass at Bergdorf's, where I pretend to examine an incomprehensibly expensive autumn ensemble, but in reality gaze into the glassy eye of that other mannequin, myself on the sidewalk, a feral creature born to look in.

31 August 2012

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It's pretty
as we used to say
groovy being me.
Making do
with what's around.
A loner
among stoners,
waiting for a new
religion,
a box of you.

31 August 2012

SOLOMON

again,

this time singing.

Angel us

to demon street

wing the bell

to peel the ape.

Girls attend his song,

and Greeks from Smyrna

imported to admire

in fluent prose

his merest raptures—

what matter if their

alphabet makes him

dizzy with its swirls,

they keep the record

for posterity,

who is the cutest

dancing girl of all.

2.

Or is it he?

Could another

fit that velvet

crown or bear

the splendor of
the ruby in it?
*None of my wives
is my wife
my true wife
is yet to come*

that sounds like him,
the king himself,
who else could sing
*always arriving
never here*
and be so glad of it?
He puts a brave
face on loss
and calls it you.

31 August 2012

= = = = =

What I learned from the decimal system:

put a little dot

after everything

and roll some circles out

so anything after them

gets smaller and smaller

till finally I reach

a number I can handle

far off in the distance

the ten millionth part of now.

31 August 2012

= = = = =

Vote for miracles.

The sun

 was like you once,
a chance remark in the noosphere
overheard by gravity.

And it came down
to warm us and blind us
and make us dependent on
seeds it summons from the ground.

So being is inexplicable,
life a riddle. Only death
holds the explanation.
Bother death for an answer,
prod at death
till it finally speaks.

31 August 2012
(first poem composed in Shafer House)