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Robert Kelly  
*Bard College*

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Came calling. Nodded  
once and fell to sleep. Does any  
fall sometimes wake. A vacuum  
cleaner woke him not long after.

Call that a night and a morning  
and come calling. A carafe  
bedside. Out there commotion.  
What train could be so long.

Animal or? Calling out he  
slept again. Next time time  
itself did the waking. Ocean  
dreams the doctor called them

remember. The doctor is everywhere,  
is everyone come calling  
to inspect what you have become.  
the doctor has a satchel full of names,

one or more he imposes on me  
he thinks right next to the carafe  
now empty. See when we wake  
the thoughts grow longer, more,

more people in them, each with names.  
Sometimes impossible to remember  
where the thought took over  
and sleeping slept. Vacuum logic.

Night before morning. Then night  
comes again, calling. He calls  
this thinking, and there is no one  
close enough to tell him he is wrong.

1 April 2009

## **THINKING**

is not thinking.

Any more than seeing

a cat is being a cat.

One with white feet.

1 April 2009

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Any I  
like signs and coins and flags  
a coin  
is not what it can buy  
a coin is what is.  
From my house  
two dozen flagstaffs stick out  
proud with banners of lost countries.

The lands  
the islands are still there  
safe in the actual.  
But there needs to be  
I swear  
an ecology of signs  
to protect them  
from exploration,  
exploitation, extinction—  
all the gloomy  
Latin words that rule the world.

Make the street  
safe for signs!  
Green heraldry!  
Eco-numismatics!

I appeal to the Christian child in you  
who knows that symbol's nobler than substance,  
host dissolving on your personal tongue  
right here, heaven in your head and nothing far.

1 April 2009

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The lion left now and the cloud withdraws  
from earth returns to sky. “Grey day,  
Cronopios.” The elm cut down last summer  
its stump is fresh and clean and white  
like a new-delivered revelation—  
have I read this scripture even yet  
after all this winter? No time for new.  
The old stuff still needs deciphering:  
rock, leaf, scorpion. God knows how long  
it takes the simplest thing to be. And go  
on being. Grey days are best, light  
enough to see but not to see light itself.  
that maddening original, that boisterous Child.

1 April 2009

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Couldn't tell his body from a dream.  
A golf course hidden in the mind,  
a game he never played, felt no interest,  
but there it was, vast well-tended sweep  
of lawn, the one neat thing in his head.

Let us walk here, he thought, and see who else  
we might find walking in the cool of the evening.  
None of them played. These meadows  
were meant for looking, walking, meeting,  
walking away. How soon our conversations end,  
the links empty again. Not even hard to keep  
trying, no effort required, the ground itself  
carries him along. It carries us all along.  
He read Chaucer in college, knows how things rhyme.

1 April 2009



## LIBATION

But do you even want to know why this happened,  
a reason for everything but nobody knows  
when someone you know dies but you don't know her  
what do you do? what do you do  
with what you don't know?  
Can this feeble ignorance console the mourners—  
the ones who knew her— can you just stand here  
like a dumb flower withered on the funeral wreath,  
what good does it do to kill a hundred flowers  
because one woman dies? What can you offer  
that helps anything stay alive? Stand there  
thinking us all up out of the grave, out of ashes,  
console yourself with specious resurrections?  
What you know wouldn't fill a bottlecap  
but pour it out anyhow on her filled-in grave.

1 April 2009

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But was there a moment  
when the tiger wasn't  
and that acre of jungle  
was alone and quiet?

I dreamed I stood up on the grassland  
Nebraska, maybe, or Dakota of the horses,  
and saw from one horizon to the other  
nothing but me. Right there

the exact middle of the world.

I was born at last. A man  
on earth and nothing more.  
Nothing but me and nothing but that.

1 April 2009

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People stand next to each other  
not being there. The Twin Towers fell  
because we can't talk to each other—  
standing, they were a sign, a man  
standing next to another  
man in amity. Love vanishes  
from the places where it mattered—  
lovers, art deviants, heretics—  
and hides in rubble. Find love  
where you find two people  
standing beside each other,  
love has emptied their pockets and fled.  
Dante watched from his foolish bridge  
the sluggish river move. Behind his back  
all the girls in the world passed  
across the bridge unseen. On their way  
to some place else, where some other  
lover stands, perhaps waiting.  
The flowing water down there  
burns his eyes. This planet is a crucible.

2 April 2009

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Maybe the word is about to speak.

It looks like ordinary wood

but then it opens.

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But if there were a book I needed  
there would be the library right now  
or tomorrow an author to write it.  
What if it's a pale only shimmer of idea  
to shine me a path? What if it's a voice  
that answers me at last? *Peccavi*.  
Is that what it is, a priest in purple stole  
to hear my confession? *I have sinned*  
but mine is a sin that has no name  
how can I confess it? *Sein* = sin.  
Being is a state of sin. No. That  
must be the sickness, the dead owl  
in the horse trough, the runaway slave.  
Depression is anarchy, idiot philosophers  
canting in salons, millionaire outfielders  
roaring around drunk in golf carts,  
adjectives weeping for their unknown nouns.

2 April 2009

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Not a mood but a meant.  
Something on the move.  
Allow the weather  
that allows me — some are smiling.  
The joy has to be inside,  
true as a the newspaper at least.  
This gloom is new at least.  
I walk in fear.

2 April 2009

## SHAPE OF A BAT ACROSS THE MOON

I came into the night  
like any other animal—  
mute till wounded.  
Fear everything, creep  
in the shade.

Even  
the proudest beast is  
furtive, scared.

Because not even animals  
belong to the world,  
don't you see that, René,  
don't you see that no one  
at all is at home here  
but the rock itself,  
the water, that move  
immensely through us

and we are their dream.  
What is a man  
but a passage of water  
through phosphorus and horn?

*Anything that gets born  
is a stranger,*

life is itself the alien thing,  
the fall itself.

And I have no shadow either—  
all day long I give it away  
and earth takes it in.

2 April 2009



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I have no enemies  
or have only enemies.  
Who will guess  
the twisting path between,  
so dark among the trees  
and there are no trees.

2 April 2009

(BAGATELLES)

At last I know what that sign means  
a tree alone against the sky

\* \* \*

Later name the tree,  
beech.  
Then name the sky.

\* \* \*

So many things to think  
so few think you back.

3 April 2009

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So much to tell  
we spend our lives  
telling about holes  
never get around to  
what holes are holes in.

3 April 2009

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To be as dumb as summer  
and full of grief—

all that green  
hurtles past  
as if there were somewhere to go

You look at your back fence  
and understand  
it's all up to you.

The opening. To go.

3 April 2009

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Hermetic chambers  
where blue women rest  
thinking yellow

they breathe red in  
and green out

when we are lucky  
from wherever we came  
we come to their house.

3 April 2009