

4-2008

aprF2008

Robert Kelly
Bard College

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.bard.edu/rk_manuscripts

Recommended Citation

Kelly, Robert, "aprF2008" (2008). *Robert Kelly Manuscripts*. 623.
https://digitalcommons.bard.edu/rk_manuscripts/623

This Manuscript is brought to you for free and open access by the Robert Kelly Archive at Bard Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Robert Kelly Manuscripts by an authorized administrator of Bard Digital Commons. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@bard.edu.

= = = = =

Could there be one left
among the apples
a wounding a girlish twitter
in apple leaves and then

so long after the wound opens
the way the bitten
applewhite turns ruddy brown.

23 April 2008

= = = = =

Bruised links
between men
the tendons
stretch

 to deal
delight
he can remember
an upper lip
a millennium and then
long after Lorca's
donkey plodded
along a moonlit road
over the mountain

he sees that face again
a woman now not a boy
a dancer not a Talmudist
when we were atheists together
and all our fear was personal.
But now. The curve
is as eloquent as the voice
is quiet as the thigh
presses on the donkey's flank
and the night is torn to pieces.

Resemblance is unforgivable
he decides: *close my eyes.*

24 April 2008

= = = = =

But it should be the star
my father said
or a bird cry – white
throated sparrow you think –
off in the scant-leaved
April saplings of
tomorrow's trees.

You are here for a minute
only, like a star
poised between nullities,
lasting as long as your breath.

For air is all
and who has air
has air to burn
on speech to sass.
Whereas a line
goes nowhere.
A hand even
soon lets go.
But a star
can last a whole minute
from a world to a world
while you, figlio mio,
are still inhaling
the scent of lilies in the dining room.

24 April 2008

THE CLEANSING

Ghost persons from brain
levigate. Then lixivate.
Lye. Scour keel of, off.
Cleanse. What the priest
must do when sees
shadow of ghost in wall.
Say: You wall are sick.
This shade peel off.
How. There is a juice
that licks the mind.
Dry it, merely mine,
and bitter. The shadow
spills into his hands
he wipes his hands
on live dog, dog
goes. Priest hand
clean. No hurt
on dog, a dog
is a smile at a ghost
and a ghost goes
out of the wall.
One by one this way
eliminate persons too
long remembered.
Sparrow shadows
do not vex the operation.
Operate means pay
attention. Let noise come.
The white sun goes down.
Person from brain
is gone. Name of same
in wax letters let
then melt in sun only
later, when the yellow
one comes up.
Use no heat and no cold.
The day don't give.
Then be ready new.
A ghost is anyone
who died in you.

Commentary: Blagman Jospeth said Water. Blagman Maru said No. Consulted stones. Stones said: special water: dew on limestone only, dawn. Blagman Petru said Sometimes the dog dies. B.Jospeth: Not often. B.Maru said accidents aver eternal laws. Blagman Susu disagreed. True, true, three others said. The stones hurry. Rid the mind.

I don't want to be the person who knew that person. I want no trace of that knowing to know me anymore. None. That is what a wall means, when it is clean. Clean and no door, not even a window. I saw in Philadelphia once a wall like that, tall, broad, the sky on top of it and itself the color of honey, the color of sun.

25 April 2008

A N T H E M

Time to look around my grass
kingdom most accurate empty
signifiers penguins on the lawn as if
some truer spokesmen of eternal lust

I ask you delphine and curmudgeonly at twice
the speed of aftermath declining yellow nouns
across herbaceous frontiers when I look at you
I think about camels and goats and milk

what do you think of when I stumble
is everything a translation everything but the bird
or it too is yanked from español
by some Urquhart or from sketchy Greek

built like a seed and easy swallow?
We pass things through ourselves I think
because the morrow's melted on the midnight
and mostly we forget. When water stands

and there the robins are again endless proving
their pleasing demonstration of ipseity
I mumble along beneath moaning I am I am
in all the several dialects of skin

fall down fall down and let me know thee.

26 April 2008

= = = = =

Once I could have wanted.
Hunt. Once a fish or flower
old house. Wake
every a.m. in a different room.

Mise, I think it means myself
and only after me. The lorn
of else. The sylph of breathe.
Can I smell my breath,

can I mouth mine yours?
It is so far to come another.
But try, I. There there
I tell me that way where

you see the people moving
I don't move or I don't see.
Am to be enough or less
and still wobble the wall. Am.

At the stroke of noon the trumpeter falls down.

27 April 2008

= = = =

Updates and long coats
I intrude on a child's world
every time I look in the mirror.

27 IV 08

HAMLET

Resistance to closure makes a very long play. Why should we stop the play, stop playing, just because Hamlet and Ophelia and Claudius and Polonius are dead? The Ghost is still alive. What motivated them now motivates us. Revenge, like love, is infinite in its capacity to feed upon itself.

So let us have Act Six. There is no single, all-guilty villain. We are all guilty, and as long as we're still here (loving and vengeful and deluded and compliant), the play must go on.

I have been writing speeches for Acts XXXVII through XXXIX all my life, just me, and the Ghost on the deck at night tells me Not enough, almost enough but not enough – that girl over there, put words in her mouth, she looks like someone who has ill-thoughts about the king. And if there is no king and there is no queen, there is always somebody bossing you and everybody else around – if only me. Yes, Sire, I say, and so to work.

27 April 2008

= = = = =

Always bring yourself to the front of the room
the front is where all the sunbeams are
and the most interesting dust, the front
is near the Bright Wall, and the Lady
stands there in her stupid clothes
and tells. And you can tell
if she believes what she tells, you're close
enough to see her lips, to see her skin breathe,
the skin never lies, or if it does
you don't know that yet, never learn it, let
the truth feel just like the truth.
Always bring yourself to where you can tell
what they're telling you,
what kind of a room has no front
has no you in it either,
what kind of a wall has no room
you should be close to.
Touch such walls. Press
against them till you pass through
or see over. Don't worry
about the Lady, the room tells you all
you need to know. Or the wall.
A room is like a person with no clothes.

28 April 2008

MORALS

Be reconciled
with nearer angels.
Radicals.
People you don't want
to think about
ever again. Or today.
Categories. Frilly dresses
hanging off hooks.
Empty chairs
around a dance.
The hardest thing to spot
is what doesn't move.
An animal
safe in the center of itself.
Virtue. To speak
more than you know
is the only generosity.
Birdcry otherwise.
Hawk scream keen
as the beak be.
Reconciled. Enemy
is your friend
enough. Inkspots
from the old days
still singing
in the pink hotel.

28 April 2008

= = = = =

The cast of turn again
deserves our ardor.
The steel of her countenance
reminds the moon.

To do something.
The rest follows logically
like a fork or a pyramid—
always something to discuss,
relationship with the inside.

For we are interior people
and our bright skin a brief parade—
then back home to the other
side of seeing – all this
loveliness a roiling river you must pass.

Yes, you. This is a sermon,
a sweater, a bicycle wheel—
name it and its yours,
I am the tribune of desires
and I summon what is yours.

You never told me where your breath
goes when you breathe in.
Maybe you never followed it all the way in.
If not, you'll have only boring stories to recite.
The only place of utter newness is deep inside
where no one has a clue and everything is true.

So carry me with you on the narrow gauge—
explain everything you see and feel and need,
you're safe with me, I'm blind and dumb.

29 April 2008

SONNET OF DESPAIR

That there could be something there
after all, specifically after all
the music was finished and the Russians
had gone back to the café and the farmers
among them counted up their earnings
with stubby pencils on napkins
and how easily a list of rutabagas, beets,
purple topped turnips turns into poetry
and they smile and drink and beat
their fists on the table and soon begin
sobbing at the beauty of things, just
sheer dirty ordinary shiny things
that make us sob too they are so close
so close to us and we will never touch.

29 April 2008

LIBERATION

Liberation lacerates what
she asked. Or do things the other said
with other things and call them
by someone's name. Do me.
The evening had grown asthmatic
as we spoke, the ashtrays
looked like little dungeons, no one smoked.
In South America there's a lot of this
I said, trying to be obliging. One
coughed, the other turned on a curious
device they have in that country,
a TV without any picture, it turns
language into instrumental music far away,
ocarinas and claves. Nothing gets
in the way of feeling then. The wall
was covered with Europe in the old days.
I have been in some of those places
too, I thought, but where am I now?

30 April 2008

= = = = =

I am always having a conversation
with someone different all the time
but the difference is always the same.
So language is possible among us
likes sunrays and clothing and toads.

30 April 2008

= = = = =

What is someone far apart?
An if. She is listening to me
as I am listened and

would that be language
that she is I am?
Walk along music into the woods.

The trees are just punctuation—
do you understand of what?

30 April 2008
Olin

= = = = =

To be in your body
is to be at the center of an immense architecture.
No one sees you and no one sees it
until you say what you see.
Your arms reach to the horizon your head is the top of the sky
and the center of the earth is at your feet.
Every move you make
creates a basilica.
You are the god. You give it to the world.

30 April 2008