

5-2009

mayE2009

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Recommended Citation

Kelly, Robert, "mayE2009" (2009). *Robert Kelly Manuscripts*. 549.
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ARGUMENT FROM MUSIC

But music is a kind of enemy, isn't it, because it pleases or displeases so quickly, before we even know what it's saying. So it divides me in and from myself, caressed in the dark by unknown hands. Intending what?

Is that why music-lovers believe in God? It must be love if it can touch me so accurately sad or glad, they think, and this love must come from somewhere, and that bored horn player, this narcissistic pianist, they don't know me from Adam. But someone knows me, knows me through music, knows who and what and where I am. The music does.

So there must be a place from whom this music flows.

15 May 2009

SERMON

Hoping to do, one does.

Hoping to rest, one sleeps.

Hoping to win, one hopes.

Hope harries hope—

sleep. Sleep harried by hope

wakes. What to wake for.

What to do. Do.

*

It is commonly only through comparing one's state as one perceives it with one's imagined or projected state as one wants it to be, that one lives sad. If one clings however to the dual verity: One does always what one deeply wants to do, and, It happens to one in accordance with what one does – then grief and misery turn into fine analytic tools towards discerning and accepting, not 'fate' or 'life' or some such thing, but what one actually wants: Say to yourself at any moment: Look, you have fulfilled your most intimate desires.

Now look at those desires. They and they alone brought you here. If you want to change what you are, change what you want. Especially: change the ignorantly chosen mental pattern ('success,' 'career,' 'failure,') that has been given to you by other people, parents usually. Then you become yourself alone, not somebody else's son or daughter.

16 May 2009

SATURDAY

Haven't found the key to the day. Day.
The story that tells me.
They call this Loki Day in Iceland
where they don't give Thursday anymore to Thor.
Thursdays used to be weird in Iceland
they tell me, early closing and no TV.
That must feel like Sundays here
when I grew up, nothing nada and nix,
just dry leaves blown along the pointless
streets of autumn Queens. Bizarre
when people claim certain sunrises
rise up strange, legislated, busy stuff
some old book demands. Isn't
every day a miracle? Or insult?
Or a question? The sun has risen,
the paper hasn't come, the maple stump's
roots still snake overground for water.
Water. One thing the sun doesn't bring.
Or maybe it does in Iceland, glaciers
melting or snow from the house eaves.
But there's not much snow in Iceland,
strange, just an endless line of Thursdays
limping over the horizon, a kind of
dull story, isn't it, but a story still.

16 May 2009

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The girl who does everything
does everything. I heard Brahms
listening to her. I saw a river
move behind us, her left hand
grappled with earth and made
certain personages rise up.
She can do that. The mountain
behind me small as it was
was swallowing the whole sun—
I could tell by the way the light
fell from her clothes. So this
is evening. In long robes
those quiet people came
climbing up out of the music,
shimmering with dark
in a strange way, they left
their shadows inside the piano
and moved through the room
knowing us with her hands.

16 May 2009

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I love to live in the land of crows
so came soon as I could to country measures,
getting gone was easy, not so the green
spondulics I spend so, special pleading
with the deities of desire that they'd deign
to fit some finesse on all my fumblings—
I'll have a house they'll haunt for me.

17 May 2009

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Wish upon want!
And the craven
waterfall too soon
slips into the
sea's hands.

17.V.09

= = = = =

Was it wondering? It was milk.
Just milk. Peruvian lilies
it seems all this season stood
on the morning table. Nights
we eat standing or lying down
spreading stale bread with
fresh sunlight.

What do you really
mean? All this is foreplay
and as I foretold, all actions
vanish into words, words
vanish into music, hum, humm,
and something comes – anew
like a sparrow and less attended,
nobody's eye is on these
little birds, surds, sonants,
irrational entities we nominate
after our curious bigmouth
fashion as action. Deed. History.
How is a dream of meeting Napoleon
different from tasting an apple?
Touch, Thomas, is the darkest
of all our senses, hidden in our hand
from the beginning of time
or to say it in Chinese: touch

is the only thing that isn't time.
Is free, is now
and now is the skateboard of the mind,
like poetry or piety, up inclined
plane a youth-filled leap
breathless pause at top then clatter
leaves the cement of my sometimes
crouched and cracked and bleeding.

17 May 2009

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Who of you if I said Come
close and let me know you
or just touch you would
come and be handled?

Would you come as a lamb
to the pagan priest me
for something like slaughter?
Would you laugh in my face

but let me? Or sneer at me
with secret welcoming?
Are you a sacrifice, miracle?
Are you game for anything

or hate the idea but have to have it
happen to you just because
it could, and you want to be
monarch of every possibility?

17 May 2009

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If I lived alone on this island
it would rain every day
from four o'clock till dark,
be foggy every day till noon.
And I would not be alone.

17 May 2009

SPIRAEA

by

this porch stood
twenty years unattended
one year broke into
song an eye could hear
a million white flowers
each one no-account
but all together a cool
burn of bush, now then
for ten years ever since has
similarly spoken,

loud

white words all over it
—never said a thing to it
but it still answers.

Things

have childhoods of their own
and all this flowering of theirs
is not about me, not even us—
who knows what all this white
is really for? Bees? Then who
are bees for? Flowers? And whom
do flowers serve?
In dark streets of time
they blossom for strangers.

18 May 2009

=====

Argument is itself
an armament

listen to the quarrel
and know where the arrow's

likely to strike
hard in the heartwood

but of what tree?

18.V.09

= = = = =

Know who
everything is.

Uncounted though,
like the faintly holy glow
some sensitives can feel
around doctors even
to this day,

the sheen of caring
that comes off them,
the aura that says
*they have done well
by other people, no
matter what they had
in mind, their hands
helped.*

Moral:

People's real motivation lives in skin—
feel it there, not in what they say.

18 May 2009

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Not much said and then begin,
the banjo's as good a place
to die as any

if you're clear
about what to do after,

or stumble out in the woods and lie down
the way I did and wait for the little foxes.

18 May 2009

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Do act. Write ort
part of any art
is port part starboard
a word's between.
The insertion is.
Act. Write. Do
it in the word's between.

19 May 2009

= = = = =

Aspersions of the dim light
we speak with doubts. Yet
by doubting we uncouple
will from its willing. Free us
to be no one for that moment
when everything new comes
in and sits down at the table
speaks from our mouths, brings
out bread from a hidden pocket,
shares it with us, every one.

19 May 2009

= = = = =

things nourish us
we thank them by thinking

19 May 2009

VARTABED

Vartabed means clergyman or priest
but one without a stiff white collar
or if he has then hides it safe beneath
a big beaver of a beard slung down.
Wait-a-bed and bide-a-wee
and all those amphimacers—quick
lightweight words that save us from
solemnity. Wait till gravitas itself
is green and giddy, calm down, go
read Coleridge below the comforter.

19 May 2009

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Corporate madmen wear socks with sandals
bricks toppled from a pile of bricks descend
slow-mo as shadows, vanish in money.

Nothing remembers. That's a fugue all by itself
in a city I used to live. But the water is still there.
Solo escape into everywhere, hey that's my smile

you see scattered in all the shiny bits of sea
sloshing under the kindly old wharf. Sheepshead.
Entry of the second theme, the ordinary groan

of memory. The thing I mean when I say me.

19 May 2009

= = = = =

A chess board and some naked fingers
shoving letters of the alphabet
up legal pathways but a wicked heart
wanting to break every line – a line
is misery, color is the debtor's prison
where the light itself is captured
enslaved to man mood and free fall
until we see that color is just shape
and break the shape – your hands
quiet, stroking a book on your lap.

20 May 2009