

1-2013

janH2013

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Recommended Citation

Kelly, Robert, "janH2013" (2013). *Robert Kelly Manuscripts*. 377.
https://digitalcommons.bard.edu/rk_manuscripts/377

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**Change my name
I've had it so long
take off these vestments
and learn to ski
listen to what people
put on the radio
learn to eat fried chicken
buy a car.**

20 January 2013

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**The tree has changed its shape today
what power the night has**

**and there's a wind in that tree
not this one**

welcome to the mystery.

20 January 2013

UN CRI DE MERLIN

**I'm being too clear
soon I'll have
nothing left but breath
then not even that.**

20 January 2013

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**Take longer to tell
in this mini-time**

**build attention spans
an hour in your**

**company darling
worth ten thousand**

four minute songs.

20 January 2013

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**Sunday morning
not too cold
people running
up and down roads
what a strange
god they must serve.**

20 January 2013

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**Then she talked the clouds out of the sky
persuaded the sun to go down
showed herself to the moon
then it was evening
and I began to understand
what the world is supposed to be about
and why I think I'm here.**

20 January 2013

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Ego scire cupio vim...temporis

**I said to Saint Augustine I love you anyhow
and he said you like my Latin more than my soul
well not exactly but I can understand it
and you're only showing off with your prose
but that's what we're supposed to do before God
witness David prancing before the tabernacle
and we call it a dance and we call is language
and you're terrific and I guess I am too
and sometimes we get brave enough
to call the whole megillah by a word like soul—
we find out what it means by how we live.**

20 January 2013

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**Lost things. Like the Alps
lost into Italy. Austria.
The language of the next
valley we can't understand.**

**And when the sun goes down
the cliffs turn red. Every
night we think the same thought:
there is something up there,**

**something we should know.
Find it, find it. But tomorrow
we forget all that when the cliffs
look like ordinary stone again**

**and things have their way with us.
We waste our time and time wastes us.**

20 January 2013

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**Letters are about their senders
as the blackbird flying across the common
is about itself. I mean the sparrow
I mean the trine of battered winter grass
fruit trees and spruces sees my house.**

**I want to belong to what they know.
The bird. The sky. The woman who wrote the letter.**

21 January 2013

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**In the old days
sound sounded different
and the moon was brighter
but the sun less bright**

**things came closer
in the old days but women
were further away
from men and likewise**

**even now all people
with the same name
are the same people
and rain still comes down**

**in the old days the priests
said their breviaries
walking in the garden
rabbis walked quickly in the street**

**the difference between noises
was clearer then, this
was a dog barking but that
inside the room was music**

**nuns taught children
how to play the piano
but we had no discipline
nowadays all children are good**

**but in the old days children
just wanted to eat or hold
new things in their hands
and cry in vacant lots at night**

**in the old days people were afraid
there were ghosts but no machines
nobody knew about the weather
and cars smelled good inside**

**and all the things you loved
had handles on them
so you could carry them with you
all the way through sleep.**

21 January 2013

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**An idea long frozen under the ice—
then the explorers came and loosened time's hold
and it leapt out again free to be thought.**

**What did Amundsen bring back from the Pole
or Scott send posthumous? In the brittle masts
and rigging of Shackleton's ship what ways**

of thought tinkled crackled spawned?

21 January 2013

CATHOLIC INTELLECTUAL

**“Epicene spokesmen
of a lost cause
dressed in lace and crimson”**

**he called them
but when they came into
the room he still knelt down.**

21 January 2013

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**Still, I heard her—
she was stirring in the dark room.
Didn't she need a lamp
to see what she was doing?
But the body needs no light
except its own, feel
of a box, a blanket,
drawer tugged open,
shawl draped around shoulders.
I don't know the answer,
Any minute the door will open
and she'll be there in the fearful light.**

21 January 2013

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**But will there ever
be time for today
in all this history
of tomorrow,
 bears
fossicking in dumpsters,
sailboats at the bottom of the pond—
o Sodom I have loved your streets
busy with the merchandise
of pure ideas that needed
only yielding bodies to make sense.**

21 January 2013

CALL IT PALAESTINA

where the Celts first
divided into Irish and Jews
one to go all the way
west and the other to go everywhere.
Galatea. Galatia. Celtic. KLT
the Celtic wave
swept in over bleak Anatolia—
and I don't even have the force
to overturn the rock
and see what's written under it,
carved on the underside of things—
it is the Celt's habit to hide what he means,
Göbekli Tepe, upend the earth
and read the bottom,

For everything

is hidden there

from the beginning—

and always the Celt driven west
the cruel sunlight keloiding his back.

look at the back

to see where he has been

and what his Luck has written there—

then the phone rings, the smashed

crates on 13th street near the river,
where the meatpackers were
when there used to be meat in this house
when there were men and women in the valley
and the rock
gave us what passes for our name,

the breaks of consciousness
by which the banks are sustained,
cognitive capital—
but there is no property
to thought, no moral
to remember.

No right to music you have made
and even this song is
a broken branch, the withered
apple tumbled in the snow.

21 January 2013

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**Bridge over the lugubrious canal
the Maestro's dead
the blue sky of Russia bleeds for him
cathedral of the Precious Blood—
so many years this wood of my desk
has endured so many words.**

21 January 2013

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**I thought I was another country
my hat blown off my head
a girl perhaps named Emma
smiled past me from the pier
s the dirty fishing boat docked
but I was another country
thr opera was still moving
in my idleness I had strung
together a chain of paperclips
I looped it round her neck
like a lei but she wasn't there,
it tinkled dully to the dock
messy wood wet gore of fish
man shoes a little rain,
a rough patch on my knuckles
I rub with oil I find somewhere.**

21 January 2013

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**When it is fire
who is the burn?**

When air, where?

**We hide the elements
the way music is
hidden in the spruce wood**

**flute or fiddle
anything me.**

**In ourselves to happen
the broken path.**

21 January 2013