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Robert Kelly  
*Bard College*

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Examine then  
unpeel it  
to one holy now  
and then to be.

24 VIII 07

= = = = =

Scratched glass  
tells it is present.  
Personality  
is made of wounds.

24 VIII 07

## SICILIAN AVENUE

An angle  
off the proposition,  
a bogus alternative  
to some actual street nearby.

I bought a book and lost it.  
If you lose a book  
you have to make it up  
all by yourself  
and act it out with your life.

Better to walk  
empty handed up the Strand  
counting the empty churches.

24 August 2007

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I don't have to buy a house  
I have some autumn light between the trees.  
Horizons are good habits.  
I whisper to small animals  
who pay me no attention.

The glass is falling.  
When it shatters on the jeweled stairs  
the rain will come.

Girls in pale chlamyses  
shuffle in indian file towards God.  
It is the moment when everyone waits.

And sleep is our loving mother.

24 August 2007

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The things that left when you were lost—  
skylight, for instance, or transoms  
over hotel doorways, revealing glow  
from secret bedrooms where. Nothing.  
Don't think about it. That was then.  
That was the movies, movies teach  
promiscuity, you to a different one  
every night. Forget the hotel, the light,  
night tables with pills and booze, forget  
the doctrine of vegetable signatures  
you learned from alchemists in high school.  
I'm ready. I have forgotten everything.

25 August 2007

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I always want a little more from an apple.  
I suppose that's what the myth of Eden came from,  
a raving hunger, or conviction that once upon a time  
there was something more. Something gone now,  
something beyond the crisp skin, mealy flesh,  
sweet taste, sharp pips, harsh core, something  
past fragrance and texture and nourishment,  
something beyond the feel of it in your hand,  
your mouth. Something even beyond color.  
Something lost. Quiet snake telling the truth.  
An old man disappointed at your choice.  
A thorn hedge with a smiling angel and his sword—  
you won't see him again for four thousand years.

25 August 2007

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Knowing nothing is plenty,  
maybe even enough.  
As you're still willing to forget.

25 VIII 07



## STAMP COLLECTING

The place in Ireland  
your triste beautiful  
face recalls, sweet  
world's end sorrow.  
A hill, a glen, a shore.  
*Tra*, the beach. At night.  
Phosphorescence. Wave  
crests. History. They put it  
on the corner of their letters  
and send it to friends.  
Now you have it too.  
You have been everywhere—  
we're all born the same year,  
same turf-reeking shanty.  
I see it in your eyes  
when I look close. I see  
myself too, standing there  
like you, waiting to remember.

25 August 2007

## A THING

The longer I live  
the clearer it becomes  
that things have life.

Whether a life of their own  
remains to be seen—

the first life they have  
comes from their maker—  
the maker's will  
and daydreams and resentments all  
enter into what they are  
and how they do

(which is why it's sometimes safer  
to have a machine-made object  
for your own)

((but who made the machine?))

and the next life a thing has  
is resurrected in the owner-user,  
then all the users  
down to this day of ours.

Then I pick it up and wonder.  
A thing is so silent  
because it is many,  
has so many lives inside it,  
so many wills  
dreaming towards enactment  
that it falls asleep.

A thing sleeps  
for your protection,

a thing is kindly,  
imbued with a decency of its own,  
substrate, beneath all the drowse or  
clamor of its maker, owner, user, wills.

It wakes in your hand.  
Sometimes I am quiet enough  
to listen to it,  
the old song stones know best how to sing,  
they've been with us so long

and a stone that's been shaped  
and wielded and carved and used—  
that's where the one true story in the world is hid.

26 August 2007

= = = = =

I dreamed I trimmed my nails,  
what does that mean? You tell me.  
I'm afraid of the animal I will become,  
tearing and rending? If so, who is your enemy?  
But doctor who is anybody when you're asleep?

26 August 2007

## SMOKE

Any authentic animal wreathes  
breath around its forehead, horns.  
“I succumbed. I smoked a cigarette.”  
With those words the chapter ended,  
or began, I can’t be sure, in the book  
I was reading in my sleep, a sentence  
on the boundary line between.  
But were the two sentences one  
proposition or two? Separate, or did  
the second sentence explain the first.  
I think that’s what she meant,  
something tempted her and she did smoke.  
I might be wrong. The smoke  
might be coming from elsewhere,  
ordinary autumn smoke, old letters  
burning in the fireplace, though none  
was there, he hated open fires, fear.  
He was afraid. But I woke up to find  
a ring of salmon-colored insect bites  
along my side. The dream had not  
in any way predicted them. Somewhere  
someone has already compiled  
a schedule of forthcoming catastrophes.  
Go, fetch me that paper, that I may read  
all the krakatoas of the heart to come.

26 August 2007

## REVEILLE

It's not enough to wake up,  
you have to be awake.  
And that's not enough either.  
You have to know you're awake  
and go prove it  
by waking other people up.

Wake up the situation.  
You need an assistant from the audience.  
The lady with the fawn shawl, she'll do,  
the one whose companion seems to be asleep.  
Bring her up. The two of you  
have to discover the right thing to do.  
This is what history is for. And time.  
Figure it out. Something to do,  
with mirrors and red wine and pieces of string.

26 August 2007

## MAGIC

We all do it.  
The earth turns.

This is a causal statement.

26 August 2007

## COSTLY MISTAKES

Blue riversides  
carry the name  
snug under your belt

notched once  
for every time you've  
spoken it

Seamless the sky.

26 August 2007



## DARING

                        is always something else.  
A criminal you think  
a ruptured iPod singing in the gutter  
its earbud half afloat.  
Nobody listening. Nobody  
ever listens. Just my ear  
pressed against your sleeping shoulder  
far from any city hears  
                        everything it needs.  
We can be quiet with us.  
We were born in the same year, the air.

26 August 2007

## BEING SURE

Puffy clouds  
over it.

The blue  
of reference.

The book  
I am always written in,

the endless narratives implied  
by everything I see.

I want them all, all the stories  
stored in one plain thing.

Any object is an intersection  
of agencies  
striving in obscurity.

A doorknob. A rubber ball. A cloud.

27 August 2007

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Quiet night.  
There is an animal in the woods  
crying calmly.  
It is some breath in my own chest  
wheezing easy.  
The animal is not afraid,  
it is at its ancient business,  
hunting, being hunted.  
Nothing changes in the heart.  
Noise and breath and remember  
and pad through the dark.

27 August 2007

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I've seen a million movies  
but I'm not a movie goer.  
I never learned how to be a man  
from movies, I learned it from a book,  
books where real men talk and talk  
and tell as much of the truth as they  
in their beauty and febleness and self-  
delusion can get their hands on,  
Huxley and Lawrence and Powys and Joyce,  
nice or nasty, sincere or smarmy,  
didn't matter, they said and said and said,  
to be a hero meant to be clear  
and say it, disclose it, self and others,  
prophets, Freuds, fops, all the million pages  
to say out loud what I think about you.

28 August 2007

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Aspidistra maybe  
or blue convolvulus.  
The words grow pretty  
in my garden  
like your girlfriend's  
girlfriend gone to Egypt  
to hide her blond hair  
in yellow sunlight.  
We are never ashamed—  
that is our sort of beauty,  
a confusion of my means  
with your ends  
like a rock tumbling  
down a flight of stairs,  
a world made  
exclusively of cigarettes.

28 August 2007

= = = = =

The mind is a sojourner,  
we know that, pretty much all of us know that.

It dwells in the body  
like a guest in a hotel –

where it comes from and where it goes  
the hotelkeeper never knows.

*Like a traveler in a guest house overnight*  
the scriptures say,

from body to body moving.  
We all know that. But the mind

is a traveler too inside the room,  
inside the body it has chosen for its own.

Now in the brain (we think), now  
in the chest (we feel), now in the loins

or legs or hands. Or hands.  
Let my mind be safe in my hands

this moment so I say it right.  
Map all the places in me

where the mind hides.  
And from which it makes me speak.

29 August 2007