

1-2006

janF2006

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Recommended Citation

Kelly, Robert, "janF2006" (2006). *Robert Kelly Manuscripts*. 725.
https://digitalcommons.bard.edu/rk_manuscripts/725

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The skeleton's skull
looks out of its eyes
and asks the passing doctor
"Do you know who I was?"

For the bone has forgotten,
all it remembers is the stone
world before the man it was,
before any of us

put a face on chalk and potash.
I wish the skull could ask me,
ask me. Then I would tell,
my mother and my father

buried in one grave, each one
remembering only who the other was.

21 January 2006

=====

really

doesn't feel as
real as you do

Voodoo

explains some of it:
a hand holds

something a long
time then lets it
fall, opens

like a book

like legs like

Orion overhead—

who has a different
name in every country
but shines the same

21 January 2006

=====

Something nears to be complete.

Another thing dissolves.

Pains here and there,

alternatives, as if a fugue

were running my body

if that's what this thing is

I'm in, a complex groan,

loony sighs and tuneful smiles

all one to its machine.

2.

A fierce machine, this music.

Is. The problem lies there,

strained sinews of being going

on. The miracle is more.

3.

The miracle is driving east

looking for the right canyon

on the left, then the right

winding lane half up it

where her house is.

Sunshine while you wait,

ice cream, we go in,

it makes us at home.

4.

There are spirits everywhere.

A swimming pool out back
nestles halfway down the hill
among the predictable
scarlet bougainvillea.

But then beauty always
has something predictable
in it, a drone or undertone
to its surprise. Lord

of the Angels, bilingual

Deity, sometimes I too
am tired of surprises.

Skin inside her blouse,
sky on top of earth—enough.

22 January 2006

=====

Outcome leery.

Snow everywhere a song could
fit in the head goes white till

The Zen Gun of Barrington Bayley
looks weird on the table
under the lemon-yellow chrysanthemums.

I want to sit and watch Miyazaki movies
his exquisite backgrounds
really he should carefully animate John

Ashbery's long poem *Girls on the Run*
from the angelically prurient images of Henry Darger
then everything would be perfect

and I could stop namedropping books
and it would stop snowing already.

23 January 2006

=====

How about the six inch tile
that fell with a clatter
when the snowblower moved,

how about the wind chimes
covered with slushy snow,
what can they know

about all this,
what notes can they disclose
of the lost melody

the one Solomon built his temple from
by having his wives sing it
a capella, then they slept

all over his bosom and forgot?

23 January 2006

SIZE

It seems important to remember that Omar Khayyam's reprobate sacrilegious lustful very wise skull was found on exhumation to be sixty-three centimeters in circumference. A size 8 we'd say in hats. It seems important to remember that things and people have sizes, that they are not shadows but have volume, mass, weight, et cetera. That they smile when we smile at them, some of them, that they hold their shape forever if they can, that's all our duty finally is, to look exactly like myself and act accordingly. Otherwise the angel of death, let alone the angel of life, would never find me.

23 January 2006

WINTER DAY

Breughel owns the peasants, owns the snow,
almost owns the colors of the world. Today
I saw a mommy with her four year old, she
in blue and he in noisy red, sledding downhill
and I thought Breughel. Breughel owns
these things, turns the world to snow and lights it
with the colors of our clothes, turns us
to peasants so we laugh and touch each other
and keep close, close, only us to keep us warm.

23 January 2006

=====

Why can't I see my life as one piece, and my aversions – to change of place, for instance – as not pathologies to be cured, but guideposts, karmic or angelic or built into the nature of the animal whose being is me?

Birds on snow

peck for fallen seed

below the feeder,

not elsewhere.

They know.

I go to those place

or stay in them

where my food falls

even if shadows are my meat and sounds I drink.

24 January 2006

=====

Leggo cities and a snake in them –
Eden again, and a doubt about Kapital.
What then, colored pencils? What then,
beaver? Omar, his book in English
once was everywhere, no who has it?
And my blue deer along the Taconic,
not even I see them any more.
We changed our church to marketplace
no everybody feels at home. Just
have a glass of God before you go.

24 January 2006

=====

The rapture of knowing things are really gone.

Snow on sloping roof of the pergola,

make my heart true.

24 January 2006

PALAEOLITHIC

And can it speak?

What was it doing

down there in the cave?

Worshipping a girl in Chauvet,

dying in Cussac,

you can't fool us: we found your bones.

24 January 2006

=====

clumsy building blocks wall to heaven
tartar bowmen toxic composite horn and horn
and how we hold our things together
the jag of quartz in stretch of bone
to write with my eyes tired from all this seeing

24 January 2006

=====

Everybody my time
or someone else
takes and no space gives—
from this Contradictio
make magic or
what is this science
without opinio,
this radical fuss in the heart
leaves a mess on the wall
and my day already
slips down to the night
that river place
that takes so much away
and leaves a cave
stuffed with leaves
a bear skull on a stone
a woman walking
away into the wall.

25 January 2006

=====

Binoculars in the dark
see two more things,
two brands of dark
they try to bring together—
focus on the night.

The unstar
where all the rays of
darkness meet.
And we meet too,
almost all words gone.

25 January 2006

RETOUR A LA PLUME

That taste hidden in the curtains
where in the wings the extras mingle
with the imposing particulars of the action
and all of them sweat together I feel
when I open the pages of a notebook.
Anything can happen. Anybody
can be me. The bizarre mysterious
democracy of the alphabet
tolerates any proposition. Fall in love
with anyone. Think what you can
and write some of it down – at once
it starts thinking on its own.
Coral reef, said Proust, alive but slow,
the other side of the curtain of all
our words, the patient audience.

26 January 2006

LIEBESLEID

I spend so much time
being mad at you
because I don't get
more of you I wonder
why I want any at all.

26 January 2006

=====

So what is today going to do about it
I only have this tune to fight it with
and an old sheep over there in Donegal
who may or may not remember
taking hay from my hand. Do sheep
do hay? Tune sounds like choon.
Sheep bleats like an old gate
creaking in the wind. Wind
sounds like your breath in my ear.
Tomorrow will take care of itself.

26 January 2006

THANKS TO OUR ADVERTISERS

Why do they call him Perseus?

Why do they call him Śiva?

There is a river or a pond where cattle wade in soft warm light.

Why doesn't everybody live there?

Or do we?

Bosphorus? Oxford?

In the Gangetic plain, only the sun is listening.

The cattle are water buffalo.

Silent horns.

Egrets in the shallows.

Shadows. The soft warm flat light.

Matte light.

On the roof of the lakeside temple

Om Namah Śivāya!

it says in neon lights

over the placid ancient water.

Coconut oil. Blue shadow.

What color is the name supposed to be?

Ads that show pictures

give away much more than they sell.

26 January 2006