

10-2008

## octD2008

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### Recommended Citation

Kelly, Robert, "octD2008" (2008). *Robert Kelly Manuscripts*. 654.  
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Stay home. Nothing  
waits for you out here  
where I will paint  
leaves all afternoon  
and let them fall.

Float. Nothing  
needs you. Now  
is the time you have yourself  
been waiting for, the now  
of nada, the quiet sky.  
You don't even have to listen.  
You have already been said.

11-Reed  
16 October 2008

= = = = =

As much as we toured a car  
the moon kept breaking

no line so narrow a foot could  
fail to follow it all the way

the light! the light! the café  
beyond the bridge turned out

to be a store where they sold lights  
and the lights were on all night

and nothing open Paris 1954  
the war was close behind me then

and that was broken too  
the man I was the later on the man

who drove a car into the night  
looking for a naked animal to own

and kept falling for dawn again  
fifty years following a light

only shone and nothing shown  
you still haven't seen the strange

thing came out of the broken moon.

16 October 2008

## FACE

The size of the eyes  
makes me laugh.  
It is a child  
in a woman's face  
artfully reclaimed.  
The commodity of innocence  
new bought. Look.  
Let your lip softly low.  
The eyes so big  
can't even tell  
the color, they  
are the color of  
whatever you want  
me to think,  
I think it, sincerely,  
can't guess even  
what's going on in my  
own mind. Eyes  
as Dante says, seas  
men drown in  
all too easy. And  
why not, you ask,  
what good did it ever  
do them to be dry?  
I quote Heraclitus  
desperately, It is death  
for a soul to be wet.  
Exactly, you say,  
come play in me,  
there is something  
that comes alive  
only when the soul  
has died, one other  
mystery, an infancy  
you too can be born in  
when you sink in me.

17 October 2008

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I see them pass  
I watch them carefully  
I study I compare  
I remember and imagine

And have no clue at last  
to what's on their minds  
really, the people,  
the people who pass by,

and this ignorance of mine  
is the freedom and greatness of the world.

17 October 2008

=====

cabbages big as searchlights  
at the base of the flagpole  
purple ornamental and who will eat  
  
or eat the flag or drink the sky or  
all the things that seem proposed  
for us to do before we die

17 October 2008, Hopson

= = = = =

Whose heretic are you  
who wanted to know

Is there some sign on my back  
a sudden permission  
daddied down to the world  
to do and do well  
what could never before?

Be strong like a mouth.  
Or pray all night long  
the deep muffled snores  
mean God is speaking  
heavy in you now

then wake to tell  
even this. No need to  
tell sleep from waking  
or famously over a meadow  
is it frost is it sun  
is it just someone?

18 October 2008

## **THE SIGNIFIER**

When they say Giordano Bruno was burnt at the stake  
for revealing the mystery of signs  
they mean the sun rises mortal every morning  
but no one is supposed to notice it or understand.

18 October 2008



## VALPARAISO

A place it seems  
used to be in mind  
when I was a kid

now I remember  
how much I liked  
the sound of it

Never got around  
to visiting  
any of its towns,

Chile, is it, Indiana?  
And just now  
hearing the word

in my head, sounds  
as if it means  
Valley of Paradise

a place I've never  
visited either  
but also never left.

18 October 2008

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Not be angry  
stump of a good sugar maple  
cut down in its prime.

My fault. Fear,  
not politics. Wood,  
not words. And still

I'm left peaceful  
stupid in all these red leaves.

18 October 2008

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Uncanny resemblance? All  
resemblance is uncanny,  
unnerving. Nothing  
looks like itself alone.  
Whose face is that in the mirror?

18 October 2008

= = = = =

I am lost in silence  
inside all the words that speak me  
or I speak. Never sure  
who's talking. Who that is  
—hiding? hidden?—  
in the silences inside.

18 October 2008

## A PIECE OF BREAD

A piece of bread  
enough for breakfast  
fast a piece of light  
enough for a sky.

A piece of bread  
and a piano  
when the notes  
come one by one  
they work as words.

Give to hear.  
Fingers at the keyboard  
fingers holding limp  
a piece of store-bought bread.  
a piece of bread.

The natural dyslexia of evening  
silences the bread.  
Whatever it is  
it often breaks. It is fast  
but you can hear it.  
You can hold it in your hand.

19 October 2008

## ETERNAL SONG

Brick scat  
on blacktop

around the construction  
site the *chanting*

place our friends  
overseas seem to call it.

Everything that goes  
up has to stay up.

The voice lifted  
never comes down.

19 October 2008

## OCTOBER FAIR

Words coming.  
Words combing hair.

I sift my fingers  
through your hair

as your hands  
rest knuckle-deep

in sheep fleece still  
on its animal.

How warm  
you said the horns

are and I thought such things  
must have blood in them.

19 October 2008

## **SHEEPISH**

Market weather, I tried, just look  
at all the deep-fleeced sheep at the fair  
we had to talk a half a mile away.  
Cars wait on line too. The miracle though  
is just the sight of you your hand  
touching through the fence the dense  
compact wooliness of them, brown jacks  
dusty corriedales, pin-shanked cheviots.  
And the pleasure you take from the touch  
I take from the quiet pleasure of  
seeing you touch them. Quiet will.

19 October 2008



## THE PENITENT

As if I had spoiled something  
    you know,  
        just a strange  
feeling in the forehead  
    over the eyes  
like the feel on the face when you  
open the fridge  
        no more  
than that, a sort of emptiness,  
and always you.

Linking, from what I knew  
even from the beginning carefully  
or easily ever, all the way  
to one of those transiencies those  
absences I pleadingly call 'now',  
linking, as if, I had,  
in all that,  
    not you,  
        dropped something,  
erg, an erg of information, could it,  
a jot left out of tittle,  
        a bruise  
    adrift from its skin.

What.

What have I done.

A man who has broken his word  
has nothing to say.

Is it that,

is it simple as sin,  
deceit, crafty policy,

and then one night the dead come back  
floating, each on its little skiff,  
putt-putting into the crowded harbor  
and one by one they step ashore  
and each tells me again the lie I told?

Is it?

Or is there another wrong  
wrapped up in weather,  
something we, not just me, or even you,  
are supposed to understand  
just by opening our eye, yawning, morning's  
there, there to be taken in, there  
to evangelize the waking mind  
with sudden revelations of the absolute,  
while we're still naked, unwashed,  
shag-minded, corrupt with sleep?

I mean us all but it means only me.

How the truth hurts.

You know it's true because it hurts,  
the empty box that smells of ancient glue,  
the eyes that see but won't see me—

like yesterday among the goats in Rhinebeck  
watching them watch you with their lustrous eyes,  
some blue even, some olive black,  
but they did not seem to see,  
not even you,  
the gleam of their eyes like the gleam on their fleece,  
some vision that had nothing to do with seeing.

I want to take

the little train to Martinville  
and see all the aspects of your face at once  
whoever you finally turn out to be,  
if ever,  
and then another mile,  
another empty chapel on the godless plain  
in love with birches and maples and farewells

because good-bye is such a sacrament,  
we almost found a new religion  
we almost drown in seeing,

all around us  
everything knows its name.

What is the wrong thing I did  
there are so many which is this

my head kneels down hard against a word  
and croons blunt misereres,

I confess,  
confess.

All reminiscence is a sort of sin,  
is it that,  
the keen vague taste of what could have been,  
a skin I never touched  
that still gives light?

Drumbeat autumn, the trees in uniform.  
This sound you may or may not hear  
hurrying at least in my ears like woods in winter

the drone is all the wrongs I ever did  
remembering out loud in me.

And there our penitent falls silent.  
The priest long ago stopped listening,  
drowns or frankly sleeps,

his clean

old fingers fingering the purple stole  
such men put on

to lift our sins with  
and lodge them, God knows where,  
in some other memory,

a battered shoebox  
in Aunt Celie's attic,  
my great-grandmother's mother's photograph,  
could it be,

a parrot on its perch  
behind her—

everything pretends to be dead  
or still or fixed or far away.

Whereas  
you can't get away with anything,  
stranger. Allergic to dust in a dying world,  
allergic to sunshine, metal white and gold,  
the sound of bees, elevators,

shoelaces break in your weak hands,  
you choke on lettuce and won't drink wine,

you animal, you brink of mind.

20 October 2008

= = = = =

When we meet we should talk about the weather  
because it's always there and holds your hand  
sort of as we hunt for common ground in  
the parched badlands of what we think we think.  
It doesn't matter anyhow, it's always raining  
or not, something's going, the wind is blowing,  
some days the sun just gets stuck in the trees  
never gets dark and people go for drinks.  
That's you and me I guess in this histoire,  
like any old movie with ukuleles.  
Anything else is too dangerous, right,  
hearts and hands and dreams and all that lingo.  
This piece is too short to be a sonnet.  
This piece was too short to be a sonnet.

20 October 2008