

2-2013

## febC2013

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### Recommended Citation

Kelly, Robert, "febC2013" (2013). *Robert Kelly Manuscripts*. 323.  
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**The trouble with Aristotle  
no word for sky  
that doesn't have you in it.**

**7 February 2013**

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**Music student trudges up hill  
Confucius Mao Bach and mother  
weighing her down. Her father  
weeps far away in broken sleep.**

**7 February 2013**

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**Bus drive by with open door  
let winter in, bus  
go back and forth, nobody  
stay on it for long.**

**7.II.13**

## OLD CHURCH SLAVONIC

I hear on the radio  
deep-voiced choir: a Russian Mass  
there are interruptions as the signal  
cuts in and out, changing the words,  
*pomiluy*, have mercy, *vieky viekov*,  
through all ages of ages the words  
change, chip away at the sense  
a thousand years, how can we  
understand the words  
after so many lives?

The words

grow with us, always  
as young as we are.  
This deep tuned silence.

7 February 2013

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**Someone looks at me  
is the same as hearing  
what they're thinking  
but any words there are**

**broken, like water.**

**7 February 2013**

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**In the moon when  
deer walk hungry down the hill  
the stars between snowstorms  
are especially clear.**

**How long I've been reading them,  
so long I hardly ever  
look up to see them  
and when I do I see**

**my eyes are dim now.**

**After a lot of life  
the stars are mostly inside you  
only a few up there**

**you still can see.**

**7 February 2013**

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**An hour in another country  
almost home  
the voices like seafoam  
hushed on the rock**

**but what if they never stopped singing  
and the real birds had to flee  
from the storm of insinuated desires  
all music breathes?**

**and what if even I  
were listening, hearing their urgencies  
but never knowing who they are who sing,  
isn't that the great quiet grief of heaven**

**where they have, almost all of them, forgotten the earth?**

**7 February 2013**



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**Revise me,  
the thing they do with raisins  
bitter aftertaste of lemons, of the sun**

**you watch them try to dance  
by the marina, you climb  
up to the headland  
and watch them through binoculars—  
all you can really see  
is movement, it breaks your heart  
and you can't tell why,**

**so many bodies young and old, plain  
and glamorous, all moving  
to a music too far away to hear**

**and your heart feels thick with sludge  
which in a moment you recognize,  
that's what's left of love,  
bitter, heavy, strangely nourishing.**

**7 February 2013**

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**Cast a word to be obvious  
before the great snow  
predict me an answer  
to write on the ground  
the wau frat boys drunk  
at prairie schools mow  
vulgar words deep  
in thr growing fields  
only birds or planes or gods  
can see and be shocked by.  
Vulgar, from *vulgus*,  
the crowd. They use  
the words to help them think  
there's someone there,  
some city of real people  
hidden in all that corn.**

**8 February 2013**

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**Write me a silence in the sky  
could be a question or an answer  
as long as it sounds like  
somebody's there,**

**that kind of silence  
when you're in an empty house at night  
but know you're not alone.**

**8 February 2013**

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**Because they had porters  
they traveled with trunks  
umbrellas shotguns sitzbaths  
duodecimo editions of the classics**

**and so they brought me here  
to this snowy jungle up the river  
far from the intelligible  
gull cry of the nourishing sea**

**far inland, whimpering  
day and night to be born,  
really born, into a glorious  
and multitudinous body**

**like the replica they left in heaven  
to shine down on me some mornings  
and explain all I had ceased to be  
by taking on a name and being me.**

**8 February 2013**

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Still trying for another other  
the Don flows down to the sea.  
Titles of books, the thousand  
kulaks slain, two million peasants  
starve to death. Behind the arras  
the father spies upon his daughter.  
From the moon, a special angel  
with poor eyesight watches us.  
Did you hear what they just said?  
It is snowing all around us  
and all we see is white. Everything  
has an explanation. Go to church  
before the priests get there  
and be alone with god,  
whoever you find that to be.  
In quiet, wearing white clothes,  
a summer evening lost in memory.  
Do you really think I'm cold  
don't care won't move can't reach  
out of the magic circle of my will  
to make ordinary stuff happen  
such as by inertia or by gravity?  
Push hands. Orchestral music  
Liszt's *Hungaria* we think—

he didn't speak the language  
and I can't sing. Religion  
is an excuse for architecture,  
music, painting, cemetery  
statuary, cypress trees  
native to the Levant, I can't  
stop worrying, it is a skill  
infixd since childhood. Who  
will deliver me from this  
body of fear? As the apostle  
asked, using the true name of fear.

2.

Maybe again. Here and then.  
A game? A drink? A thing  
shared, not necessarily all that  
good for you. But there.  
An intimate encounter by yourself  
—who do you think that tree is  
and are you sure this house is home?  
So many doubters for one small  
doubt. People at table waiting  
to be served. Glasses. Silverware.  
It is so quiet lovely they hardly  
need the food. What would they eat?  
Rose repoussé handle of the knife  
the thick petals on the spoon.

3.

A line in silver oxide drawn  
darkens in our atmosphere.  
The profile of the queen  
quietly appears. I draw not,  
so with my thickest pen  
I write some name, some name  
and hope it grows a person  
and that one will talk to me.  
But the wind is always waiting too  
so who comes first? The sound  
becomes flesh? The air  
takes leave of us and we succumb  
to where the wind has been?  
No. From the name I swear  
she will arise, her breath firm  
will breathe a place for me to be.  
There, that's what I see on the paper,  
the glowing surfaces of light  
come an intricate tantra of lines.  
Fine lines. And any one of them  
I follow leads me home. No.  
Not home. No home but here.

8 February 2013

## **THE INVADERS**

**Coming anyhow end  
mark the floreat  
a woman of her time  
descanting**

**or what we hear**

**madrigals in overcoats  
in high school auditoriums  
all the boys in crimson ties**

**\***

**sensory overload of being young  
no wondrr tantrums  
bone aches sudden swoons pf inattention,  
sleeps.**

**I will give you my attention, love,  
but will not pay it**

**\***

**then the chariots rolled in  
of the Indo-Aryan paranoid lifestyle peoples  
that is, the ones who made up history  
and believe it still**



**and teach it hard to frowning children.**

**Gentle people have no history**

**they dream the present**

**with lips and hands.**

**9 February 2013**

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**Ovid things spring starts today  
(bt warns of plenty winter left)  
—Venus rising from the morning sea.**

**9 February 2013**

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**Narrow as an arrow  
the hour goes by.  
The snow is thick, sun  
thin. We have words  
for everthin,  
more words than things.  
Freedom. Peace. Liberty.**

**9 February 2013**

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4.

Or the wind is aspiration  
from inward out  
to breathe a decent world  
by children—was I music once?  
The wind the drifting snow  
lost vocabulary of old men  
they plow the roads and driveways  
why don't they clean me  
of my accreted misconceptions,  
ring the bell, wake the Great  
Unlearner and drag me in.  
So much to forget—  
far away and still at home  
one more miracle of weather  
I lost my chance to be a sailor  
but still hold carefully one  
clean water glass in my hand  
shivering inside with secret light,  
life, I wouldn't call anything so  
lovely and lucid a goblet.

9 February 2013

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**But I need to say more  
need to be more  
things come upon me as I sleep**

**a smell of reason  
fights against the magic images  
that speak my dream**

**Awake, I say, but no one  
in me listens. The drone  
of soft evasion we call sleep**

**seems enterprise enough.  
Under the dream trees  
even the shaman is asleep.**

**9 February 2013**