

10-2012

octH2012

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### Recommended Citation

Kelly, Robert, "octH2012" (2012). *Robert Kelly Manuscripts*. Paper 119.  
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Gaunt meniscus of the new moon  
boomerang over Woodstock  
O what is that mountain's name  
is the little stream that runs by Ed's house  
by Peter's house, is there continuity  
Pound to Olson to thee and me  
as the leaves change color  
a writer chooses her own grandparents  
born in the soup we climb towards dessert  
but where is the natty-aproned waiter in this bistro?  
Am I forever?  
The priest whispering into my face  
in the confessional, shock  
of a stranger's breath so close  
and sometimes see him there  
face in the dark  
full of meanings, a closet  
full of dust and guilt and velvet  
curtains and fear.  
Am I forever?  
Who will deliver me from this body of death?  
Or is it the body that gives life  
and the Platonic soul gentles it away?  
A woodpecker day

things you learn in school you leave in school  
but this map  
the wind imprinted on my face  
this road that dragged me where it goes  
don't be at the mercy of their streets  
zig your own zag through the conjuncture  
elfin passengers like wind in your hair  
what's red on one side and silver on the other  
answer: your life  
you must be speaking to me again  
confusing me with the color  
the name of the other  
rain through autumn leaves  
what is this, a poem?  
Leave the punctuation to your heirs  
my brain is an autistic child  
thank God I have an organ on my side  
suppose there were a bird on the sunporch roof  
suppose a woodpecker or a starling  
it could be anything, are there leaves  
mother, are there, are there children there  
no my darling there are only birds.

19 October 2012

[*noj* = woodpecker. "is a woman's highest intelligence" J.B.]

= = = = =

Furtive blessing as they pass  
a sprinkle of green tea  
flicked, and they don't know  
that they are changed. *Abhisheka. Asperges me*  
they answer with their bodies  
in which the heartsoul now beats  
stronger while the blessing works.  
Who knows how long love lasts?  
One thinks it pours into the world  
and still the ocean is not full.

19 October 2012

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No one will see the leaping  
the order of the deer  
stepping quiet down the hill in fog  
who leads the way?  
Who knows the next step?  
Sniffing the morning out — mist, leaves,  
the different smells of different trees,  
a skunk not too long away,  
who was here before me?  
Where did they go?  
In every world in every art  
must be someone who takes the next step.  
And if they fall, another  
adjusts the trajectory of will.  
And moves this way.

20 October 2012

= = = = =

The heart's owl  
dwells at morning —  
how far it flew last night,

preying on small lost  
memories and bringing them  
almost to dawn.

A handkerchief  
someone gave me thirty  
years ago,  
cotton in the fingertips.

20 October 2012

deep fog

= = = = =

The trees downloading light  
car with headlights  
joggers in their skimpy clothes  
as if to run is leave society behind  
...

20.X.12

= = = = =

Tear the cloth  
then tear the cloth  
the sun is cotton also  
something a great plant grew  
and smiling peasants beat the boll of it  
to make it flat  
to make it shine  
to make it thin enough to fly  
then tear the cloth  
and tear the sun  
see what's behind it  
hidden all our lives  
this sweet silk molded to our frame  
the liquid hide the way it slithers  
along the muscles of us  
then tear the cloth  
tear the sun and tear the moon  
until there's nothing left but skin —  
and do you dare to tear the skin?  
Or maybe no one's there  
at all behind the cloth  
maybe what seems skin  
is just a thickening of the light  
and do you dare to tear the light?



Then tear the cloth and see.

Then tear the cloth.

20 October 2012

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The bad helicopters  
a story too far  
they breed on mountains  
each leaf and every leaf  
has a word on it to read  
you have to do this  
or remain ignorant  
stare at the leaf  
until you see it  
or it comes to mind  
the colors in the trees remind you  
autumn is the reading time  
your fingers read  
the feel of foreign cloth  
attend the opening  
nothing is closed.

20 October 2012

= = = = =

On a different perch  
today to get the old  
light just rising where  
I used to get it  
from the trees to write by,  
light to right by  
and the trees companionate —  
a tree is *presence*.

That's why we hear so well  
in forests,

*nemus*

sacred grove, even a clump of a dozen  
spruces off the highway  
is that, sacred,

*place apart,*

enter at the risk  
of *meeting someone else*  
the invisible one who is not you  
talks to you here  
better than other places,  
and all the time  
you thought it was just leaves.

2.

I'm just telling you what they told me —  
be far away enough to be another.  
But I don't even know how to be myself —  
rid the trees of silences  
and the rock of permanence  
let the boulders float through the middle air  
unhume stone,  
                  gods' zenoliths call them  
operas, solemn high masses  
or elderberry bushes beside your grandmother's house  
you never knew.  
They all died before you were you.

3.

Headache in my head  
bought myself a paper  
remembered water  
the tree was listening  
these few little stones  
arranged on the sand  
to spell you something  
let me come close  
till I have passed  
through your presence  
and all that's left of me  
is that ocean over there —

you take seawater in your mouth  
and let it dribble through your lips  
back into the sea  
in this way you kiss the world —  
O God if all magic were so easy!  
If only all would let itself be kissed  
and know the lips that spoke to it.

21 October 2012

= = = = =

Halfway to not being here at all  
suddenly people were living twice as long  
and still couldn't understand it,  
a man of 154 still reasonably competent  
mentally alert and able to walk about and pee,  
astonishing. And women 180 if a day,  
how did it happen?  
Do things take longer too?  
The faster you go the longer you live.  
Someone said that, and people  
send out suicide cards when they get exhausted  
and death day parties became common  
among the wealthier classes.  
What can it mean?

21 October 2012

## **TAILORSHOP 1946**

A bald man with damaged fingertips  
working a foot-powered sewing machine  
the needle stabbing down and down  
you never see it going up  
always down, how many  
times it must have pierced  
those broad fingers, some  
of them with no nails.  
And with his free hand  
from time to time he'd pick  
dry Cheerios from a cup and eat them,  
munching noisy as he sewed.

21 October 2012

=====

*for M.R.K.*

Let pens be everywhere  
so the words can come home  
whenever they want to  
from wherever they've been

in short lines to please a mother  
running from sink to stove  
water to fire and the air  
around her rich with earth

kale rutabagas scallions  
the words have brought her to me  
alive again, and me scribbling  
in sunlight at the kitchen table.

21 October 2012



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I know you  
and you know me  
but that's not enough  
since I do not know  
you knowing me.

21.X.12

[Brahms' 4<sup>th</sup>, first movement]

At last everything is known.

I have told you

everything I know

and now must keep

discovering what stones

silence still has scattered

through time's mind

and how they resound

when I strike them, hard,

like this.

Coaxing water from the rock.

2.

And there she stands at last

the girl I loved, across the stream

in morning mist, her feet bare

beneath the damp hem of her long

crimson skirt, now the sun

takes her in its arms,

and she smiles, perhaps at me.

3.

This is the cathedral

we were never married in.

This is the hymn  
they didn't sing.  
And this is the priest  
who is still asleep  
dreaming of Calvary.

21 October 2012

= = = = =

Here I sat reading my mail and the sun rose  
I read in the *Popol Wuh* and was far away  
wondering how Euro-Christian had shaped  
the telling of that book, the book hidden  
behind the book it was writing.  
And it is always like that, always  
another story that the telling-story hides,  
deforms, has to deform to get it  
out through the habit-lips  
of speaking me-and-you.  
And by now sun was in the tops of the trees.

22 October 2012

= = = = =

Beast mind and its soft purr  
all the day long maidens meet  
in maple weather when human need  
is sweeter even than the trees  
we walked beneath every yesterday  
on our way to and back from music.

22 October 2012