

10-2008

octB2008

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Recommended Citation

Kelly, Robert, "octB2008" (2008). *Robert Kelly Manuscripts*. 652.
https://digitalcommons.bard.edu/rk_manuscripts/652

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“But in this case, Socrates, the woods become the teachers of men.”

(photo by Charlotte, 4 October 2008, text by RK, waking from dreaming the scene where Charlotte took the picture.) 5 October 2008

= = = = =

Not wanting to be close or such
to such a closed in face
for fear of what I'd say or it would answer—

this is a caption
for a snapshot
I didn't take
weeks ago in sunlight
on a strong hill.

6.X.08

= = = = =

Language is the weariness of honorable war,
jihad against the self and sole
paradise to welcome in
the weary persecuted Other
come at last into your silent arms.

Wrap the kiss in language and it lasts forever.

6 October 2008

RECORDED MOTION

or Ark
still on Ararat
unfound for
very small
it is – Noah's
flock were
mitochondria,
the sly instructors.

6.X.08, Amtrak

=====

Build me a hand,
Mind.
Yes, but first
build me a mind.

6.X.08, Amtrak

= = = = =

Out of archaic crumble
glints of loose time

a turtle floating on the riverside lagoon.

6.X.08, Amtrak

= = = = =

Weeping willow outside Croton
a yacht in shrouds
already snug in wintering
hot day all the rest are swimming still.

6.X.08, Amtrak

= = = = =

The certainty of loss. The pygmy spirit bolting flour. Fine. The earth is bread. Cloud massed low on south horizon. Trees. Mostly sumac here and vines though. Shiver in scarce wind, why? No mill whirls.

Here Mind the Gap becomes Watch the Gap, all eye and no thinking. Even so, there is no King Victoria. The lycée boy's sexy aunt hides in her room all night. The rumor of her flesh keeps him awake in his.

Any distance is all distances. But some distances are infinite. Transfinite recollections or. A dreamer tries to recall dream details from a dream in which he tried to recall in turn the feel of her peignoir as he brushed, cautiously deliberate, against her once.

6 October 2008
Amtrak, s. of Croton

= = = = =

Imagine them come down to serve
the things you serve. Imagine
their bodies growing smoothly sweet
out of your all too single body

and reaching places you can't reach.
Make offerings for me! you cry
so that their multifarious hands
speak prayers in every universe

the blue the brown the red one
not just here where any lake
is just a stone in trouble, and a bird
yearns for the interior of the earth.

7 October 2008

= = = = =

A measure, or milder,

a toast to Spring
out of Mallarmé's handbasket
on a cold bright autumn day

with not a single violin
coming over the hill. The mist
is morning, not meaning.

The swans on the river last night
hid in moonlight,
glorious ghost silently there.

7 October 2008

PSYCHE SAYS

Some things missing
turn up tomorrow

anything still left around
we're sure to need

Psyche answered
Sweep the house

clean of expectation
that dust of foil'd desire and

let the wind blow in
only what it deems

in its airy wisdom
good for you.

Everything is alive
or nothing is.

2.

What else did she say?
She loves you, she prays
for you every day

her heart goes out
to sick people like you
and small birds in winter

because of you.
You worry about her predilection
and wonder if you too are a sparrow

cat-mauled by the dumpster or
really an elegant plover
trailing her faux-broken wing.

3.

If you listen to her long enough
you'll find out everything you are
that fits her mind—

and her mind is vast, vaster than yours,
bigger than seas and galaxies—

and yet, you think, and yet
there is more to me than that.

4.

Psyche's counsel.
A red-winged warning.
In winter, cardinal.
Your seed
is only good for birds.
Feed them, and sleep.

5.

But is it true?
Is any of it
what she really says?
Or only what you hear?

8 October 2008

=====

The problem is, is

one even here to be bothered
by it much less solve

the broken pattern in the sidewalk stone
every mark an incident every incident a history

and no one home. Usually
the door swings open in the wind

but usually there is no wind.
Saying so will tell me what I mean.

The bride is ready for her groom, they both
are ready for the orchestra the wine the blatant relatives

o how few friends in all that blood.
Saying so will tell me what I mean.

7 October 2008

PEOPLE WHO RESPECT THEMSELVES ALWAYS BUY DECENT WATCHES

says my spam this morning,
a moral message for once
not just the lengthening penis
stratagem or lawyer in Lagos,

this one has the ring of the old
reliable mnemonic,
All Cows Eat Grass or Every
Good Boy Deserves Fun,

And I do respect myself, my watch
when bought was decent enough,
keeps time perfectly (though that
is a contradiction in terms

since Time itself is the actual
nature of our imperfection)
but that *always* bothers me,
do I have to keep buying watches

to stay self-respectful, every day
another Rolex, or every week
a Patek-Philippe? Or an Omega
at the end of every year?

And *decent* is a problem too—
my watch never uses coarse
language, doesn't whistle at girls
or mock folk of other faiths,

though to be honest it doesn't
salute the flag, and Horace tells us
it is decent, if not decorous,
to die for one's country, and thank

the gods I'm not that decent yet.

9 October 2008

SOME GONE

1.
Helpful departures
waiting at the river gate
for one more swan—

be particular, ranger,
don't conform yourself
to any beast. A beast

is a system, free
yourself to origin,
fire wing, golden beak,

droop of plover
by the sea rocks, stoop
of sudden hawk.

2.

Then let the others be white—
you have no need of bright,
the darkness opens for you

and tunnels you through
itself until you reach
the other side of you

and that is light enough,
you fly through rock
unimpeded and with noise

coming from your beak
sounds good to me and I am
the connoisseur of farewells.

9 October 2008

= = = = =

The trees come down
it is terrible
it is necessary
dead elm and questioning
maple too
close to the housewall
so red and shapely still
here at the summit of October

scarlet as the horse's
blood the Romans
used to splash on
girls and women in the street
squealing and rejoicing
in that abrupt fertility
October October

anything that has to
happen is terrible.

10 October 2008

= = = = =

The thud of tree
falling, that special sound
when a man's weight of wood
hits the ground it grew from,
a soft sound, considering,
from the air so suddenly
comes back home,
anything that happens is a single cry.

10 October 2008

VOCATIONS

Poets

These liars
are the only people
who tell you the truth.

Plumbers

make water
run through copper
run through lead

amazing penetration
hollowing out low ways
through which the gone can go.

Musicians

Exquisite annoyances
perplex the lower air.

In a warmer language
they are called gods.

Overweight ghosts,
they haunt our hear.

Bakers

It's all about breath,
betting other people
very small to do
your breathing for you
in the heart of bread.

Farmers

wound the earth.
The earth bleeds food.

Who will forgive
their hard life,

their dark conclusions?

Yachtsmen

weave interferences
all through oceans
tattooing their names
onto the waves,
leaving patterns
of human excrement
to filigree unknown seas.

Fishermen

deceive.
Send down promises
of generosity,
nourishment.
Fatal gifts!
Loud guffaws on deck
as little silver people die.

Hunters

woke me this October
ridding the river
of eye-sore iridescent
ducks and Zeus's swans.

11 October 2008