

3-2009

marl2009

Robert Kelly
Bard College

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

Recommended Citation

Kelly, Robert, "marl2009" (2009). *Robert Kelly Manuscripts*. 531.
https://digitalcommons.bard.edu/rk_manuscripts/531

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.

=====

remembering G.S.

Sailing there
and with no boat
sunflowers
all round the door
stone beehive hut
it too has a name
in old Provencal
but the man is dead.

mid-March 2009

Göbekli Tepe

thinking about these steles these columns
these pillars with heads
and snakes and foxes on their sides,
their arms are animals,
10,000 years ago assembled in Turkey

I remember Paul Valéry saying
“those who go down into the self
should go armed to the teeth”
and I quoted him in 1961
years before I realized

that to go into the self
was to go into you,
my self is over there
where you are—

you feel it among us even now
a sound, a touch
abrupt,
 a loving mistake.

18 March 2009, NYC: St.Marks

= = = = =

Bird passage
spill over street

they call it light here
but I know an angrier race

human sight slows things down

our eyes silence the tumult
and we see at any moment
only a freeze-frame of all that's happening,
reality is speed

we miss how it moves.

18 March 2009

= = = = =

If it were a fireplace
cold in summer with dried
hydrangeas colorless in it and no cat

quiet artifice of domestic space
who made this womb
what child's supposed to come from it?

every space points in and none points out
where is the house of outward
who lives in the room that speaks?

18 March 2009

= = = = =

What if I found myself on the floor
wondering mildly how I came to be there—
a fit, I suppose, do people still have fits,
or heart attacks, do people still have hearts,
some failure to sustain attention and I fell?
But here I am sitting at my table
telling lies. Can't trust experience,
can't trust the senses. Trust language
to bring all things into doubt.

18 March 2009

= = = = =

Things belong to me again

home house

don't have to listen hard

to hear the rain

just get into the mood of light

blind man then see.

19 March 2009

JOSEPH

said
and said again

There have been crows
in my wheat
God bless the crows

The pagans over the hill
worship a woman on a goat
God bless the goat

The tax collector steals my coins
God bless silver and gold

I am a man in a dream
waiting for someone
to fall asleep and dream me

I dreamt of a woman
she dreamt of a child.

19 March 2009
for the feast of St Joseph

NIGHT OF THE CART

Odd cart. Man
in it. Woman pushes.

Close up it is a play
from far off a hill.

A horror. Something
holy. Things

are better when not
seen close but seen

for a long time

held at eye's length

off there where

the danger starts.

Odd cart. Man

and woman change

places. Roles.

Rules don't last

either. Who

wants to ride. We

push one another

over the hill. Cliff

close. All play

is sacrament.

The man is a boy

the woman a girl.

All play acts out

a dismemberment.
Every children's game
is about dismemberment,
exile, war. We learn
who the gods are
we fear and how far
we dare go before
the poem runs out
and leaves us bleeding
beside the broken cart.
The hill watching.

20 May 2009

FOUNTAIN PEN

of youth. I want to write
with dark blue ink
made ten years after my death

I want the blue future
to flow right now from this gold pen
and speak words out loud to the paper

the way people will sound
a hundred years after I die
so they will finally hear

not me, I'm dead,
but what the words were saying
the dialects of time.

20 March 2009

REDWOOD

Or sequoia, why a
day or even hour later
you're just the shadow
of who I was when I went by

a tree is usually a conversation
but this! it child's me
my mind on its knees
before the up of it

the sky seems almost an accident
up there, from it the tree
races down to a meager earth

and it all is tree
silencing me.
Go there yourself, wary, in love,

your heart in your mouth.

20 March 2009

SPRING

The sky explodes with spring
dawn lasts for hours
the colors of it flung across the south

* * *

Spring has sprung
but cold was ready.
In the 20s last night.
One wears a hat.

20.III.09

= = = = =

Mercy waits for Justice
at the side of the road.
Each one love another
perhaps the very same.

Justice comes slowly
in a big car, Mercy
lifts her hands high
a gesture innocent

dramatic: stop o stop.
Justice is tired of all this
caring, wants the car
to get there and be done.

Justice believes in destinations
Mercy believes in now.
The car passes, Mercy
keeps walking alone.

In the gulley below the road
an old man counts his fingers
carefully, one by one
touching each with his fingertip

he knows that he has ten
but can never find more than nine.
He is mildly worried by this
the way the sun shines.

20 March 2009

Answering a question from Alana

bricks are made of birds
are made of sky

the few things I know
the answer to are other things

I stroked a lion once
he looked at me

a big male lion I stroked his mane
he looked at me with woman's eyes

bricks are made of words
to hold them up before our eyes

so we can read the walls
the walls are made of bricks the bricks are made of words

they look all the same
but each is different

a sound in your mouth
listening.

20 March 2009, Hopson

= = = = =

Reflections in water
and the water moves so fast,
spring thaw, our little stream
a thousand times a minute
the reflection of my face
and shoulders dissolves
and must reconstitute itself
in ever-changing water.
Is that why it's so dizzy
to look into rivers?
Whereas the sea is calming
showing nothing but itself
just the waves and crests
and leaps of it coming in
and my own face stays
hidden safe from itself?

20 March 2009

WALKING TOWARDS IRELAND

as if it were there all green and wet
at your toe-caps from the potted palm trees
of Dun Laoghaire to the Bloody Foreland
and your relations thick below the ground

and no one smiles. Walking towards memory
is a long hard slog. The one who gets there
is not the same as the one who started out.
Amazement of arrival. Cock on a dungheap
chanting to the sky. My kind of country.

21 March 2009

= = = = =

Do something with this.

Make it that.

And when that's done

go over there

with the other children

walking in and out of the columns

talking about **το εν**.

21 March 2009

COMMISSION

So I have to write a review of the world
the phone call instructed me.

What do they think I've been doing all these years?

There's a big red-headed pileated woodpecker
on the slim sapling just outside my window,
the proportions seem all wrong, big bird
on little tree. But he's beautiful, his black
feathers glossy in the morning sun.

That's how it has to begin.

21 March 2009

= = = = =

Waking to no heat
and a bird outside.
Just because it vernal
equinoxed yesterday
doesn't mean it wasn't
nineteen degrees last night.
And freezing sunlight now.
With a bird. Try
to get the furnace
started up. Be a man
on earth already,
suffer. Like a bird.

21 March 2009

LOGIC

Where is the year?

Under a barrel.

Where is the barrel?

Rolling down a river.

To which ocean does that river run?

There is only one.

When it gets there will you still be able to remember?

I have never been there, I do not know, even now I think much must have
been forgotten already.

Why do you say that, how can you be aware of how much is forgotten?

My mind doesn't have enough images in it to account for all the years I
seem to have been alive.

But as compared to what, somebody else's brain, how could you know that?

It may be as you say, or suggest, maybe nothing really is lost.

I didn't say that, I think I said no one can know what he forgets. That's just
logical.

Then logic must be the science of consoling yourself for everything you
have lost, I should learn it, where do I begin?

21 March 2009