

3-2008

marE2008

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Recommended Citation

Kelly, Robert, "marE2008" (2008). *Robert Kelly Manuscripts*. 619.
https://digitalcommons.bard.edu/rk_manuscripts/619

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In my driveway everything hurts.
There is a day trapped inside the day,
a wolf beneath the soaking pine boughs
his fur smoking in the rain, I see his eyes
the shape of his endurance on the earth.
The four-footed people with sharp teeth
the ones who own this place we rent
a few breaths of air in then we leave.
I hear the sound of a car starting
like a stone waking up from sleep.
Empty highway. Time did this to me.

20 March 2008

In my driveway everything hurts

He walks up the ramp into the old garage.
At the top they crucify him
where the old cars are. The crowd lets go.
A little boy is left alone
watching the dying man.
The boy is scared, uncool, uncouth,
dumb in the face of what has become.
The smell of crankcase oil, of gas. The blood
runs down. Why is Jesus hanging there
in the garage? Because they made Him climb a hill
to die, and this is the only hill he knew,
the boy, so that's where the dying goes.
But why? Why is there so much pain?
Later he will get to see the backside of the moon
and climb Mount Everest where the silver
woman waits for him. Someday he will know.
But not this. Never this. The mystery.
Why does everything hurt?

23 March 2008

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Translate everything. Everything
is my favorite person, touch me.
That's what the text message said
I'll sue you if you don't touch me
I'll take an ad out in the paper
naming your name, I'll tell your mother
I'll cry. It had to be in French because
I almost understood it. About doves
and roof tiles, gravestones and foxes
you know the stuff that Europeans
dream while they think about money.
Language is money. Marx was right
if he said, wrong if he forgot. Up to us
to make him right. We burn buses,
topple small autos by the cathedral
never in our own country you know why
we have none. We were born in a book
pages spread open on a fair maiden's lap
and she was sleeping and she dreamed
and then I was. I stand upon footnotes
the sun comes out of my eyes and shows
you how pretty you were as a child.
And look at me now just rich powerful
not exactly ugly but glued together
out of flower petals blue and lily orange
butterfly saliva, billions of bee wings
to make my sad meat let alone yours.
Touch me he repeated spring is at the door.

21 March 2008

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Some slow go through.
Some no. Or know
later when it's too.

But now there still.
Avail avail the sweet
perhaps after all.

It heard I sing
wheel wait to run
wind on the weave

the wind unspeaks
the mere meek found
all one could able

it was it was
till that alone the way
the way was.

22 March 2008

EASTER 2008

It all comes together
the going out

it all goes together
the coming out

he told one man
to come out first

he came, he was sitting
there no on the hillside

waiting, saying How
do you like it

sir, this coming out
the light again

the easy flowers
the smell of things

No, I am different
I called you

and you came
nobody called me

I had to hear
myself thinking

through the world:
be world again

show them
all there is to show

someone walking
on a road

someone with the sky
later to wait

around us all
Yes I too

understand that now
the sky is around us

and nothing changes
I go also on my way

leave you to that woman
coming towards now

into your astonishment.

23 March 2008

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I know it's Easter
because people say Happy Easter

as I know it's morning
because people say Good Morning

and I know that I'm here
because somebody says Hello

but sometimes I look around
to see if they're really

talking to someone else behind me
someone who is actually here.

23 March 2008

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Is there enough
ink left in these flowers
to last till night?

23 III 08

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I wonder what light breakfasts on—
presumably the dark,
but how does it get such a big mouth
big enough to swallow a whole night
when I can barely handle
the dark inside the hallway closet
yet am I not made exclusively of light?

23 III 08

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When symmetry breaks
the hunters of the dawn time
scramble across their rock wall
chasing the shapes of things

the shapes leap into substantial form
the hunters follow, spears addressed

breakfast in hell, breakfast in history.

23 March 2008
(response to an image by HSB)

CONVERSATION

Superheated message
yearns for conversation

yearns for you

but remember.

A conversation always implies silencing response.

Terrible but true. You don't say everything. So much is held back.

You don't say everything,
you speak to the thing the other speaks,

you offer and respond, and however long it takes
there is something unspoken.

So if you praise a writer by saying He is having a conversation with the reader
you are also saying He is holding something back

because a conversation is also a manipulation, a giving in order to take,
a taking in order to give.

Whereas a writer who speaks to himself alone and lets you overhear (Proust, for
example) may be lying, but he is lying to himself, and believes his lies, or wants to.

Whereas a writer in conversation, if he lies, wants you to believe the lie.

I am impressed, oppressed, tonight by the thought of how much is held back in
conversation.

The dialectic reveals, brings things into clarity. But there is a dark dialectic too,
the thing that dares not speak when the self and the other have their conversation.
The dialectic silences as much as it articulates, hides and much as it discloses.
Maybe more.

Interesting that the Latin for conversation was *sermo* – it turns up in English as
sermon, the most one-sided discourse of all.

But what is held back in conversation is: the simple truth.

Easter 2008

= = = = =

O to be here with myself
at last to hear
her (who?) sing from
before I was born

that long, the sweet
smell from someone else's mouth.

23 March 2008, Olin

OVER THE HUDSON

Slowly something coming as if to be
and the cliffs drip with the last elixir
from snow melt, glaze of last night's
freeze and here the river is, the broad
rememberer who helps us forgetting.
one could walk down there now,
Hoelderlin by Kephisia, old man
by ancient water makes him new,
walk to a place you never knew,
only mind map is ever Egypt
and Kingston reach is Nile enough for me.
The rivers are this river. Morning
is this light on my windows, paradox
of dust, history makes it hard to see
what just is there, the backyard
is all we ever have to prowl, no house
but this sound now. Down the cliffs
the water slips, a shimmer of
descendingness that teaches also
but what? *Jahrlang, ins Ungewisse
hinab.* Year after year into
the unknown, down there. Where?
Unknowing and unknown, the water
is a sort of science, a sort of letter
you will never get around to reading.

24 March 2008

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Let me say something else
while I am still me,
there was a watchman at the door
and he had a wife,

to get into the building
I had to make love to her
to distract him from his vigilance
so when they quarrel

I slip in and make myself at home
in the dark he tried to protect,
and that is the only purpose
love has, to ferry us

through one another into the dark
where something else is waiting.

24 March 2008

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I found in the desert
scratched in red stone
the equation that expresses
the incurve of the descrescent moon.

24 III 08

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Could everything be later than it is
and the river still flow? In the story
my father long dead comes through the door.
What does he say? How do I remember
what never happened? In the latitude
of Florida this constellation is not seen.
You have to study fish instead
their quick bright movements in the shallow sea,
the wind that cries in the night
and dries the sweat beneath your heavy breasts.

24 March 2008

FOR THE FEAST OF THE ANNUNCIATION

Or beginning again the way the lark
a bird I've never heard I think
goes up quick over waste land
and children from the city get to hear it
and remember, a child's whole
business is remembering,

what is duty,
spud peeling, ambergris extracting
from the dead sea mammal, swallow
the whole sea and divide by π .

It always was beginning, the lost
in translation message in the angel's wings
like dust on satin, shake out
our sneeze their laughter is
and sun comes up because we dream
again, there is no other reason.

In other words annunciation.
Steeple talk and a shadow fall'n
pointing the house he has to find
and shake the whimsy from his wings
and lick her left wrist with his little tongue
so then the thing is done,

the instruction heard,
the offer that she could but can't resist,
scarce understood but
reason raptures easy in her secret places
and all is well.

That's all an angel knows,
it works, the little tongue says one big word,
rain or shine it's going to work,
it always does,

the steeple always

shows the way to go no matter how we dance
away from the accusing shadow,
we targets of insufferable grace.

25 March 2008

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Going out of the city
walking
through dry wilderness
to a better city.

Beethoven, Op.12, No.3, second movement
of the sonata for violin and piano

a piece of music
as a silent movie

but no comedy, a tragedy, overexposed road
and weary wander,

high desert north of the San Gabriels, /high Mohave

an out-take from Stroheim's *Greed*,
lost footage, lost film,

of all this intelligence
only the sun is left.

25 March 2008, Olin