

7-2004

## julA2004

Robert Kelly  
*Bard College*

Follow this and additional works at: [https://digitalcommons.bard.edu/rk\\_manuscripts](https://digitalcommons.bard.edu/rk_manuscripts)

---

### Recommended Citation

Kelly, Robert, "julA2004" (2004). *Robert Kelly Manuscripts*. 855.  
[https://digitalcommons.bard.edu/rk\\_manuscripts/855](https://digitalcommons.bard.edu/rk_manuscripts/855)

This Manuscript is brought to you for free and open access by the Robert Kelly Archive at Bard Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Robert Kelly Manuscripts by an authorized administrator of Bard Digital Commons. For more information, please contact [digitalcommons@bard.edu](mailto:digitalcommons@bard.edu).

## HANDING OVER

To welcome me again  
my oldest hand  
this quiet guilt  
that runs my outboard

while deep inside I drift  
from instrument to instrument  
laying my hands on you in sleep  
and by that touch transmit.

2.

Transmission is a sending  
through each other to multiply  
the natural power to a higher power  
by the square root of sex

added to the number of trees in the woods  
divided by the names I call you by,  
simple as that. Simple as dust  
when the girl –say Elizabeth–

goes into the closet and language sneezes.

3.

We all catch gold.  
Puns are horrible  
because they tell the truth.  
The sciences begin like this,  
simple penetrations,  
trying to conceal pale skin  
  
in meager noontime shadows,  
stone guesswork  
of old temples,  
last minute confessions,  
curious lickings.

1 July 2004

## SCHIST

Have I found you yet  
sayable stone,  
mica splendid  
architecture?  
Manhattan built of this.  
Be pure,  
sweet linkages,  
get it right  
so all the love  
gets lost inside the cracks  
and we have to make it  
over and over again,  
every polder in Canarsie  
a bulletin from the soul,  
manifesto from drunken  
poets in weird command posts  
in Park Heights, dream,  
dream, dream.  
So make language a  
love-sink instrument  
dispelling it like heat  
not just on her sacred body  
but all the world.

1 July 2004

=====

horse in my dream    why  
someone kept a horse  
I had to get through a narrow door  
before the horse came at me

I got through, into a narrower  
corridor the horse was coming  
would I get the door shut in time

and would it matter?  
What is time?  
Would a door keep a horse out?  
Who is the horse? And what is time?  
Why would anybody ever  
keep an animal. And why is time?

1 July 2004

## **A horse is not a usual menace me**

there have been so many though  
Buddenhagen's cows. All those  
north Germans lean and bitter that I knew  
we ate eggy pancakes in their boarding houses  
spare men lovelessly devout.

2.

I have prejudices. Baltic. Riding horses.  
I love those places. Can I be beautiful again  
the way the rain was if I be not wet?  
Silver trays and salvias red as rockets,  
fluttermice on the mountain garden,

3.

the wood is wet and what secret  
is hidden in your body? Why do I wake  
to you of all people after such a storm?  
You will weep upon my page if I let you,  
you sky, good morning, goldfinch.  
And you me of me, lurking in my underwear  
to wield a day against the world  
and make some sense of it  
that never has been said. And sometimes  
let it be true.

4.

Body is the leaf  
and spirit is the soft green pod  
and what's the pea inside? We have no  
name yet for that seed, the pulse of life,  
the scattered remnant in our midst  
of something inconceivable, something  
of which Being is just the husk.

5.

The feathered snake went in before us  
soaring to that gap behind the sun,  
the other side of anything you say.

6.

Because I dreamed  
a horse came charging  
  
tired of running wild outside  
tried to rush his way in  
  
the same gap I hurried through  
the animal and the man  
  
hurt each other to get there  
and nobody knows if they ever do.

2 July 2004

## **INFANCY**

I wanted people to talk the way they talk in books.

But then they'd have to kill each other that way too.

Aldous Huxley. D.H.Lawrence. Joseph Korzenowski.

2 July 2004



=====

Old face cloth I used to wipe the table dry  
after the rain. Now the sun  
is wiping the sky. On the island  
I had wiped my face with the sun.  
“How good your color is,” she said,  
and touched my cheek. Now the sun  
is drying the old cloth.

2 July 2004

=====

Surprising the opposition  
knelling the truth  
from the tall steeple of the Dutch church  
something dies in every town  
and something's born

The woods know everything  
but keep their secrets  
coming back from the island  
overwhelmed by how many trees  
we live still in northern forests

universities of them  
dangerous and slow  
they have centuries to tell.

2 July 2004

## **KEEP ON THE GRASS**

Moderate stress  
is good for lawns.  
For people.

2 VII 04

**APOLLYON**

the grammar  
of destruction  
the Centaur  
flaming on his flanks or  
giving rides to  
sleek haunched young hags

that be the centaur do,  
the minglekin, the horse embarrasser

bears her on her nightly ride.

The grammar writhes  
to make her sleep alone,

**κατευδω**, a kind of starlit loss.

2 July 2004 (**late**)

=====  
Who will be waiting  
after the full moon?

Eve by the horse trough  
took me by the hand  
and led me home

so many houses have I  
and such wet hair

the woods unravel  
the place is there

she said the miracle  
happened to me

stress in the sky  
and the moon broke through the cloud

through the wet grass also  
a house ahead

grown out of the light in a window  
shadows turned hard

the car was gone  
this is what it means

she said  
to be here.

3 July 2004

=====

Lissome sunlight  
sly through leaves  
how deep  
the little woods are  
around my house  
the same things  
endlessly fascinate  
the fall of light  
natural alphabet.

3 July 2004

=====

The trees are closing in  
suppose each one knows my name

suppose they call me softly  
one after another

what will I do  
who am so called?

3 VII 04



= = = = = = = = =

Goul man, dry your wings.

The wind is corposant today  
and scorches the basement of the cloud,

did you know lightning comes from earth?

Bird with wings draped on the air

3 July 2004

- - -

[*goul man* an old word for the cormorant]

=====  
I didn't write anything today  
it must have been a holiday

rang.dbang.gi.dus.chen

but on earth there is no independence

a bird lies on the air  
a fish breathes water

we stand there for a moment  
in the wind  
pretending we have come on business  
or were sent to make war  
or woo a stranger

for some mysterious suitor  
who wears a veil  
no one has ever lifted

a stranger for a stranger  
and our poor hearts  
milled between those stones.

4 July 2004

=====

I don't want to come back  
on what I have written  
or ask a new day  
for the old day's address

as if I couldn't find  
my own way home  
or didn't have a jingling bunch  
of hot quarters in my pocket

5 July 2004

## **FENG SHUI**

don't give a clock to a friend  
its hands are like swords or knives  
it has a face but it doesn't love you  
and will never forgive

don't give a rose  
to a man with no garden  
don't give an answer  
to a woman with no question

my ignorance of this law  
has cost me many a year.

5 July 2004

<late> =====

**Interrogate something.**

Ask a color

what it means to 'be in love'

or 'feel on top of the world'

a color like shadow

cast by sunlight March 18<sup>th</sup> in Siena

say, where almost naked young men

run through the piazzas.

No, they don't. It is a day

but not like other days.

It is near a tremendous change

in the long marriage of the sun with the earth.

Ask the sun.

Interrogate all the shadows

in fact, make them name themselves.

Which shadow is trying to rule the world.

Which shadow is just trying to be with you,

your friend, your own color, your grief.

5 July 2004