

2-2006

febA2006

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Recommended Citation

Kelly, Robert, "febA2006" (2006). *Robert Kelly Manuscripts*. 728.
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Speaking ties. A crow
on a branch
before I get my glasses
on I guess.

He knows, I surmise.
All crows are male.
All vultures female.
That much is clear

whether or not true.
I heard you dreaming
a hard dream,
way you breathed,

rolled over and held you
lightly, as if
I could confer a peace
I do not feel

and it worked!
Or something did.
At dawn you slept
quiet and the crow was here.

1 February 2006

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Keep trying to impose
blue order on red world.
The orphans stumble
dry-eyed through new snow,
we always know

something is about to change,
be vague like sunlight,
decisive as night,
yellow as corn – you wanted this,
wanted to be born,

and here come the examiners
clustering all around you
with their wings and scales and teeth
feathers and philosophies
asking you to pieces

until you live and breathe
as if that were some kind of answer.
Big red flower, big blue sky.
You could have gone on sleeping
but you thought instead.

1 February 2006

ars poetica

To wait the whole day before
and all the inductive night
for the few words I know

to put on at morning
one after another till a few
and then they tell me

what it all means
for a while, then the day
is beside itself

and takes me in.

1 February 2006

"Not much but texture comes to mind."

—Noah Weston

The little trees, like leprosy
on a snowless earth,
exalt comparison
as a way of knowing something.

Jesus said this and that
were like that and this,
for example the kingdom
of heaven is like a woman.

Like an old woman. An old
woman with a sack on her back.
The sack is full of texture
alone. It is her mind,

her mind is like barley,
is like wheat. The mind
has a hole in it,
the texture slips out grain by grain.

The kingdom of heaven is like
that, he said, when she gets home
holding an empty bag.
Poor old woman, Poor bare trees.

1 February 2006

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Questionable, as an animal.

Hard, the break between

and then the conscious rock

and the remembering river,

such ravines, such shadow,

I can not be the same as the same,

there is always an edge

that also breaks, a stone

trajectory over the hill

falling to the place the blue

the mark. Edge me. Sedge

thee a pond between.

Eelgrass and comeuppance,

traitors drinking milk.

The hands are the instruments

furthest from our brains.

1 February 2006

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Which of these was the bravest
the corpse said, the man
with the whistle or the girl in love with a ghost?
And the priest couldn't answer,
there was a stone grown up in his chest
size of a cat's head and this stone
knew no kind of language
and didn't even want to speak.
Still in the back of his mind he knew the answer
but we can never say what we know.
The wood of the flute. The blood of the girl.

1 February 2006

SINNERS

Would be a scholar
of that lunacy
till the thing breaks

and the sky gets
tired of our stories.
Story is sin.

To tell
what happened
or what you want to be or begin.

I am the sin
telling the sin.
You are sin.

2.

At midnight they revel
wretched in the park
no sound understands them

I can't tell you who they are
or what they claim to want,
that would be telling

and all telling is a sin.
And they themselves
don't know who they are.

They don't know
is enough of a story.
And I have sinned.

2 February 2006

PORN SITE

This may be what you're looking for. We provide pictures of all the people who write to you. Just send us the letter (or e-mail, or bill, or form letter) and our special technology will elicit and send you by return mail a true photograph of the person who wrote it. Specify nude or clothed. Never again put up with mail from a stranger. Send us the words and we'll show you who's talking to you.

3 February 2006

=====

I believe in meritocracy

I believe in me

but only in the country of me

that stretches out as far as I can see.

Beyond the hill

is Palestine.

3 February 2006

= = = = =

Come back when there is light to be.

Come back when the newspaper lies on the porch
faithful as dawn just like a hundred years ago
and who do they think they're kidding?

Nobody reads it. And nothing happens.

The news is a recycling of old anxieties,
wordless words, faceless photographs.

But the paper still gets damp from the rain.

3 February 2006

"Every symbol is a displacement."

– Christine Hou

The unarranged recital
happens even trees.

Sparkplug
not clean, laid in clean
cotton wool, a box.
O god give me a box
of my own to hold you in.
Pyx. Box. Pyx. Box. Old
waterbottle scummy with evaporate,

where water was. Was once.

Everything
moves to one side. The soloist
who knows so many things
puts them all in her mouth.

As Goethe said, The indescribable
becomes a kind of man.
But the always-woman-of
holds his hand.

3 February 2006

= = = = =

Something said.

A red renewal – he
knew there was something fishy
about the moon,
he fed it corn
to take the doubt away,
it did. These things
he thought
belong to me,
all of them high
all of them low
even the thing they buried
long ago beneath the apple tree.

4 February 2006

=====

There are reasons for everything
young man
or maybe there aren't
or maybe the only reason
I wear this weird ring on my middle toe
is so that one day you might see it
and ask me why and I
could tell you there are reasons
for everything maybe even this.

5 February 2006

=====

A day when I am someone else
coming up behind me and saying
Is it done? Is it done yet?
I answer in my native Latin
but I don't know what I said.

5 February 2006

=====

Even on the least of us
the burden on Empire falls.
I miss Julia so much,
I miss Lesbia. Now
the water tastes of shadows
and the wine is all gone.

5 February 2006

AGAINST THE NEO-AUGUSTANS

Finally for me it is magic
or nothing. And I have come to a year
when they want nothing.

Yet I respect the easy posture of their austerities,
the glib sincerity of their thrift.
No more emotion, no more shock —
just placid manipulations of old words,
new tricks, interminable insinuations
of the baroque flutes.

No more transformations
they tell me, keep your affect
transfers to yourself, no more peonies,
no more trombones.

5 February 2005

=====

Vita dulcedo et spes nostra

the most beautiful cry, to mother,
anything that looks or feels like mother,
to woman, this
passionate confusion of a child's cry.

5 February 2006

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The sand was so long
the delicate citizens of the emirate
were always far away from home
even when nestled on airy divans
in their own living rooms,
they are far.

It never hurts to be explicit.

Moon and Sun mean up and down.
Beautiful empty highway
as if daylight were a kind of soap.
Their epic poems chant about
endless journeys from bath to kitchen,
pilgrimage to the rec room,
husbands and brothers lost forever
on sinister expeditions to the basement
to look at the air conditioning unit,
cave of the winds.

Because distance is their birthright,
distance is built in,
no mere geography can take it away.
All the grains of sand. We see
them as packed so tight together
(one of their preachers said)
but they see themselves as lonely
abandoned isolates in soundless night.

6 February 2006

=====

It is another day.

Do something for people.

How? Tell them something.

I do that every day.

This time make it fresh,

something they

(not you) can use.

How can I tell where

they end and I begin?

Go, tell them that.

6 February 20006

*INVOLUTIONS IN A TEXT BY ANNA GURTON-
WACHTER*

*a part is made
even when he speaks he speaks
they do not look at me
he has life as a man to get over
my new wife enters--
I am allowed to say she is my wife*

there is one wife
and there is a wife and somebody is a wife
and somebody who is one
knows something is not telling
knowing is not telling
what it feels like to be up in that or down inside or
on the other side of the door (there is always

a door)

*he opts not to notice that i am taking his place
how easily you enter, believers in me*

how much how much I
am a believer in you so much in you in you
I think the meat of your mind sizzles in the sun
you are smarter than hecatombs, kinder than cattle
but do you believe in me or on me?

*she: you spoke so fast, faster, it became so fast that
you needed visual aids, which appeared around your
body*

because the body is the field
and the mind the knower of the field
that's what it says in Sanskrit
so the field is all around, the visual signs
are previous to heaven, the glaze
of broken glass or smashed pottery
the body is the broken pot

the body is the dry cistern
my teeth in the arm
*she: I had a dream that you thought you knew what I
meant but you never did.*

And I dreamt I did too,
and knew you
but it was only me I knew, like a mountain in
Arabia
much discussed and seldom visited, no rain, red rocks, and
gods gods gods

in every cave – long ago
there was rain, and sluices, and spillways, and then
thinking of them, I really did understand you
*accept his experiences now as my own, I do.
his rot as my rot, that we may grow noises around
our ears,
if only enough experience occurs to save one, let all
touch her!
there is one person standing equidistant from me,
what it means*

to be someone who was someone to someone
then stopped, then stopped being someone
and then was someone to someone again, later,
like a picture found inside a wall when the wreckers come
and smash their big iron ball against the brick
*a picture of my wife is as tall
she is allowed to leave me money, suggest movies to
see, pour dressing on my salad,*

I like the plain kind that usually is red or orange
the kind that doesn't make you think
*when they tell stories they relive them in a way that
people like us just don't
for a little while you are not one person, the
self-coup do-it-yourself-coup*

the entrepreneurial look like a man talks

but it's really a woman anyhow really a
woman makes him say what he says.

7 February 2006