

5-2013

mayF2013

Robert Kelly
Bard College

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

Recommended Citation

Kelly, Robert, "mayF2013" (2013). *Robert Kelly Manuscripts*. Paper 167.
http://digitalcommons.bard.edu/rk_manuscripts/167

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.

=====

Ariadne

is the only one.

Who chose

and chose again.

Rock long

in fire does

crush to fine

white ash,

everything

remembers.

19 May 2013

=====

**By leitmotifs we are led
deeper into the music of ourselves
until the tonic speaks again
our suddenly unexpected
change of key, resolution
all our friends in tears.**

19 May 2013

=====

**The word the sky said
enjoined the day
every green a different green
every me a different you
until the question withers
leaves dry petals
still fragrant in the mind
of someone who thought
there was someone there.**

19 May 2013

=====

**Maybe a circus act begin again
the lady in silver tights
trotting her docked unicorn
over the water meadow where
only the light ever seems at home
and Mr. Tiger roars sleepy
in his gilt wagon cage
ready to endure yet again
the torture of our eyes,
o why do we want to see
so much? Why are there birds?**

19 May 2013

=====

Old hotel room ceilings

with brand-new sprinklers,

old streets outside,

a mermaid on the roof.

The traveler does well

to look up all the time,

away from the iffy bedspread,

the lying mirror.

19 May 2013

=====

Among the people I should have known better

I want the lion tamer, the lapidary, the masseuse.

For I am half a stone and half an animal

and every bone feels broken by the weight of light.

19 May 2013

MERCENARY MIRACLES

**I bought to feed
a plate of beef and beans
took me an hour to consume
with conversation and a spoon.**

**The mind can say anything,
my mouth's the problem,
saying what you think
is a kid's game, men**

**(we are an enpaneled jury
all of us, sworn to verity
and no compromise) should know
any word that rises to the mind**

**needs to be written down
and not pronounced out loud.**

And when you write it down, be safe

use a secret language no one knows

like Old Etruscan, or poetry.

20 May 2013

=====

**As if they knew even my name
when I was bold among merchants
proclaiming the coming of the end of time**

**end of every human sentence,
the scramasax of silence wielded
in nameless fury also speaking**

**spoke of a wheel wheel of a foreigner
how they roll in over rubble
golf carts of the wise their alembics trembling**

**I asked him was he ready to begin
there is no place to start he said I said
the fish are in the ocean start there**

you call that wisdom? I had two cities

before I was light and you think you?

And I was place I never imagined

wet with bull kelp rising from the sea.

21 May 2013

=====

There are pains

sitting or standing or lying down

each its special distress.

An actor on the stage

could tell you about them

and hold your interest.

But I am not who you think I am.

In fact I am not who I am.

Who I am is you listening to me.

I stop existing the minute you stop listening.

What power you have!

Power it seems I've given you —

is this love?

Can I be in love with all of you?

You must find that a somewhat repellent idea,

even I feel a little queasy about it.

How can you listen to so little said?

**So little sense I have
to divide among so many of you
and yet, and yet
heavy trucks grumble down the road
and this also is my work.
This also knows the world
a little, this also knows you.**

21 May 2013

=====

Through the grass I see the ocean

waiting for me,

I see the sea

beneath the common earth

permits me.

We didn't say sea when I was small

we said ocean

Coney Island, Rockaway,

Atlantic all the way to Portugal

sea came later in poetry

a strong word

too strong for what a kid

scuffled through at Jones's Beach

afraid to swim,

ocean was ordinary, and later

the Greeks taught it was a river

unending,

around all my days,

a river I see beneath

this green triangle,

see with the same old eyes,

ocean eyes.

22 May 2013

=====

**Where is everything I knew
except in you
he said and cried a little
like a flag
flapping over a lost island
invaders already unfurling the new.**

22 May 2013

=====

**Know the place
apart from me
the place alone
among the chalices
the empty stone
so clean and smooth
all transactions
of this high magic
take place here,
must, and even
the spilled wine
sinks in so deep
beyond our sigh
we see only stone.**

22 May 2013

PARSIVAL'S QUESTION

Where did that stone

come from, the one

I see in mind's eye,

twelve inches square

marble smooth but

not of marble made?

And how did it tell me

this is the place, the solitary,

where the God rests?

And what is God?

22 May 2013

=====

It's not that I lost you

it's that you lost you

it's hard to admit the truth

new leaves on the hibiscus

where is the rose when I need it

the spread thighs the thorn

I have given you all I remember

the rest is a valley in France

famous for its stone

your name carved with all the others.

22 May 2013

=====

Mothers my mind wake,

where does the silence go

that makes everything a sign?

Magnetic dissonance

Narkissos listening to her thighs.

22 May 2013

=====

**The first humans to die
first full humans, speaking
a fresh human tongue,
their mouths full of grief and consolation,**

**where did they go, first arrivers
in the land of the human dead,
these immigrants of afterlife
when before there were only animal phantoms,
shadows of the shadows of birds.**

2.

**There was no air there.
They had to learn a new rhythm
of thinking and speaking,
something with no breathing in it.
And no words yet.**

3.

**And so they wrote their thoughts
into the dreams of the survivors,
the living. So they became the ancestors,
known in sleep and vision and in
sudden noises in the forest, an animal
spotted for a second then gone,
an animal not otherwise known.**

4.

**But was it bleak there,
images of rock and moveless water?
Did they carry anything with them
from that fine, fat, fresh human life,
did they remember language,
did they finally realize what bodies are for
now that they had none?**

5.

Soon soon they got over remembering.

I think they are together there,

killers and their killed, a new tribe.

I think they wander through the strangeness

planting in four colors,

deluded kernels of the corn

that grows into our day as day.

23 May 2013

=====

The comfortable

the affable —

the ones I fear

have gentle smiles,

they see me through

a haze of their entitlement,

I feel like a pilgrim

when I come near them,

I am repellent, unclean in their eyes

travel-stained, pledged to some weird god.

But there is a nice

symmetry in our encounter,

they make me make art,

I make them feel happy and secure,

snug householders looking out at a storm.

23 May 2013