

3-2001

aprA2001

Robert Kelly
Bard College

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.bard.edu/rk_manuscripts

Recommended Citation

Kelly, Robert, "aprA2001" (2001). *Robert Kelly Manuscripts*. 1051.
https://digitalcommons.bard.edu/rk_manuscripts/1051

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.

Wake as wood crows
rooster one
bird doing the work
word of another.

1 April 2001
KTC

Scope of escape the sky
footsteps of a brooding
crowd how slow they move

past the vitrines of noon
East Village down
town lean against clean trees

*

learn to tell the truth
it's as simple as reading

menu in a Chinese restaurant
white rice or fried
uptown or Rinchen Jungnay's golden face
filling the sky with that prosperity called heat

money me cherry blossoms south

each thing chanting as we look
if you can see me you are still alive

1 April 2001
— NYC

NUEVA

image Sixth Avenue painted
red any avenue
subdued by liquid seeming
shut up you mean paint

paint imagine paint
it all the way back to Amsterdam
Rubens Vermeer Saenredam
from Spui ten Duyvil to Castle Gardens
up Damrak to Centraal Station

no city is worth such love
you gave me yet I love you
belatedly years too late too busy
too distracted for me from me too
green too grey too beastly too distingue

my own. Who are all these people?

1 April 2001
— NYC

if you walk too fast you escape the loop
of circulation

 you engage the act
before or just after it is ready

what you taste today
will last forever
the special taste of this day in your mouth

no never

 what you have tasted today
makes you a dancer

people can't see you
or see you only as a quick mistake
shoving through their quadrilles

you hold the taste of it in your mouth all day

a city you are learning to speak.

1 April 2001
— NYC

a woman one already knows
no name for her
swinging ponytail the smile she sprays
on her child her man

set this image before me
the intense dark woman talking
you know her you will never speak
everything already spoken

rainsoaked midtown parking lot scintillant in sudden sun.

1 April 2001
— NYC

Why does Albinoni on the radio
sound like New York? Or is it Vivaldi?

Fifty years ago in love with Diane Youngswick
before she went to Nepal and came back with a diamond in her nose
and didn't love Ernst Toch's Chinese music any more

I sat in the Peacock Café reading *Steppenwolf* while she didn't come
and didn't come and ferns are still cool and leafy

and windows have seen it all before.

1 April 2001
— NYC

We did not fight on the day of knives
It does not rain on the day of rain

It is midnight in a quiet district
Shushed by cars' soft passage west to east

Red slippers on a pale oak floor not mine
Yellow light from ceiling fixture

Where would we be without colors
The long careful fingers of the blind.

2 April 2001
Boston

Finding new things
a pilot through reefs

where the QEII ran on rocks

finds a sparsely peopled island a savage Voice
lifted between a rock and a rock

this is me. I am a page
from a lost gospel
itemizing unexciting miracles,

a few unmemorable similitudes
all things are like all other things

or the man with a stone on his back
by magic persuaded
to let it fall.

This is the island of it
such things as fly across the mind
pretending to be day or night

but always just this one thing
watching the sea break on the rocks.

2 April 2001
Boston

If my hands were clean
I would touch the floor

the floor's the most important wall of all

so it's the holiest old monk who, bent
low, with a palm frond broom,
sweeps the temple floor
clear of dust and food and offerings and filth

he knows what supports us
quiet root of the world,
end

of all our falling,
the last song of all.

2 April 2001
Boston

UNUM

Younger woman older man
She smiling shows
Her first white hairs

A mingling of evidences
An approximation
A coming close

Tenderness of the fate
Of all becoming
To be so differently the same.

3 April 2001
Boston

BIRD STUFF

Two rock doves
melodiously squabble
over the wild birds' seed

each puffs up big
blue breasted plump
against the other

we never
know really if we're
battling or making love.

Eventually anyhow everybody flies away.

3 April 2001
Boston

Last night three sea gulls flying east
All night the planes
Spoke east on their way by Logan
Hills over small city we
Gesture at things, we go there
We come back safe in multitudes
Far afield from the dangerous unity
 But that's what's true.
 Only me only you.

3 April 2001
Boston

O winter how I love thee
the clarity

the sweet achiote
godrealm of the broken ice

god-flowered crystals
the shadow of ice is the deepest of all shadows

holds us hides us

in the clean.

Because there must be a moment
when momentum stops

urgent system of clarity
iceberg a hundred meters high.

3 April 2001
Boston
(at Omni, Shackleton film)

To play with life
the way children
play with firelight
throwing shadows
on the innocent wall

a wolf a crocodile
an awkward bird
that never flies away from the wrist

3 April 2001
Boston

BOSTON BLUES

Be particular with me
I am sodden with absolutes

seething with desires
come and see
sun sparkle on the Charles
first day of actual

spring snow yesterday on the trees
a basket of vecchia
come and see
on your Grand Canal

shiver me a steeple
up Beacon Hill
I want to sail
right through the eternal Gate.

3 April 2001
on the Charles

THE REMINDER

I will meet you
At that moment in the night
When the clock
Only has one hand.

3 April 2001
Boston

What we choose on the table
to set *shulkhan arukh* set
what is ready the ethics
of a spoon
 how much to raise
grease-glimmering to the moon
a shimmer in the gape of the tent.
Everything on the earth
Waits for Rachel to come to her husband's couch.

4 April 2001

The old orange crate I hauled upstairs
when I was five
to make my bookcase with
now of what was that
some evidence

A struggle and a boast and something needed
my mother was appalled but somehow proud
the books stood up green and blue on the two shelves of the crate
as I knew they would
and I saw that it was good

4 April 2001

we can exaggerate it
anything can be everything
and then what will the cobra do
climbing up the bamboo pipe
knowing only one direction one escape

escape not from but into

light at the end of the other I am.

5 April 2001

VESICA

As if inside the belly a pair of hands
held cupped to hold
some water someone in you
lifted from the stream and drank

santana mindstream current this.

Something in you drinks

When two circles of the same size
caress one another such that
the circumference of each
touches the center of the other
the territory overlapped
is called the vesica, bladder, vesica piscis,
fishbladder,

a godly shape, a Christ or hands of his Miriam
held loose in prayer,

scooping moments of glinting water
reflection from the stream of mind

a shape they called the shape of women.

In the warm dark she stood in front of him
not quite in arms reach but her shadow in moonlight
came towards him she wanted
to do something for the first time
so he could see though it was hard to see
the dark the little moon she let him see
the stream of her water flow
restoring this special water to
what always seems at first just ordinary ground

so he could see her. She gave him
the sight of this, the vision

of water. Where it
like everything else
comes from and how it goes.
Awkward, a dangerous and downward assent
between them, worth it, to have
been found worthy of that spectacle,

something simple given quick through all the complex
absences of midnight this one
actual warm fact.

As if the shape of what holds
renews endlessly the shape of what flows.

5 April 2001

Spring here. Outside with me
On the little hill in sun.
Flies pass by. Green words
Speak from the sodden earth
Little tongues. No clouds.
Everything inexperienced
Finding the way. The same one
We have to forget every year.

5 April 2001