

8-2005

augB2005

Robert Kelly
Bard College

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Recommended Citation

Kelly, Robert, "augB2005" (2005). *Robert Kelly Manuscripts*. Paper 809.
http://digitalcommons.bard.edu/rk_manuscripts/809

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= = = = =

The old things that need to know us
on a mild grey morning with blue heat behind it

like a bayou breakfast once with cheese on grits
and the day was ours. Beyond this tree

there are no lawns. What we began tomorrow
will achieve. What we begin today

will lead us there, weird resplendent temple
in the middle of the woods we never knew –

step right in and be its long-lost god.

5 August 2005

RAIN DANCE

The sky needs oiling.

Come, pluvius. Rainymead.

Come, please. The harder
you come the wetter we'll dance.

She bought a feather boa last night
for such just emergencies.

Come splash. Come speaking
drench and wind storm, come of cloud
and allowed. Teach the grass
how to spell, hear the trees
recite their catechism.

2.

But these are words.

The rain needs moves
to listen to, knee and tailbone,
wrist and scribbles on the skin –
smear sacred symbols
on your cheeks so rain
your mother comes
to wipe you clean,
the rain can't read
except by washing things away.

5 August 2005

= = = = =

We turn into me.

I turn into a word

and blow away.

5 VIII 05

= = = = =

if I asked you
you would tell me Mozart
and I would ask what
you would say
the flute one the sly one
a little on the smutty side
on the side of the night.

(late summer)

– 5 August 2005

= = = = =

The ones who wait in m
like music waiting to be sun

and an animal I don't recognize
is bellowing in the trees

wait mortarly, like Roman work
concrete and conglomerate

the rocks of Hades in a modest wall
this hard thing helps me.

Water, I say, a cry full of Pentecost,
a man telling me: *you are Caesar's now.*

(late summer, Kingston)

-5 August 2005

= = = = =

As if a mistake
had been made and
the dream you had
was meant for me –

the golden pipe unscorched
from which one smokes
the wildest drug: reality,
no match, nothing lasts.

For you it all is here, all
your years, luminous
in your immigrant eyes
permanently child.

(early July)

–5 August 2005

= = = = =

Walk to the end of the pier, keep
walking to the end of the wave,
keep walking till the end of water
the end of land the end of air
of anything you are except going
keep going until going is gone.

late summer

–5 August 2005

= = = = =

All these tongues
telling the music
to tell me I don't know

in a rainstorm lovers
stone crumbling, vines
on the warpath

choruses of villagers
inveigh against the god.
The mystery of napkins

folded by tired waiters in cafes.
A soft high voice
anyhow seems to forgive us.

(late summer)

-5 August 2005

NOMAD CUSP

At the cusp of this and that
miracle like Morocco in an old movie
strangely blue eyes of desert girls
and you call that a camel?

We are at home everywhere,
we are mind, the pasha, the sheik
of all aromas, we are older than stone.

At the cusp of the second Sixth Month
at the magically auspicious window season
on the day when Death is furthest away
and a solemn printer is busy right now

eating his lunch with inky fingers
(Saturn rules typography and delay)
or is it supertime already in Berlin
the bombs falling, the giraffes frantic in the Zoo?

When will he ever finish printing this very book?

6 August 2005

APPELLATE COURT

Judges ate from jumbo plates
at Joe's on Court Street
where the Catholic lawyer club
"The Dumb Oxen" dined
in decorous argument.

Catholics always know the limits,
will not guess beyond the edge
of the issue. For they have issues.
When you have issues, thinking
gets replaced by argument, inquiry
by getting what you want.

Hence the law. That thoughtful
angry discipline, always concerned
to determine who should get hurt.

I remember the big plates, knives to match—
I ate there too when I could afford it.
Their new-shaved baby faces shone
all round me like the plump yellow
yolk winking in my Yorkshire Buck,
tasty, cheesy, specialty of the house.

6 August 2005

= = = =

Caught at least close to this a stone
measured in its mother's parlor

learning tricks. Leaving sticks.

Sit. Be cold. Nachman of Breslev:

“it is forbidden to be old.”

Remember. All I need

is knowing. All I need

is this stone and you picking it up.

7 August 2005

= = = = =

Teaching Arabic to flowers,
the Sufi convert
stumbles on the verbs,
roses whisper reassurance always
don't worry, we don't
need those, we noun.

7 August 2005

= = = = =

Getting reading for anything
is being ready already to remember
what hasn't ever happened

and now can. Learn from history
its opposite. The face of never–
that is your wife.

7 August 2005

= = = = =

Running on small today
like a falling leaf

it won't be long
before I get somewhere

then where will you be?

7 August 2005

= = = = =

Agitated by the agnostic dawn patrol
the neighborhood needs air-raid wardens—
I look up and see a worrisome tree
thinking god knows what a tree could fall,
be deadly to small us. Aren't they all.
Life is a waiting game they taught me
that when I was even smaller, targeting
a something else, something to ettle towards
a girl disguised as the horizon, world-wide
proletariat coming on clouds of glory
crowded in a Christian sky.
But I think the real waiting was over
long ago, done somewhere else, and this
is where we got to, this place we try
so hard to love and need and mean
and all the while we wish we could go home.

7 August 2005

MICA

Sparkle eyelid, gold belt low on hip.

People dress these days

like gifts to one another

given to the eyes, the eyes unwrap.

7 August 2005

= = = = =

Branches fallen. Endorphins
rage in the almost ordinary mind,
young foxes have fun in the rain
it looks like and I am full
of pleasure at the thought, the mind's
red flash of fur.

7 August 2005

= = = = =

Adirondack chair
mine for a while
later it belongs to wood.

7 VIII 05

= = = = =

Soon I will be ready to get ready.

Let the trapped mouse
out in the clement woods.

Get the papers. Take
the oracle of the day
from whom I see.

Who sees me.
The pendulum of the street
bringing, taking away.

7 August 2005

= = = = =

Give me a sentence
a sentence of Twelve Tones
and let me answer.
I love answering best.

7 VIII 05

= = = = =

I love answering best.

The questions I make up

are all about you

and I know everything about you

already, don't need to know more than I know

when I know everything.

So you do the asking. Neither

one of us knows a thing about me.

7 August 2005

[from Sappho's new text]

...

these things I groan about, but what can you do?

Not grow old? I'm human, no power to do that...

(11.7-8)

7 August 2005