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Robert Kelly
Bard College

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WHAT THE RIVER SAID

Sometimes the river knows
and sometimes keeps silent
if never still. I heard it
one day explain to someone
the difference between east and west:
if you go against the sun
go hard, go glad—language
contradicts the natural,
natural movement of things,
you drive straight ahead
into the face of the light.
But to go with the sun is meek,
accepts the death of you
and all the rest. West
bank of the Nile.
Necropolis. Stay
or go or be like me
and be between—
and cross me if you can.

12.12.12

=====

Laisse-musquie

or capture bobcat
saw in New Hampshire
long enough ago
to nt be me or am I
child tossing pennies in a wishing well

I feel the wet walls of the gorge
seepingdown granite
the water from somewhere
or in France blue petals
of that Alpine flower
gentian or come back
or cyclamen growing from the rock
of a devil gorge in the Savoy
and that may really have been
me seeing it and not alone
you were at my side
before you were you

or where does the music come from?

2.

Images choose sunrise
light comes round the corner

imagine if the earth
were really round
I mean if we felt it that way
in our bones and bearing,
if we knew

or what is this place it is
so hard to stand on and yet we do—

and yet is a funny word for always.

3.
Some mist walks towards me
down Cedar Hill—that alone
should prove we're in this together

I used to drink and go to church
used to have opinions
now I have blood in my ears

and sleep late as I can
still trying to be everybody else.

4.
Consolamentum, final rite
among the men of Albi
and sometimes women too.

stepping away from the flesh
into what? What appalling lucidity
on the other side of being

or being here? The patient drum
of long deceiving, that bloodbath
in the arteries, the beat of time?

5.

Less music, more something else.
Everything wants me again
as if I were the one who brought
this panoply together and set it moving.
They look at me, each thing does,
stares at me, everything I see
lours at me and says *Do me, Do me,*
Be me into your language and your love—
for I am mute and yearning, I am the law
you have to bring down from the mountain,
I am the commandment you have to break.

6.

Now I'll never get there
it's still the first act of the opera
I'm larking around the empty stage
wondering who to kiss or kill
or who will come along, sly baritone,

curvy mezzo, to kill me.
Fear and desire flee from music.
No road for them
in what is so much here

The orchestra is restless
tired of its one note after another
forever and nobody singing.
What are the words to nobody's song?

The sun rising, soldiers
quiet as they can march into town.

7.
Song of the knife
sings its way into the bread.
We can handle this.
Another day. Another argument
against the existence of God.
Music, Music refutes
everything. Even itself.

13 December 2012

CONTE CRUEL

Suppose I took you by the hand
and went there too. Would a day
be any decenter? You flew there
to appraise some old furniture,
bid on carpets, see a movie,
bring everything back to New York.
You learned the language so fast
you stayed on forever. You sit
on the furniture, pace back and forth
on the sandy Isfahans. Lovers
come and sometimes go. Your whole
life you've been trying to find
the difference. And feel it.
But there are no differences
most mornings you'd rather wake alone.

13 December 2012

= = = = =

and her wedding dress a tree of ghosts

—Alana Siegel

for so it is we came
from forces we understood
only by yielding
and all round us the bones we were
and they are speaking

once a woman marries
she becomes a new nation
even a boyfriend is dangerous
a dark in the light

doesn't she remember
what it is like to be naked?
a wedding dress
hides the natural body
turns it into shimmer and falsity
and an image of flow

a flow where is no water
no river runs from such vows

and are you quiet yet?

they try to talk but mist is in their mouths
filaments of understanding
drift through that brackish marsh
the *undercurrent* beneath all thought and non-thought
you can feel it down there
when you meditate or try to,
purling nonsensically tragically sexily along

we call it magic when it comes to life
but it never does

your picture wants to give yourself to me
starting with you

starting with a church
steeple of a church
a long drawn out sigh
on its way to heaven
or that is what the woman thinks
all in black at the door
waiting for the sexton to come
shambling along in his old Sicilian hat
to let her in

let us all in,
beasts and men and the flowers roll in too
in their majolica pots their terra cotta prisons

bring dirt, good earth, the soil, the humus
we get our nickname from, humanus,
bring the dirt into church and listen
to the Mass it sings
no Perotinus no Palestrina no Vivaldi
just that house on fire
we call a flower
and let erect itself from unseen seed
through our common dirt,
just listen.

And in her clothes the young widow listens too
her young husband just weeks dead in some war
far away has come back, a greyish wraith above her
weeping kisses on the parting of her hair
she feels but she can't see him.

We see him, though—

we are good at seeing phantoms
the shadow of your breasts inside your shirt,
wine stain on the sidewalk, the round
earth spins its own libation
from the all too casual cup
was it you were holding?

(14 December 2012)

= = = = =

If someone grabs you by your behind
it means he's more interested
in where you came from than where you are/

What's behind is behind,
the whole animal history
you embody.

Not who you are.
He's not interested in you
now. Your face,
mother of millions.

14 December 2012 (dreamt)

= = = = =

Measure a thing against itself
and all the rest comes clear
in what sleep tells you

I'm talking to you, friend
of so many love stories
embedded in the light you pass
through on your way to them,
the sequencers, husbands, fools.

Yes, things come in threes,
for us at least since Brahmin
days when children
started to count things
and adults caught on

so here we are
implausibly numerate
all made of ones and o's—
the sequencers do it,
mix up the many till unity,
till the one comes.

And here you are
a coven on my counterpane
you have come to me again
like spring like autumn
bird banishment echo
soldiers at the gate
no rain for several days.

14 December 2012

= = = = =

Be an oracle
say what has to be said
you'll never know it
till you hear it
coming out of your mouth

so out the truth comes
leaking word by word
away from you,
 you can't

have truth, can only
speak it. After that
it takes care of itself.
Come to me then and be
my sullen witnesses,
ratify the world into place.

14 December 2012

COSA NERA

ease of articulation is all
do it by assimilation Italy
actum > atto

by assimilation ease
cosa nera
the black thing
that follows us home
could it be nothing worse than a shadow?

And what is that?
A shadow is a dark thing
a distortion of our shape,
our effect cast on the innocent earth

we cross.
Cosa nera is consequence, caused effect.
karma ripening.
Ripieno, full,
a shadow is full, coherent,
continuous. A black thing.

14 December 2012

“inward upon”

— WCW

(for Michael Ives)

So the restless

sun

works all week

jogs Sunday

(never sitting)

isn't there

a work inside

athlesia

to sit still?

Be restless into inside

all the way

wrestle with silence

and let the silence win.

Metabolism bowls from mind,

jog down the tunnel of

where happy happens,

must use sappy words

they alone point pregnant to

what's always going on in you

(no matter).

2.

A cup of liquid runs a car a mile or two—
two thousand pounds uphill and happy
because when it's not running
it's not doing anything at all.

3.

On the eighth day we invented stones
to teach us how to think.

15 December 2012

=====

Car pulling away.
Could they be going home?

Picture it,
silver in oak leaves

distances to come.
Love and disappointment.

Something will happen,
the car will stop

and new questions begin.
The obvious loves you.

And there's that word again.

15 December 2012

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Put your hand on it
and call it me

all the rest is snare
drum and guitar.

15.XII.12

=====

I laid out my solitaire
every card put down
was the nine of diamonds.

Paper money flutters home to roost,

15.XII.12

FLASH

of white:

bird

flitting in the yew tree or

woman jogging up the

road. Indecisive.

You choose.

15.XII.12