

6-2013

junG2013

Robert Kelly
Bard College

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

Recommended Citation

Kelly, Robert, "junG2013" (2013). *Robert Kelly Manuscripts*. Paper 238.
http://digitalcommons.bard.edu/rk_manuscripts/238

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.

70.

**Mercy remembers all the strange names
gave to bedfellows ivy and she was thistle
and herself the only mistletoe
semaphore hard to know how come it's over
the little songs of sinking ships the atoll
lubricious indexes of unread books
I can tell your daydreams from your midnight
because we rode together in a battered car not far
and counted shooting stars the way lovers do
or daisy petals but we were angels too
in love with not being in the body but we were child
and children know the world is just a guess.**

71.

**If you keep going along this path
no road signs or all point to heaven
gorse I said or whin or keep you off and green
I am a thing of books and boundaries
a headless god at the bottom of your garden
stone and with a word or two in bad Latin
chiseled in what I took to be my heart
as if the earth needed reminders we are here
or we did and always will, see how the wind
caresses me and the sun remembers our nights together
we slept on the Hill of Tara her very grass
and never woke and all this since one long dream.**

72.

**Ireland it and look again
woodcock whooshes past at sunset
lives by the No Trespass sign
the fairy mound back there that no one knows but you
though sometimes I think I see them walking there
in and out of the mind's view
giving names to things and changing them again
the fairies are the editors of earth
rinsing the sinews of our experience
no one can look at the same leaf twice
but one bird can come twice to your hand
carefully choosing the random seeds that you extend.**

73.

Stay out of sunshine walk in the shade
I suppose this place an ancient apple tree
older than Eden and the ferns grow round it
it leaves me with no answers
I feel glum and businesslike today
accountant of a bankrupt hardware store
with nothing left but the names of instruments
and columns of numbers those birds of the heavens
endlessly fluttering past and vanishing
and O the hawk of zero knows my name
inscribable outstretched beneath him
divide by zero and smile for the police.

74.

**Some day I'll get this some day wrong
and it will be today, the actual
two schoolchildren performing at assembly
telling of seaweed and the stars in the flag
what about the starship from the alien planet
why would they bother to come here
why do women wear flowers in their hair
I never wanted to alter your routine
snow or swelter you know better
there are whole cities where the men know less
spell your name in the Irish way
then no one can whisper it in the local dark.**

75.

O the street the street the hand that goes everywhere
why is there thistledown on your feet
I looked up mirror in the book it showed my face
but only as the others see it liars and poets and thieves
maybe I also once stood beneath the cross
ponderous useless unable to help
pointless witness of so much catastrophe
unless the act of witness has some meaning too
and *a thing that happens* waits to be observed
and we are iron filings summoned to its shape
soon enough dispersed and baffled ever after
but we know *I saw this happen* but don't know what this is.

76.

**Rectitude analysis a vulture
browsing on human thought
write it down change it later pretend you know
pretend it's better steal rose petals from the shore
you're only borrowing the colors light lent them first
I spoke mentally was understood physically
what are all those prairies for
the linked absences that define a sensibility
fervent mistakes "ambushes of young years"
but I knew no worse so did what I could
the shattered teapot the car too fast
so many pregnancies in the lost museum.**

77.

Peaceable allowances thun is a time set apart
to be itself alone and nothing doing in it but itself
a session on the other side of the self to call it
door shut mind open listen to listening
kept wanting more of it the cheekbones
the tail feathers of equal length the pinions
rimmed with blue though they look black
walking on the road in Colorado at home on the ground
dig deep to find the surfaces of things
I am left with a zodiac on my hands
can I interest you in being me a while
while I sail your white ship into the typhoon?

78.

Woodpeckers four fledglings from a locust tree
one more priest one more shepherd
sheepless a crowd of unbelievers
a perfect place an island think of Latin
it never hurts to ask how red your poll
sweet predators mavors' insectivore
do you hear his chimes beneath the sea
no that is the wind that is Schubert all alone
no one paid attention to the clumsy instrument
the beak a young man has to know the world
I slept my way out of more towns than this
town or dream what difference she lifts her skirt.

79.

**Talk should be terror incognito for everybody
all I know is no one must know
otherwise the words don't work, tell only the true
never the new the one you never
the moon shining under the skin of the sea
the long hair of the law the only power
windswept and sound pressures the heat that fell
from the absent sun so long ago
the weather is a spaceship bearing messages
we have to catch new senses to perceive their text
don't be afraid to say hello we'll all be gone
three seeds plucked up by a pilgrim bird.**

80.

Three are the gates of paradise
a blazing letter stands before each one
of course it's in the dream it happens
it matters only when you're not awake
the vast blue bird perches on the roof
wet towels of the swimmers drying on the rail
in sun and wind the changes come
difference is a molecule apart
there is no nurture in the metal world
bonfire on the beach atomies of amorous madrigals
but if I were a folk I would tell you clear
in wordsongs true as stones on the beach.

81.

**Just looking out the window but I have no window
so you have to pull the sound of words apart
to guess the moonlight through
you're riding on a ram up Mt. Erigal
the three moons of Gaelic folklore roll along beside you
slower than gravity, the earth cries
resist me if you dare, outmoded primate
mere folk, graverobbers, oilsuckers
foible-witted blank-hearted market-minded
lip-serve liturgies flower-fondlers bird-handlers
cow-killers ocean-sievers word-wasters
fucking philosophers heartbreakers men.**

82.

**Picus four woodpeckers next door pileated fledglings
no j day of the woodpecker probe for knowledge be a girl
the things the weather tells us
Marx for breakfast Aquinas for high tea sleep fasting
nothing matters but matter doesn't know it
materials seem as if there were some other
language told me to be silent in so many words
read this as commentary on Book VIII of the Aeneid
upriver journey into your own country never seen before
your new arrival in yourself sun glare on windshield
I have something to tell you you have to tell me what it is
space between self and other shaped by two dreams.**

83.

**The square root of someone else lives in your fancies
curious behavior of measured things
caught the comfort from the cushion and sold it cold
of course I want to anyone would but I don't will it
if I willed it heaven and earth would have to comply
will makes you crazy wanting makes you sane
we live decently when we recognize our lack
a child is all waiting
how came you from so far and still a citizen
woke before the birds again and still never alone
boat humming in the harbor luring weather
meant Mozart love-hate I want to kiss your sister too.**

84.

**Time is the dimension in which we unwrap space
we and only we there is no time apart from us
distinguish shade from shadow
one of them licks your hands
to be poor is to be burdened with memory memories
the doctor waiting on the porch alone with the wind
not many people do it anymore the young the very old
he opened his mouth and Persephone spoke
language is the mouthpiece of another
the strangest thing about the caves is that we think we're out of them
this is the Dordogne the dream time
Athabaskan wilderness men with eyes of a wolf.**

85.

Every page is precious especially the blank
the story here is her round face her round eyes wet
nothing more to say hence ready to begin again
a man is a wheel on a mountain road
I'm talking tantra but to an empty room
xenolith they built the structure on as if to say
earth gives us something like a day
and where is nurture in all this where is Bernini
the woman shape that taught us how to pray
boys in the clouds hair comes through the hat
the sun moves secretly from house to house
but no one knows the father.

86.

The breeze knows these
legends of the mother house
her hands pressed firmly on the territory
noises annoy her most
no one's children clattering in grass
and in the sky they mow the clouds
the mother house is guilty of the sun
she made it cooked it over pine cones in her cave
till it glowed ardent hell and hydrogen
then she sent it to the sky to measure us
mind us little children and a rock she spat up too
to light our nights from tryst to tryst.

87.

**Roar of the mirror whine of the hedge
ask nothing of me, disturb less than one word does
noise left and right unending
no more nuisance really than the fish in the sea
when I sit and look at surf rolling in
as if I were part of something even this
battle of Actium spread out before me as the sea
Antony impaled and Cleo's left breast toxic-nibbled
and all the lovely stories end at once
I spent my whole childhood believing
and childhood never manages to end
the waves her pure right breast, and go weep.**

88.

**And have nothing to do but this
in the comfy prison of reality
no more work but making time pass
change the names of all those wicked places
salt marsh no hay a bracelet of Whitby jet
I went there for the sky the wet horizon
timothy grass belonging from black mud
weathered narrow boardwalk above the muck
a thousand birds and only there ever alone
and no room left to plant the lettuce
but room for Wagner and Valkyries
high above the north sky where once a city is.**

89.

**Intonation patterns in body language stood in the sky
we could only know her ascending
and the moon set invisible Portugal over the horizon
who knows how far a hurt can have you
she condemned my right to say what came to mind
never forgive but this one high above it
cloud walker yes nephelist yes can speak
inside the mute beholder makes him speak
by second nature we are secondhand
tell each other no more than nature told us
like a man walking a fat white dog at the dock
each supposing himself to be in charge.**

(16 June 2013)