

2-2010

febF2010

Robert Kelly
Bard College

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.bard.edu/rk_manuscripts

Recommended Citation

Kelly, Robert, "febF2010" (2010). *Robert Kelly Manuscripts*. 458.
https://digitalcommons.bard.edu/rk_manuscripts/458

This Manuscript is brought to you for free and open access by the Robert Kelly Archive at Bard Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Robert Kelly Manuscripts by an authorized administrator of Bard Digital Commons. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@bard.edu.

[from a prompt by Hannah Haves: “Write about something you weren’t able to understand while it was happening.”]

It was the other side of me
the four lips indistinguishable
I breathed her name in my mind
enriching the taste of
her mouth my mouth busy
with this strange almost numb
entanglement, I felt what she
was feeling, my lips, I couldn’t feel
what I was feeling, I never could,
I hardly can, my hand in her lap
already, we tasted like each other.
miracle I’m still trying to figure out
which one of us was me complete
but I wanted to know her herself
not just what she did in me,
both of us lost in discovering,
all I have certain is her name.

10 February 2010, Olin

20.

If only we could go back and speak in words
speak not in language just in words

words set free again from languages
those socio-economic meshes where they're trapped

all compromise and how-do-you-do
for the word rises radiant from the intersex of thing and mind

but only language makes a word mean what it means
you're wrong language keeps the word from meaning all it can

it could stand loud and intricate with meaning still to come
but how lonely that would be a word

no one to speak or understand it
no only lonely the way a man is every day

waking at dawn alone with what comes next
ready to be pierced or caressed by the strike of noon

but how autistic you make it sound the self all alone
yes maybe a word is the only self we have.

11 February 2010

21.

But it stands in the street you know that
it looks on all sides and belongs to everyone

but what if hell *is* other people as in French
wouldn't paradise then be the word all alone

with no queens or commissars around
to guide it through the world of money

to someone else's dacha bound by language
set free by silence that's no news

liberty is a lamb they kill to celebrate
I was waiting for you all waiting on the moon

the other side of anything is the truth
we're used to putting up with sermons

is the price we pay for being social
religion is primeval entertainment

you're being tendentious right now yourself
and so are you to notice it

let there be truce between us
because peace always lives in between

where the shadows burst into song
let the sun always look away from the moon

where he shivers like a leper in the sky
all mottled white mysterious

the sun is pregnant with the rest of us
you can see it in her belly telescope shows tourbillons

where spirits strive in plasma to reach
out and seize molecular array or Form

form you fond entanglement of mind
so much to worry me I woke aghast

thought the whole day was past already
and this morning now tomorrow morning is

and the sun calmed me with her word
fecundity in every season you can do.

11 February 2010

22.

He loomed a different way that year
put on a new suit new girlfriend said him

and out he went to lift a glass mid fellows
inside every prof a kid reading Byron

time for a glad refueling of the instruments
the oxen from the byre be led

to trample this new field all flat for dancing
Slavic milk makes your eyes soft mavourneen

I'm glad now be brought home that big red cow
glad we pig and dig and gold leaps from the ground

glad to be found because the world worlds itself
and we grow intrigued to watch then join the dance

eighty years later we squat on the piazza
wondering what on earth the poet meant

when he said whatever it was he said
I get the feel of it can't remember the words.

11 February 2010

23.

When everything that happens speaks a form
shaping itself by every between

itself and you as you try to do all that you do
shaping music it hears before you do

what can that be but **Kassandra Krazy Wizdom**
mulching the deep winter of your mind

she be gone before they wake
those seeds she set a-thinking in you

you wake sometimes and recall her face
unfailingly small smile her tall body

upright while you try to go on sleeping
but she is speaking you reach out to touch

whatever is there to hear or drowsy-voiced repeat
or what has gone already back into the woods of dream.

11 February 2010

24.

Who knows the one who came to sea
listened to that endless conversation

everything gets told and nothing remembered
all this coward knows is sand around the toes

warm feeling sinking in after cold waves go
innocence in curiosity blossom that one's skin

who is a fool and lets everyone know it
gasping at flamingos writing dirty letters to the moon

thought love was a pre-war commodity
under chestnut trees in Zurich saw Lenin's ghost

uprooted all cabbages no babies would come
ate eagle meat and shat out the sky

confusions were our only coins
we paid dear for what we hardly wanted

all he wanted was the warmth of his nurse's lap
the undemanding intercourse of simple touch

the clarity that is supposed to come with time
assassinates the self-forgiving mind

oracles roar their pretty heads off
this hero cowers by the bedroom door

give him a name and send him to school
stones in the street will take care of the child

guide him to knowledge and drag him back home
knowing everything except what he's learned

there is an Opaque Luster in the heart of the heart
it keeps the sun from burning us away.

12 February 2010

[from a prompt: “I really want you in my life but”]

I really want you in my life but
there is no garden in my gate
no house behind my hedge

I am all seeming, a red mirage,
so you can only move through me,
I want you in my life but I have no in.

12 February 2010, Olin

25.

To die from the physics of air alone
the speed the thrown the sound of breaking

suddenly the heart is silence
the blue of the body fades in the blue of the sky

desire often one to need one absolute aloft
living no appetite for the undeed

in memory: one among the way lost
downhill sung the broken body something rose.

12 February 2010

26.

The sweetness of the actual holds me by the hand
when I want to walk into the woods and not come back

a fool and his metaphor are not soon parted
it has no hands and yours are in your pockets

you slouch through glory with an eye on doubt
billions of decisions pure cellular decide

it's no kind of game it is an orchard
trees bear fruit only when you look away

morning has to last the whole day be meaningful
the natural usury of time enriches you rust and dust

have no intention but to go on
get there even if it's not there when you come

all your spavined horses left behind
sweat scum lubricant of lust

the form sustains you

the wizard of onward hoaxes you along

stumble down the starry beaches of the aftermath

when the sea goes away and leaves you to do its work.

13 February 2010

27.

The tollgate listens for all the ones
a two can't go a three's too loud

in all the world are only nine
only one can own the drone in your own dome

imagine a prairie imagine being born there
from this kind of dream there is no waking

because I loved the trunk more than the tree
the leaves have fallen and no lover trusts the spring

keep reading till the tulips wither too
dip your finger in their wet ruin and write

every word a trace of ancient misery
be a man for once and fuss with the machine

long after anything a reek of sincerity
a church with all its candles blown out at once

a girl was climbing the furrows of the brain
in the marrow of meaning may have lost her way

leaped from the little brings and heard the horses
whinnying the highway across the mind

she knew her way had found her
trembling with intensity of namelessness do nothing

called it feeling and let it lap you
till the edge of feeling was the edge of seeing and you saw.

13 February 2010

28.

Eventually the steam runs out of me
no identity to drive mere native energy

the machine splutters dozes on verandas
no Cousin Julie to crank the ice cream bucket

live desolation of newspapers and a dog
no cousin to pretend familiarity

you're in the shadows now little boy
for all the endless decades of your sunburn.

13 February 2010

for Charlotte, at Saint Valentine's Day 2010

We are walking across a field
and become the field

we see a house ahead of us and walk into the house
soon enough we have become the house

rooms of us stretch away through other rooms
always more rooms without end

and so many windows
some of them reach from floor to ceiling

some of them are in the ceiling
it is strange to have the sky above us in a house

we turn on the radio and become the music
but sound turns into the horizon and we stare at it

stars and moons and nameless lights
climb up and make their way into us

all the wisdom of all the galaxies
quiet in us where we sit in the room we have chosen

every day a different room
and all the things we know compact in us

no bigger than a book or your hand.

13 February 2010

29.

All of us milk the same cow
we drink her milk from a billion cups

I have only one question for all of you
why was your heart bad to your father

angry at your mother and your father
as soon as you were born

think about the answer a year and a day
then write to me what you decide

this is the beginning of poetry.
And why does love have to be learned?

14 February 2010

WEBSITE

Only sixteen hits between midnight and dawn
and it's Valentine's Day!

Where are those lovers who should be reading me
and chirruping my love songs all night long?

Who have they found to play with this night,
can they tell them any more than I can

or leave them even more scrupulously alone?

14 February 2010

= = = = =

If you look around you with the right eyes
you'll see bolts of peculiar lightning
blue or mauve or crimson
striking on all sides—
some will smash a necklace without touching the skin
and the pearls will roll all over
and the girl will grumble as she scrambles to pick them up
little knowing her life was spared,
who knows who sends the lightning,
why it comes and hits or misses,
but every bolt hits something, small lightnings,
some melt the laces and your sneaker comes undone
some strike the heart and a man falls down,
so lucky are we when they miss
and shatter the champagne glass or
windowpane, or raise a pimple on the purest cheek.

14 February 2010
riding through Poughkeepsie