

10-2009

octH2009

Robert Kelly
Bard College

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Recommended Citation

Kelly, Robert, "octH2009" (2009). *Robert Kelly Manuscripts*. 586.
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Sin is anything that comes again
to wake you.

Bite you

it may be.

Youth is pure commodity.

27 October 2009

= = = = =

So many things left to ravish
me,
 the altarpiece
and the painted apse behind it,
the colors of this faith's confusions
turn luminous certainties
for the while of eye.

 The wily eye
finds God in everything.

27 October 2009

= = = = =

There is dirt
under the fingernails
of even the cleanest hand.

I know this,
I have seen the blue crescents
glow under the sin-o-scope:

this little finger touched
and this little finger kept to itself
and this little finger pulled the trigger

in what the preacher
called a Most Just War—
and never mind what this little finger and its thumb

are busy with right now
squeezing the pen for dear life
hoping the words will wash away all misery and pain.

27 October 2009

= = = = =

a stretch of zeroes running towards the barn
but nothing makes it
safe into the grainsmelly dark
beyond any random old wooden red door

everything kisses everything and falls.

27 October 2009

= = = = =

I've been telling you for a long time now
that if you write a lot of it down
it will seem to be coming from very far away.

28.X.09

LATE OCTOBER MORNING

To live in amber

as this light

decrees

leaves

profound Talmudists of sky

as if the aether over

came down to ground again,

a sky made almost all of earth.

28 October 2009

= = = = =

Be a little bit
of something said
somewhere else by someone
you have never met

and yet the words said
seem right now to come
out of your mouth
and the people you talk

them to are surprised
as if all of a sudden
all of you actually
meant what you said.

28 October 2009

= = = = =

I tell them all how to do it
don't know how to do it myself
an old car idling in the rain and lo!
there is no interstate, barely
a dirt road through maple woods
above the river, slippery red clay
and the low river welcomes all
this sudden rain. Should I too
slip into gear and just go?
No one is alive in the world anymore
just me and this remembered place,
not a sound, not even the engine, not even
the rain pelting down over Damascus.

29 October 2009

= = = = =

Sometimes we need more of fact
than just blue sky. The weather
is our only mother now—some
of the younger ones have a second
mother still, who opened one time
her body to the weather and let you out.
But most of us are orphans in the sky.

29 October 2009

= = = = =

So many leaves to read these autumn days
these legacies we're left and have to understand.

29.X.09

= = = = =

I don't mind looking ridiculous,
just don't want to be right too often—
then they'd really try to strike me down.

29.X.09

= = = = =

But it wasn't
then it was—

so easy animals
begin to speak

and not all that long
before we listen

but what are we saying
to each other ever

in this blue café?

29 October 2009

= = = = =

what the skin said
when the men fled

the mother act
is a void contract

a man made of bone
must sleep alone

in sunlight haze
the river's waves

reflect the hills
the human will

forgets it all.

29 October 2009

LOPING

1.

through the window
a sight of birds
or bird a one
looped so fast between
the mullions no one
could tell its grey kind

—who goes there, citizen,
and of what country
or is there one at all
more ridiculous than this?

2.

Keeping, and keeping looking,
and moving around. We even
want to see what we hear.

3.

From the mountain on top
of the mountain on top
a white face looks back—

I thought it looked old
but I was young
and any face that looks back

is opposite—everything
that is not me
stares out of the mirror.

4.

Who gave me a camera?
Wasn't my mind
supposed to be my Leica?
Don't we spend our lives
preparing to go blind?

5.

Because sight is storing
and what is stored
is the unseen answer
we keep shaking
to make it say more.

The leaf
you gave me
none of us

knows why—
stare and the leaf inside
and try to remember?

6.

A wall with a wall around it.
A door into a room with no door.
A room with no window and a bird passes by.

7.

Shadows loping. Schoolchildren
hurrying eastward into night.
I see their cries against the shadows,
the flash of their sometimes skin
eager for the dark ahead of them—
we yearn for that dense answer
the cave to which we bring or
in which we are the only light.

30 October 2009

= = = = =

I'll leave the pleasure
for you
to find for yourself
the story
where the maiden
marries the fence
and all the trees
bear an unknown fruit.

30 October 2009

= = = = =

Is the opposite of the opposite

the same as the same?

Or is there someone else at home

minding the baby and boiling the water

and keeping the one away from the other?

30.X.09

= = = = =

The variation
a kind of water
running underneath
the skin.

Mere certainty
is a Christmas tree
tossed out in February
tinsel bright in dingy snow.

30.X.09

= = = = =

Sounds that could mean
more in the body
than the openings provide.

30.X.09

= = = = =

To know them even before they
spoke by the shape of their eyes
speaking and then the foreign
language came and no need
to listen carefully any more
the wave of it was wet enough
we didn't need to taste each salt.
The brain also is a colloid.
We know nothing.

31 October 2009

THE RAFT OF THE FRIGATE *MEDUSA*

stretches out in the long room
clinging to the wall for dear life
the way those bodies—living, dying, dead—
cling to the colors of the raft. No smell
from all that rotting. Why do I hear
nothing when they call, smell nothing
when I breathe in, just the quiet space
of a long hot room, overcoats of visitors,
no aftershave? Who am I to dare looking
at this picture? I thought I forgot this
ocean long ago—we all cling to something
we all slip off and drown, we are gone
from the raft at morning one by one.
Now all art smells like money,
Tanagra figurines stink of a collector's hands.

31 October 2009

= = = = =

Not to speak of
things be seen
or wonder upstairs
a broth of bother

why don't you list one
so I can savvy
and pretend you're wrong
but I'm wronger?

a good question is
a crow in the sky
hovering towards
the newly fallen.

31 October 2009

= = = = =

What shall we be
who breed colors
and empty ancient rivers
of wordy silt

and write this down
for you to scan
frowning at so dumb
—is one a number?—

and yet it flies?

31 October 2009

KNIFE

for Alana, on her birthday

We say too much

we never say enough

the words go on

the mouth goes out

this out is called utterance

it goes to the uttermost

it doesn't go at all

the utter is the outer

what we utter

always stays home

we have no home

the roof is the roof of the mouth

the sea is the pool behind our teeth

we swim in language and never speak

the word comes calling

the word comes

we do not listen we don't have to

the word forgets to speak

the word is always speaking
it's inside us all the time

we have no insides
what we are is what is seen

the inside is a medical conspiracy
a hoax by scientists
a tangle of wormy meat
how could that ever speak?

how could anything good come out of that shit?

everything good comes out of what we speak

who would we listen to if we weren't speaking?
does a bird have something to say then say it
does a rock have something to report then say it
does the creek sidling past have something on its mind then say it

saying it is the same

saying it is the same

saying it is the same as cutting a heart in tree bark
surrounding the initials of lovers

love is provisional
but what is a tree

nearby men are cutting down a tree
do they know what they're doing

did they listen first to hear the tree speak

did they write down what the tree said
am I writing it down now?

a tree is a rock trying to become a man
or a man on his way back to being the ground
a tree is always between being

there is hardly anything more frightening than a tree
seen in the right way

under a tree the world's salvation sat
upon a tree the world's salvation hung

suppose this word too was wood
a wooden word lasts longer than the mouth

but only the mouth can tell a lie
a tree can't lie a tree is hardly alive
to be alive is to tell lies

to tell the truth all the time is being
is being more than alive

revise

was there anything you saw that you could see again

the men saw the wood

I hear them seeing it now

revise

is there anything you can say
such that later, at twilight, with a cup in your hand,
you could say it again?

even the word

the same word at a different time is a different word

I keep hearing you listening

is that revise?

what did you actually see that you could see again?

why does revision talk about vision

when it's all about saying

saying differently or maybe saying it right

or maybe revising the story

taking the old story away

or the true story

and telling something instead

what is instead and what does it mean

if this were a question I would be asking it

but I am not sure

I'm certainly not certain

not the way wax is

that's soft when it's warm and firm when it's cold

and a word in the mouth is wax

no matter who says it

bark bark only dogs

that live with people bark

the bark is talk

but why are dogs?

Why are dogs?

so people can have someone to talk to that doesn't understand
you can't revise a bark

we talk that way when we write
silent on the stupid page

stupor of the page
the waiting spread out unconscious page
adorable coastline of the never imagined

stain with what you say

then cut it to size

a knife to be true.

31 October 2009

HALLOWEEN

This is the night the living
impersonate the dead.

We pretend to be them
so they can rest for a change
from their uneasy wandering
seeing us do their job for them,

the dead are easily confused,
less easily satisfied. The angels
(Rilke tells us) hardly know
whether they move among the dead
or us, if we are what he means
they mean by the living,

we are the living and for this night
we pretend to be the Other People.
We are learning how to be them
or it may be we are teaching them
how to be themselves. How
to be dead. How to wander
hooting quietly in shadowy trees,
how to be made of moonlight.
How to turn into the moon.

31 October 2009

= = = = =

When the spark
that knows me
news somebody else
no ceremony
needs this meat.

(dreamt, midsleep waking)

31.X.09

= = = = =

Cortical—

like what is stuffed

into wine bottles

to keep the inspiration fresh—

every danger so easily escapes—

so the brain too is a cork

retaining (preserving, empowering) what?

31.X.09