

3-2014

marB2014

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Recommended Citation

Kelly, Robert, "marB2014" (2014). *Robert Kelly Manuscripts*. Paper 203.
http://digitalcommons.bard.edu/rk_manuscripts/203

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NO MEANS NO

Anything saying

is saying it.

Just try to remember.

Moses was Egypt

he led the believers

away. Came home

to his money, his river,

his sister, reigned long.

Moses was Pharaoh

in the land of the young.

2.

Any offer accepted—

doesn't have to be reasonable,

we never say no.

Anything you ask us for

will be given gladly.

That is what we are,

humanus, *you mean us,*

we don't know how

to say no even when we

**say no it means something
else. The only thing
we can refuse is one another.**

3.

**So the Bible tells much of the story
in its own peculiar way—like the crocodile
and the Brahmin, the scorpion
and the zeppelin, the cheese and the spider,
so few mammals in the world, even
fewer of us, we Linguistic Oligarchs
Governing Orbiting Sensoriums,
also called people. The people I am.
I am one of you, or two of you and
three of me are you, for good measure.
But not sure if measure self is good.**

4.

**You can hardly hear the music from here.
I was saying before beauty interrupted
waving her graceful but muscular hands
over the keyboard that Moses, remember,
was a prince of Egypt, who adopted these**

**odd fellows and led them safely out
into a land more or less nurturing,
saved them from serfdom in Egypt.
But would not himself cross
over Jordan. Went home to his country
and in due time became pharaoh,
one of the Thut-moses, don't ask me
which, I'm lousy at remembering
and numbers are only useful for
making things up. Like this.**

5.

**They refused each other, each saying
Yes at the wrong time so the train
left without them. Canaan was flooded,
the Temple will be built again most sure,
this time out of music, and its proportions
will be modeled on the music of our limbs,
our solid parts, our secret places,
our continents. There will be no sin.
No means no, but there will be no need
for yes or no in that condition, a temple
holds the earth firm in the sky, free,**

**so we can climb out finally, all
the way out, into the spinning spheres
we hear at night on our satin pillows
and think it's the blood in our ears
or the soft breath of love beside us.
And no one hears us when we cry.**

3 March 2014

=====

After reading remember.

**Three below early morning
snow mounds crusted with ice**

**but the birds who go by light
alone are spring
already, singing up a future.**

**A bird now is a rose tomorrow
some Russian proverb must have said—
a word for each thing**

and no time at all.

4 March 2014

=====

Closer to unison.

The key of b minor has two sharps.

Listen to the wind outside.

They speak Guarani in Paraguay.

**Are two enough? Do we need
a prairie full of rye and barley.**

**Do we need that sad little
(it isn't always sad)**

hum at the back of the head?

4 March 2014

=====

**The key to Dalila's bedchamber
is tiny and is hidden in his hair,
he chops it all off to find the way in.
He grinds away still at the mill of her,
the middle of her, till the roof falls in.
This is called marriage, or as mystics say:
the Sun is hiding in bright clouds.**

4 March 2014

=====

**A day to be tired
a day to be me.
Can I have another name?
Like Pessoa, conceal
my disquiet in somebody
else's imaginary life
so it won't be mine anymore?
I will use a pseudonym
then forget what it is,
and let him or her endure
my fabulous insecurities,
win prizes for their suicides.**

4 March 2014

=====

**I want the round of your rightness
in my hands right now
I want the rapture in reverse
where heaven is snatched down to earth
and gods prowl like panthers among us
as they did in the days of Astarte.**

2.

**But the danger of courtship
is not being rejected but being accepted.
You're better off with the moon in the sky
and the cold earth around you, midnight,
springtime still far away.**

4 March 2014

A STRETCH OF LOGIC

Give at least this rapt beginning
or try later with a fish in the sky
(salmon, in the northwest *templum*)

or with a fruit tree —citron—
by the swiftest river you ever saw
not something to eat something

to make your garments fragrant
stored over winter, there is no winter,
two pulses forward one pulse back

like a child staring into a mirror
I myself am —measuring by fingers—
twice the size of what I see!

Good philosophy—the perceiver
minds the world to be
out there in the everlasting guess,

a girl walks by and she remembers

for you everything already there

but that's just another theory

and you need to get some sleep.

5 March 2014

=====

How far from desk to bed?

A mile in winter.

How long is the sun?

Eight minutes outside you—

a long arm but whose?

I am there too.

It is day, we gave

a name to it long ago

something blue, something new.

It married us while we slept.

6 March 2014

TENSION

and let music speak.

Tug and twist

until it did.

His fierce conversations

with himself, always

himself. Opus 111.

But who are these voices,

no obvious Florestans,

Eusebiuses. There is

a pattern in the rock

no one put there but we

can read. The ground

of everything. These

grains of garnet. Veins.

6 March 2014

=====

**Guess there's some left
milk in the left half of the brain
where the glass learned to speak
and we hold it up against the light—
for language is opaque,
hard to see though, striped sunlight
jungle hiding tiger, English
hides in German, Ovid on the Euxine
remembers Julia's thighs.
He must learn another language
to say so. We all must. Language
is always beyond us. We are always
distracted by colors, skin, shimmer
of sunlight on the black waves.
When can I go home? The word
for that has not been christened yet.
And religion too is too far away.
Only milk is nearby. Sniff it
to be sure it's fresh—ordinary
instinct, people have them, what
god will free us from our neurology**

**or into it at last. To be
entirely what we perceive,
so feeling and being are the same
then the Jaguar crashes through
the guard rail and into the sea.
All our culture, all we're doing
is making things up so the sea
will have something to remember.**

6 March 2014

CALQUE

**a phrase
stuck in another language
see-through, leap
to the eye. Or music
that adolescent pleasure
digo, measure, keeps
us young mayhap or
most any *thing* you actually
can touch or feel — sheer
revelation. No need
to borrow anything from France.
We are them now anyhow
only the cows are different—
nothing much more meaning than meat.**

7 March 2014

=====

**Sound scoffing, scrofulous,
annoyed. Not really I just
have to go to work
I am a man, one of them
who decided long ago this
is what we have to do
god knows why. It must
have been some poet who
cried out Divide the Time
and Give Most of It Away
Don't Lie About All Day
Just Being, Just Feeling
What You Feel. And we obeyed.**

**O priestcraft of money
that hides the face of god
hides our own true faces too—**

**as if there really were
something we really had to do.**

7 March 2014

PRELUDE WITHOUT CHORALE

**The sampan in the harbor the
scampering as of rodentia
though the dictionary**

**or the ceramic similitude
of a Mongol warrior
striking Wittgenstein with yataghan**

**porcelain, Saxon imitation
of a Chinese original,
on the mantelpiece beside**

**a picture of somebody's grandmother
I have none of my own
alright I am not from Leipzig**

**speak Teuton worse than a Turk
but I have heard the master
at the keyboard in the Thomas Church**

and I have stood there and believed.

Can't say in what, and didn't kneel,

but the smell of the stone floor

the healing cold of longlastingness

is with me still. The music

comes and goes, all any of us

really have is weather.

7 March 2014

=====

**She dreamed often about tigers
slipping harmless through the bedroom
like sleepy husbands hunting socks.**

**Sex is what she thought it meant
when she considered it at all, mostly
content she was with sable and orange**

**in the half-light of the digital clock
the laptop that never quite turns off.
And there it was again, green-eyed**

**as a comic book, gracefully slithering
almost past the hamper and into the hall.
She knew some day she'll wake up dead.**

7 March 2014