

10-2009

octF2009

Robert Kelly
Bard College

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Recommended Citation

Kelly, Robert, "octF2009" (2009). *Robert Kelly Manuscripts*. 588.
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HARD

Weather. Hark!
The anachronism cometh!
You remember her tongue in your mouth
quietly seeking.

That was the pilgrimage of meat.
We carry a wall with us
wherever we go, we dance
clumsily to be sure, hence,
our signs
clatter around us like the wind in leaves,
October, cold, now.

We turn
first into a forest
she must chop down

and from the wood doth build a grand device
which moveth in part and it part stayeth still

and with it she administers the years
blue years and green
as they pass scatterbrained
through our simple boyish lives,
minds,
she then is the Sun we then must play the Moon

difficult, inferior, masculine.

Like language.

Yazyk, he insists,
the Russian for it,
language,

*you seek
in one another till you die.*

The End.

So much for love stories, novels, plays.
What do you mean, ‘our signs’?
Everything takes time, Miranda—
though it took not long to grow this island,
it takes too many years to leave it.
But signs?

Words. Facial expressions.
Pursing of lips. Wagging
your tongue-tip saucily at friends,
strangers. Your hands
almost automatically translating
what your mouth is saying
into 3-D Look-at-me,
ankles crossed, knees overt,
language of hands, shadow play.
You run your fingers through your hair,
adjust the spectacles athwart your snout,
face east, close your eyes.

Yazyk.

And these things you say are signs?

Fire alarms,

FedEx at the door, ornaments

falling off the Christmas tree,

October.

Why do you keep saying when it is?

Because the horse has been dismembered now,

and naked boys run through the strata – streets –

sprinkling its hot blood wildly on

all the girls they meet, or women,

naked or not, it happens every year,

the horse, the horse.

The sacrifice

that makes the years. That hurts the horse.

The death of things.

But of what

could the horse be a sign?

When you learn the language of horses even death is a sign.

Stop. Stop. What is death a sign of?

Women and men, other women and men in the street.

18 October 2009

COULDN'T THERE BE SILENCE

for a little while
half an hour maybe
and that be heaven?

And out of silence
a new kind of word
would speak, from inside

us out so we would hear it
only by speaking?

19 October 2009

LET ME BE ONLY

1.

There's a starfish just one
in the sea you want it

all those arms are
just for you)

 a song
requires some assembly
here in the hearer's home.

2.

Or sparrow chatter
also decipher must
as if the morning sun in fact
rose up from these fox-fur leaves
and we ourselves
are the whole beginning.

3.

Now we have said
what had to be said.
Who are *we* again?

= = = = =

Too thin to be a forest must bird
on your head. Blacksmith in youth
a nail did bend between his fingers
to make a ring he gave to me.

Memoriland is weirdest country,
blue clouds in a white sky and the green
forever. Different kinds of brick
seemed to identify the towns this

tastes like cheese that tastes
too thin to be a forest think
what it would be like to tree
to oak even or to hornbeam

few here but not forgot I touched
'touch, touch' they said at parting
as if even their soft skin was
also a door a door to go in go out

and always be at home thin
though the trees were here
compared to what they'll be
later when America dreams its hair.

19 October 2009

= = = = =

What happens to the heart the heart is a muscle and more
what happens to the mind the mind is a shadow in the chest
what happens to the body the body is something you forget
and what are you what are you you are me alas you are me.

19 October 2009

CORDILLERA

 nice word,
saw-tooth mountains rear
up through orogeny mother of discovery—

here are caverns:
we speak into cave mouths, Sarah,
and later than we think a voice comes back
apparently answering.

The voice (by now it might be still
our own voice, didn't you say something?)
seems to tell us to come in.

 But we go in,
obedient and disobedient at once
as is our double nature,
 naked,
we would trick the sunshine if we could,
everything, everything
goes in.

 It is dark in us, Sarah,
have we died or is it just love again
squeezing us tight, is it dark
that has hands?

mountains

upon us and this little negative space,
this thought-carved cavern where we,
what do we do here?

is it love again,
all that touch and squeeze, and dying, is it,
isn't it,

mountain on my head
a mountain on your back
but heavier than those my arm round you,
you are firmer than the mountain, why is it,
I mean we feel us more than we feel stone
or light or even fear—

which of us led the other here,
wait, light comes through the stone,
by this emerald light I can read only your face,
this is irrational, your face
is more familiar than all these years could make it,
I think I was never alive before your face,
and seeing your face

is how I came to be born—
and it is the only thing I see in perfect dark
you too apparently answering.

20 October 2009

= = = = =

This lesson in geology
a broken mountain
is a human thing

a banjo kind of thing
a fold of cloth your hand slips in
to touch the mother of the world

plain water—
 taste my mineral
is all I ask, adore thee.

20 October 2009

= = = = =

Are the woods still burning
where I used to live?
What has become of the smallest things,
the snake I knew, the bougainvillea?

20.X.09

Truth in lying

when it's down you do
and the sky looks down
too the way it does
and favors—

bird omen
in the right temple.
a hoot of grass
beside your head.

The wind. Take
all you can
of this. Winter
soon and no telling.

20 October 2009

= = = = =

When you get old
you change your species—
didn't you know that?

It is a breeding kind of thing,
a feast of pheromones and fantasy.

In our father's house
there are many doors
but so few rooms.

20 October 2009

Liebeslied

Listen more to the heart than to the head
he said, and Does the heart have lips
she whispered more to herself than him—
her skeptic beauty dight for her alone.
But he heard, and sanctioned her misprision
with a kiss, at least he thought he did
but she with deft irrelevance decided
to bite the glamorous apple in her hand,
trophy from October field-and-streaming
so he got at best the wispy tickle of her hair
in his lips. sweet clean smell of malic acid.

21 October 2009

= = = = =

And that was the end of the Nineteenth Century
but I still like the rumor of that time
the rustle of their heavy clothes
they so wanted to take off and didn't know how
except in greasy gaslight in the chilly studio
trembling in the air, the whole population
with one single dream: to be naked
someday in the sun, a piece of bread to eat.

21 October 2009

CLAY

Poorly draining clay. House
in the marshlands. *Palus, paludis*,
'a swamp.' From a house.
In winter only. A house to come
from. Rattle after dawn his
beak on the shingling. *Picus*,
'a woodpecker.' Vex the sleepers.
Only the bird. And we affect
such glamorous piety. Poetry.
How many times use a word
before it breaks? Too question,
too answer, too yes. Breaks
and what comes out? Is a word
also a house and speech the marsh
it tries to drain and never does?
What we need is more maybe,
a glad perhaps resting on her lap
as shown in the Temple at Cnidus,
queen of everything. Hold me.
What strange wine inebriates
the goatherd in the shade? Who
resists the song of sugar, the call
of yeast? Say a thing just once—
everything else is just believing.

21 October 2009

= = = = =

Trying, *phagos*, beech tree,
fagus, oak also, how
do the names
weed in the meadow
deep grass and the snake
coiled in late sun sleeps
and no trees but the names
we keep carrying
from homeland to homeland
into the coasts of never
and here, *fagus*, grey
slippery bark of it or
write a book on its skin
like mine or renew
later the sound of the word
in the shade also
of its copper leaves
finally content to stand
what if no more than an hour
an hour also is the house of time.

21 October 2009

= = = = =

What could I have understood of what you were telling me except that I had to hear your mouth that was the need of it in me a requirement for those particulars, muscle and mucous membrane stretched in the service of some god I was trying with all the power in my brain to impersonate so my flesh would become the moment altar on which in your turn you would sprawl trying for a moment (each!) to be somebody utterly else and there would be no weather in the world then and we (alone!) would be the only settlement neighborhood town city house.

21 October 2009

= = = = =

A shtikl broyt

for all our needs

not much more—

a fish an overcoat a wife

who knows

but still

this knowing business

wants to know and know

the proper study of mankind is bread

tea jade the backside of the moon

the little place between

this place and this.

22 October 2009