

7-2008

## julA2008

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Not sure to do or not do  
praise God I am permitted to  
have fun along the way

with the material words  
we gave us. The only matter.

A word is the smell of an animal  
passing close in the night.

The sense they make of me.

1 July 2008

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Outside a quarter hour or more  
before the sense to look up at the sky  
where a communiqué of interesting small clouds  
shouldering close together hardly moved  
and the new sun tucked in them over the hill  
like a parenthesis making a hard thing clear.

1 July 2008

Robert Kelly  
**THE JEWELLED NET OF INDRA**

1.

Lattices are interesting. They are the girls  
of carpentry, a dance of openings,  
a shimmer of compossibles, a sheet  
of shadows. Trellises and lattices  
and gauze, shimmer of far-off cities  
deep below the back porch.

2.

You lattice me on your veranda  
I choose the disappearances  
there's always some wood left  
to hide your eyes. To dream connection,

discontinuity built in: a flag  
with no middle, hence flag of freedom.  
The ruly shape that Nothingness  
puts on so we can see Her.

3.

Steel has one too. Steel and such.

All metalwork is latticey,

a glimpse inside. See your way

into steel: a ball-bearing smooth

but just look in: some children

riding to the country with their dad.

Mother in backseat of course knitting.

Inside a copper coin the army

of the Third Republic advances

to battle, brave and frightened,

the Rhine not far. Inside my gold

ring a sober population tends

fields of golden barley in the sun.

Each hand does its own work—

that is the point. A lattice is nothing,

but with connections. And getting

married to something like silver.

The marriage of emptiness with mind.

Sometimes with a massy turquoise

set therein and sometimes just outside.

## THINKING

1.

Stop thinking and begin.  
When the pen runs out of ink  
then it will also have been thought.

2.

Thinking is improvisation,  
spin craft, excuse.  
If someone didn't blame us  
we'd never think at all.

3.

Children who get blamed all the time  
become criminals or philosophers,  
those lawyers of the soul, those  
thugs of mind.

4.

Thinking is the greatest of our evasions.  
Language helps to overcome it.  
Unless the word takes us by the hand  
and we let it lead us  
we will die in the rational wilderness.  
A desert where dying men  
think things have meaning  
and they linger entranced by the shadows  
of what the already dead men said.

5.

A word is vector, nurse or muse,  
a word spirits us from thought,  
from reason to guesswork, from guess  
to jouissance, a word is wet,  
a word is what you get to drink.

1 July 2008

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Waiting for the word to take effect  
release the pain a wing  
an arm a hand a thumb to hold a feather  
straight and drag the name, you,  
up through the mud of my mind.

The birds have already begun their remarks  
and even the sky is getting some idea.  
The pain we read as blue  
wakes it, and I suppose it means me.

1 July 2008



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A little air  
walks into the room  
and says why  
aren't you out here  
with me?  
I have no answer  
but to say but now  
you are here  
inside with me,  
a sleepless air  
a pain without excuses.  
Yet you have come  
so far to be here  
where I have always been  
maybe even waiting  
and maybe for you  
to come from all  
the tireless traveling  
you do to be here  
now? Is it possible  
that here is moving too?

1 July 2008

## **ADVENTURE**

I like adventure stories  
only when you go to it  
it doesn't come to you.

Anything that comes  
is terror, the White Guest  
at the door. Midnight

is not required. Even  
the sun casts a shadow  
at you. A quiet arrow.

1 July 2008

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When I thought I was finished  
with beginning I began.  
The light was what I needed  
the dark did its job too

and I baffled my dozen enemies  
with the same behavior  
I used to trick myself  
till I was a most successful failure

and everybody knew my name.

2 July 2008

## VOCATION

Have I lost what I meant to say?  
But not what I was meant to say,  
words can be good listeners  
and I wrote them down.

Some pain made me whimper  
but the whimper came out changed,  
love made me praise out loud  
but out came something soberer and hard—

that's why they call us priests,  
we serve something in some capacity;  
in a dark prison we stand, passing  
from hands that give us to hands

that take substances that might be food.

2 July 2008

= = = = =

But why do things hurt.  
Or the habit of breaking  
lasts. Why isn't it always  
just what it is until  
it isn't anymore? Because  
what it is, is just this losing,  
this breaking away at the edge,  
this faltering inside.  
Are we just along for the ride?

3 July 2008

## ***BERGMILCH***

A phone call. We discussed that mineral  
the Germans call moon-milk, always  
wet when you find it. And white.  
And wherever ferns grow in the mountains  
you'll find my mouth there, busy  
discovering one more name for you,  
saying whatever comes into my mind.  
They call it milk of mountains too  
so when you call I want to answer  
the way a lover speaks the other  
lover's common name so softly  
against the other lover's skin. With  
feeling. On the phone we remember  
feeling. White and wet and far,  
right here in that very rock. *Droitci*  
as they say in the northern plains.  
We hear the network buzz as we begin,  
time to wrap, takes so long to say so long  
and there is no language that does it right.  
We hang up, each supposing each  
has touched something in the dark.

3 July 2008

= = = = =

Caught with a stolen calendar  
the desperado leapt  
from a high rock  
into a river where there is no time.

4 July 2008

= = = = =

Why would they be close to me?  
Morning waits a birthing  
they call it now, *giving to the light*  
or giving light a little name.  
I saw her as she walked away  
as she rode on a motorcycle out the door  
silent up the broken road.

4 July 2008



= = = = =

Let anybody say the things that has to  
or another man his box held on his head  
neat as the pediments or what are they  
balanced on the giant ladies  
in California on the hill above the sea  
the exposition park the room  
I live in is a thousand miles.

They built the women out of staff I think  
plaster over lath I think the latticework of mind  
projected in the sky to hold an empty box  
what could be the better offering to the god  
than an empty head for her to fill  
from up there where the empty brightness is  
that all falls down and laughs in us?

5 July 2008

## VOCATION (2)

Accord to me Assyrian presumptions  
oiled beard and patchouli'd concubines  
and temple columns so high can't see the top  
so broad it takes a day to walk around one.

Grant me sheer circumference and wine,  
storehouses full of what I do not want  
and will never use, stone granaries congested  
with barleycorns unknown on earth,  
star wheat and lascivious spelt. Grant me  
universal excess of sheer thing.

Then I'll be content to be your humble man,  
a modest braggart on an otherwise silent earth.

5 July 2008

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I want to rule the world.  
But who are you?

5.VII.08

= = = = =

Saturday and every Saturday begins in me  
a critique of the American republic  
or republican America. The shabby, the loss.  
The economy jerrybuilt on endless war.  
The phony war on drugs, the realish war  
in unknown Orients – men die in both.  
I wish it were Sunday and I could stop.

5 July 2008

= = = = =

Could there be so late  
one word left to say  
*Abendmahl* and sad Apostles,

potatoes fall out of the air  
and sparrows bathe in dust—  
there is no answer  
till the question ripens  
like the smell of someone  
who has not washed today.

Miracle is what they meant: the poor  
given food, the sick  
made better.  
The plain kindness of the facts.

Who do people say you are?  
Doorman of an infinite hotel  
dressed in blood and tears  
not all of them my own.

5 July 2008

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There is prayer after all,  
green stems of bamboo  
up in pebbles of the pond  
stand from clean water.

5.VII.08