

9-2009

sepF2009

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Recommended Citation

Kelly, Robert, "sepF2009" (2009). *Robert Kelly Manuscripts*. 579.
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WOODPECKER WAKE

Some towns are English names
some Indian as well as we could
hear them and some of them
names of ordinary people
settled them, some
the names of famous people
who had no say about being used.
Indian are best, misheard,
misunderstood, or just made up
to sound so, *their names*
are on our waters, said Lydia,
and they have gone the way the waters went,
the deep soul-deafness
we brought to the land,
we gave them funny names to kill
lightheartedly the beings we expelled.
Woodpecker waits—
a rattle in the thicket—
snake? or shaman?
Or some graduate student
sick with primitiveness
knocks dry gourds together
hoping something answers.
Each seed a little god trapped inside.

23 September 2009

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Every country has a king,
not every country
calls him by that name.
Grievous is the land that
doesn't know who its king is.

24.IX.09

= = = = =

Know more about later. And the sun.
Birds are useful because they are particular
ever a discrete number of them at work
in the observandum, the bittersweet terrain
we only need to know. Our turf.

Prompt

is visionary and a boat.

Note: the soul floats
or is rowed to its Arrival,
no chariot, no wheeled thing
needs the soul, and no birds hoists it,
it is itself a bird enough, *ba*,
but it needs a boat,
a bird needs a boat and you
go with it through the night sky
behind the baby-blue apparency of day
to get where, precisely,
is *your* particular, your God?

They poured water in the lap,
they screamed like baboons overdawned
along the Nile bank, the drew
words like swords with fiendish slowness
on every wall,

all to let you go,

pioneer of emptiness,

the word imagined

past the imagery of commerce

the soul has its own traffic,

the founts from which it must (that one)

or must not (this one, by the white

cypress) stoop to drink.

My channel is choked

sang the river, *my river is thirsty*

sang the sky,

we die for their sake.

We owe being

and bring it home at length

in that grand apsidial structure

human people call a ship.

24 September 2009

= = = = =

So I thought I was done with Egypt,
but Nile is long
and rises somewhere deeper than Africa—
even when you turn your back on it
the river flows or I would die
between one breath and the next

so suppose the Breath Machine is Nile
and we stand outside, let it run through us
and what we call *breathe in* is that great
arcane gizmo breathing out
and we owe it every breath comes in.

Such suppositions
are also Egypt, shadows,
small men in an alleyway gambling with knucklebones.

24 September 2009

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The word it says
believes itself—
like a flute in Brandenburg
opening a window

north to the sea storm
where the shallow islands
fret philosophy
waiting for the sun.
I will make you fishers of men.

24 September 2009

= = = = =

Once a starling by the Atlantic
yellow-bill phase and speckled bosom
as human thought divided
one for me and one for thee.

Orange flower water
liana shadows on the veranda
I walked as a zombie
through all the trceries of desire
competent humans spread round them

sun glint on a spider's filament
a web proposed, abandoned, one
flirt of it still the winds catch—

I was a bad movie fell from the screen
into the lap of an almost living child
and became him, I breathe in frames,
I breed with scenes remembered
barely understood, child, but married
by time to the memory of what he'd seen.

24 September 2009

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This is beginning, this
is near the aquarium
where angels once
liberated footed fish
to pester us with slow
becoming. The design
is definite, inscrutable,
long lost. I myself
am the blueprint of a long
beginning, truth in the works.

24 September 2009

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Ampersand

 she said,
a girl alarmed
by sanctity.

Haloed are dishes
behind her head,
her slim flat hands
pass over goblets
of water quick

she breathes
an instant answer—
more is more

we are like grass,
fresh, uncountable.

24 September 2009

= = = = =

Different densities same desire or
where would the cabin be
with the plume of chimney smoke
by which it hangs from heaven?

All of it for you—Asian water-caltrop
with sweet insides, blur-land
on the steel river deceives sense,
here are flora not firm dharma.

Here an eye alone can walk.
Anoxia among the fisheries
governments as usual deplore.
I wanted it to be your river only

only your river. I was God.
I proposed entitlements and I
created blue. But more was needed.
I cut the basin with a dull machete

the sea poured in and swallowed
the dribble of nameless mountains—
almost adequate. Effervescent autumn!
Well-sprung chariots, Latin teachers,

maple syrupers, Sunday, sun.
It took so much to make you
a river and even now the water
in it is far from being done.

25 September 2009

= = = = =

Why does it always have to be a story
why can't it darken the way a thing does
bronze or silver or a person ever
deeper gouged but never someone else?

A story is all other. Blue vein
red meat and a mother.
I want a story that stays home

or like the wind is always where it is
right now and never on its way thither.
There is nowhere else for it to be.

25 September 2009

= = = = =

And the eye catch hold
shovel sugar half a year
couldn't stand it anymore
the smell of it
up to their knees in it
the ever-shifting
but the smell never changing.
On Atlantic Avenue
far from the barges it came on.
It gave him white skin
two pale eyes.

25 September 2009

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I don't want to fight with anybody
I want to write blue
words invisible on the sky
you'll read as wind
comes down and touches you

I want to build a house
out of shadows and be Saturday
always, want to watch corn stalks
dry in the vast meadow and
teach them how to talk

I'll come to answer the bell
and there'll be only stars on the doorstep
or a little river running past my feet
and what kind of sparrows must they be
who fly around the house all night
low to the ground, gibbering about this and that?

26 September 2009

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O in this Paradise
of plain words
your skin, your skin.

26.IX.09

RENTRÉE

Light me your hexagon
who. Spill (spell)
Vertex by starlight using
wet fingertip in slopped beer,
September isn't just the
Louvre happening to trees.
It is spilled (spelled)
things and nuns and prisoners,
animal reading Plato in a cage,
bars are all there are.

2.

Orderly retreat into dead thoughts.
Please, please change your minds.
True avant-gardes work backwards too,
clear up history, change the past
so fresh thinking comes along
to spell us new. Amen.

27 September 2009

7 JUNAJPU

The Kids with their blowpipes
are running wild today
no jungle is safe from them
a peccary is hiding in my heart
I am a changeling
 born to be somebody else.

()

Barriers fall down. Moss on stone.
Among the calcium trees tired monkeys droop.
Pleasure is more exhausting than distress—
why is that? To give the mind
something to think about clouds go by.

()

You claimed back
then to be a girl and
girls don't like that kind of thing.
What part of our body do we think with now?

()

Translation is a borrowing
or outright theft.

The coop
is empty, all the hens
have been snatched by foxes.
Decisions, mindful decisions.
The sacred Original Text
is dry and feathery and dusty,
empty. The Original
is scary a little, just
look at it, all
those empty words
like old floorboards running cross the page.

()

One must of course see what it is to do.
And then (perhaps) do it.
Breton looks out over the cold gulf—
water, all the water
in the world is really inside us,
that's just the shimmer of it we see outside,
ships drown in the shimmer,
sun dapple twinkles above the baby's bath.

()

On tree trunks lined up side by side
the boat rolled down
to the actual surf.
The wave took it then
but what do the trees do?
Men pick them up and take them home.
The terrible burden of needing to be somewhere else.

28 September 2009

RELIGION

Caution the wind. Wind the clock.

Spill the company of
armed vigilantes through
the quietest neighborhood.

Moon glint on gun.

28 September 2009