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Robert Kelly
Bard College

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= = = = =

To wake up like anybody else
in the dark. Like everybody
else make a joke of it, spell
your name with foreign alphabets

pretend to be the one you are
like a man falling through the sky
pretending he's only going somewhere
out for a bit of fresh air,

lies are all we have sometimes
to lubricate the minutes as they grind
through us always one by one.
Can't it be over, can't it be
tomorrow again, Friday even,
evening, sun sets on drunken persons
free for an hour from that other
addiction, work for a living,
go on living, buy a window to look
out at a piece of rented air.

12 December 2007

= = = = =

Any book that unsettles consensus
is good for the young. Fantasy
is the conspiracy theory of children.
As the stock market is the elderly's
pornography. In between
we're stuck with all the lies
about 9/11 or why the rail lines
to Auschwitz were never bombed.
Or poor Booth our sweet maligned assassin.

12 December 2007

FEEBLE PROTESTS

Waking early out of indigenous
anxieties he feels an unaccustomed
fellow feeling with the Working Man.
A tingle. Not that he doesn't
work himself, he does, but his
work is made from his anxieties,
giving voice in unaccustomed
ways to evasions and desires
even more nonsensical than other
anxious persons will mistake
for their own and buy his words
to articulate their own transports
for them till he is rich and they
are mollified. Theory
of poetry in the Lower Roman
Era. Easy transfer of affect.
Let him tell you how it feels to feel.

12 December 2007

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Who should I blame today
for being me?
Almost day now
and soft rain.
What dastard would complain
of such gentleness?

12 XII 07

BLUE HALOES

Some angels wore blue haloes,
some of these were square not round.
In Byzantium they saw like this,
that bad angels had blue haloes,
devils in fact, or wicked characters
from sacred history, saints of evil
also had their places
on the gleaming gold mosaic walls.
Blue haloes. Dark gap from which
evil reaches out and sucks us in,
the singularity, where all
the equations stop making sense.

12 December 2007

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1.

So suppose it surprises
it wears a ring on its finger
and it snows

what could be weather than that
and anyhow else just
standing simple there

in the eternity called this
fire escapes and water towers
characterize the sky

2.

all there is to be had is here
as if a book said so and
any word makes believe

a modern sickness of the mind
no older than Ulm
is that the one with the big

condominium in the forehead
who could possibly not live
where they do who invented it

3.

belief is aspirin for the masses
spatchcock and reveille
what else is time for

askerless inquiries *Sans Soleil*
when the eyes regain
the composure of the other's face

a splint for bonebreak herbs
doghouse days and luncheon meats
spillways gleety with Yule.

4.

Only ever means the weather

askerless crimeless victim
in the vicinity of elsewhere

what violent tenderness is for
tame bear ransacking larders
to speak is to let an animal in

once in the house a language stays
and wood has no more voice or else
canned peach on the floor by the TV.

13 December 2007

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Move everything out of the mouth
till silence is all that's left,
that softest tongue, the word
nobody ever has to speak.

13 December 2007

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So many years ago Chicago snow
a roast sheep turning in the window
on a spit in Greektown. Thirty years.
The peculiar shabbiness of quite
expensive hotels. The air
cold as steel. Love outlives
its reputation, Dante dies
in a cluttered room, the lake
is grey today as ever, empty
vistas, nothing anywhere to see.
Comes back now. My whole
history is stored in the weather.

13 December 2007

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Children yammer.
Adam hears them,
thinks: there was nothing
before this hearing,

this is the first language
I am the first man
I was born from listening.
And he spoke.

14 December 2007

= = = = =

When the first man spoke the first word
all around him the trees and everybody
smiled at his foolishness the way women do.

14 XII 07

= = = = =

Something needer. Spill.
Small truth, size of a tree.
Be. A little tent set
up on the gentle slopes
of Dead Meadow Hill
where things try to live
without thinking. Spill.
Call this spoiled wine
spilt. Say: I pour this out
for Mercury, for Jupiter.
But the gods answer: Do
you think we are dogs
to lap up pleasure
from the dirt? Your best
libation is the thought of one—
drink the wine yourself.
We have our own poisons,
our own pleasures. Leave
to you drinking. Thinking.

14 December 2007

= = = = =

for Mikhail

Snow plow
just came by
to revise
a whole day's page.
I see sense
at last. Earth.

14 December 2007

= = = = =

Could something happen
and nothing know it

could it after all resound?
The famous leaf

from the famous tree
fallen in the famous forest

and the whole world
waiting for the sound.

Has it landed yet?
Is it even now yet?

14 December 2007

= = = = =

Teach Thoreau a thing or two.
Census my half-acre. Name
all the mammals ever
shared it with me.

 The birds
share everything it seems
but who really know
what boundaries *they* decide?

The crows are missing lately—
is it something I've done?
Guilt is the highest form of egotism—
he and I can agree on that,
o Mahayana, o silence
that smiles in the heart like sun on snow.

15 December 2007

= = = = =

I want the authority
to say silence.
Trees told me
to begin with
the pines of Narrowsburgh
apart. Apart.

15 December 2007

= = = = =

for M & M

A pine grove is different.
It is not like anything.
It is not in the world.
It is another place—
how can you bear to live
so close to one? I wish I did.

15 December 2007

= = = = =

Regard every word
as the beginning.
Then it is
if not itself then some
sunlight in the trees.
Over there,
the other side of now.

15 XII 07

= = = = =

That's how it starts. Love songs
cold candles broken stairwells
shimmer of its coming catastrophe:
each thing has its delicate own.
Sit by the river don't watch the water.

15 December 2007

= = = = =

And then it's over,
whatever it was.
Coming again,
the flame recycling the air.

Does this sound remind you
of anything?
Don't let it—

be free at last of resemblances.
Supper on the desert
beautiful crouchers in the shade,
shadows of what?

What is it they hide from
crouching in the shadow of music?

15 December 2007

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But why should an oboe
or English horn say
“tired, I am tired!”

Why should anything that is
be tired of being?

What have we brought into the world
that teaches farewell?

And one day the first word will be the last.

15 December 2007

(Langgaard, Symphony No. 4, “Træt!”)