

2-2014

## febE2014

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### Recommended Citation

Kelly, Robert, "febE2014" (2014). *Robert Kelly Manuscripts*. 339.  
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**Where are we now?**

**Blame it on somebody,**

**blame it on Phil.**

**The winter was too big.**

**the giant horses have**

**eaten all the rain.**

**22 February 2014**

## **MORE HORSES**

**Graminivorous demons  
and so big! Imagine  
yourself on one of them  
right now, thighs  
trembling, squeezing hard  
for dear life. your breath  
unconsciously taking on  
the deep rhythm of  
the horse's breath—  
secret of all life:  
breathe the other.  
Then the move begins,  
the up that is forward  
also, for no action is  
single only, every has  
its reciprocal, now breathe  
me in asnd understand  
(secret of science, there  
is nothing to understand  
not even this). Home sore,  
smelling of horse, you**

**cry out gaily I'm home!  
but it isn't and you're not.  
No place a beast can  
take you is anywhere but  
there, in the danger,  
the out there, the wind  
hooting and the grass  
lying down at your feet,  
the terribilità, God  
hidden in everything  
but your head in your hands.  
Secret of travel: there is  
no going back, it is mortal  
to be out of space at last.  
Only the dead come back.**

**22 February 2014**

## **WOMAN ON HORSEBACK, AFTER KANDINSKY**

**1.**

**In paddock boots in straw  
basketed shoulders  
Hungarian lanyard  
sweater tied around the  
waist, wool, scarlet,  
snowflakes, reindeer,  
going somewhere, tribal  
thought between the eyes  
come back to remember  
whet the blade between  
any and every else  
is what I mean, the start  
leaves us weltering  
behind, roadbed, garlic  
tree, that litte stiff stem  
among the cloves, that  
for a coat of arms, brick  
piled on brick until.**

2.

Until what. Semaphore  
was my favorite word  
and railway train and engineer,  
caboose was an embarrassment  
like girdles and aunts  
because in those days marriage  
was never two people alone.  
Razor blade, for instance,  
penwiper, what happens  
when you're old again after  
all those years of being  
somebody else, is that magic  
or just a glass of milk?  
Your hair or a stranger?  
Thrice the striped ballpoint  
failed, the woman bent  
and laid her hand along me  
and whispered decencies.  
So many votaries of just one  
Titania, and all of them worthy  
of the lichenous caress

**of your clingable remarks.**

**3.**

**All I have done in this  
life is write a book of prayers,  
I leave the theology to you,  
aim them at any deity you choose.  
For I was wounded at Thermopylae,  
wasn't counted, crawled home,  
changed my name, my language  
and here I am looking at you  
a little reproachfully my empty lap.  
For there were giants in the earth  
in those days, not men not women  
but big businesses stumbling around  
with mouths made of money  
and feet made of all the rest of us.  
I was wounded in every war,  
a seat saved for me in the métro,  
crows in the sky, a painting  
by Constable. from the trees  
we milk the light. A stream**

**understands us. Mother  
I say to the glass of water.**

**4.**

**Hard as I listen I can't hear  
her say Son to me but something does  
there are almonds crackling  
with sugar coating, we suck them  
at weddings and get sick a little  
not enough to vomit just to feel  
the woeful intimacy of the flesh  
too vividly inside, the way lovers  
used to feel before the war.**

[22 February 2014]

**Exhaustion plays a role in it  
but we still don't know the play.  
Apple street? The three codgers  
sneak into paradise? The artful  
strumpet on her back for truth?  
Kedgeriee for breakfast. Your tiger  
has more stripes than mine. Love  
abounding in favelas? Moscow  
on my mind? Every day a novel.  
Every heartbeat a dream of its own.**



5.

**Pasquinade they used to call it.**

**Wrap your fish in the Daily Mirror  
when you still had one. Green wine  
over the mountain. The sheep stand  
waiting for you to understand them,  
behold their industry, the quiet  
passacaglia of their little teeth.**

**And so on, till we get there again  
and recognize the woman at the desk  
our doctor. Sorry I'm late. You always  
are. I know, I'm sorry. Not sorry enough.**

**How can I mend my ways. Neglect  
all things save epistemology alone.**

**How severe you look. My pulse is slow.**

**Has the man come in yet, the one  
who's going to make music for our show?**

**No joke in matter. Or is there, as René  
Rilke used to say, a smile in substance?**

**I stroke the smooth fidelity of stone.**

6.

So back on your horse  
ready to flee. You're  
trifling with me. But  
do you like it? What's  
to like or what's to eat,  
a traveler with animal  
is a difficult book.

Read with a rasp, sleep  
in a parenthesis, the French  
sang you how to bracket—

*and in all the great city*

*that whole night*

*only one dog barked,*

*but it was white*

she quoted from a backyard  
half-cracked greenhouse roof  
philosopher whose statue  
frowns upon the Quai de Reves  
waiting for you to make  
some snarky commentary  
on the book he never should  
have unwritten but he did.

**And now the whole thing  
lodges in your head only,  
a song you can't stop hearing  
but you've forgotten all the words.  
What else could wisdom be like?**

**7.  
So wind down and don't worry—  
species come and go, the individual  
is eternal. That's what we know  
if dimly, the sweater worn low  
around the hips because the arms  
are warm enough in sun so what  
did your mother tell you of the war?  
Did she distinguish the music  
from the milk, the children  
hiding in the leaves (remember  
Tchelitchev all of a sudden)  
from the little lead animals your  
father brought you home  
some nights and each one taught you  
how to be that, just that, a tiny**

**ostrich on skinny dark pink legs,  
a rhino with a hole in his side,  
in my whole life I never ever  
learned anything more than this.**

**23 February 2014**

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**Noises in the night  
you think are the house  
or someone in the house  
the quiet house**

**and then you realize the sounds  
all are coming from you—  
a tendon stretching, your hair  
slipping on the pillow**

**that jaw clicking in its socket,  
a tiny turbulence  
in the intestines, blood  
coursing by your ear.**

**What if everything I hear  
or smell or see or feel  
all comes from me  
and my poor sleepy head**

**projects it outward  
to make a world  
of things to fear  
or love or satisfy**

**with some movement of the heart?**

**24 February 2014**

*Call it a text not a poem—  
then nobody gets hurt.*

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**Voice on answering machine  
too far away to recognize,  
the phone too far away to reach  
before it stops  
ringing and starts talking.  
Language is distance,  
a far-off hilltop with  
what looks like one  
bare tree on top of it.  
Or is it you? Or maybe  
everything is too far away  
and that is the nature of language.**

**24 February 2014**

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**Being close to time**

**καιρος the Right Time**

**means no time at all,**

**just now.**

**If it doesn't happen**

**now, there is no is.**

**I learned this from a Greek**

**I took him to be from his language**

**sitting on a cloud and eating a book.**

**And his blood also was spilled for us.**

**25 February 2014**



## **THE AVATARS**

**are names we know  
for someone we don't,**

**someones always somewhere  
nameless by nature**

**like the best in us all.**

**25 February 2014**

## **WHERE THE GIFT GOES**

**In the penumbra of the dwindling  
ecclesia, shadow of the pope  
grieving in the music of his apartness  
quem elegit Dominus and then  
the firestorm of actual consequences  
out there where all the theories end  
in human misery.**

**They forgive  
sins of the flesh not of the mind  
and yet all law is founded on  
the inviolability of the body,  
sanctity?**

**No, the breeding machine intact,  
the body's social value,  
its usefulness  
to society not to itself.**

**But law understands a corporation  
as a bodyment of a body**

**that exists for its own sake**

**not for society,**

**pray in the night**

**candled with hope,**

**save us from law.**

**26 February 2014**

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**Don't think about it.**

**It disappears**

**when you look at it**

**later. Who knows**

**where and whether**

**in the first place**

**anything was.**

**Do you see it**

**now? Does it**

**cast a shadow?**

**I live beside it**

**and never have.**

**26 February 2014**

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**Not a matter of time.**

**Space**

**just hasn't gotten here yet.**

**26.II.14**