GRAVITY FEED revised

Robert Kelly
Bard College

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

Recommended Citation
http://digitalcommons.bard.edu/rk_manuscripts/420
GRAVITY FEED

1. Gravity feed the maw awaiting—
   think of clever things
   then think away.
   
   The sound you hear
   is all you are.

2. Wait for it is what I do
   other for the other,
   the others.

   Bathing
   Beauties of Rockaway,
   the spill
   of love left over when Time is done.
You saw them then, the material encouragers, whiffletree between weary horses, cart full of cauliflowers, plodding through the harrowed fields, glebe they say, of memory, and maidenheads for sale in frightened countries, Eighth Avenue in evening shadow, eggplant hurried supper seminarians back to the book, book, that sly theology the eyes believe—and dear god the things we do to each other.
4.

Didn’t mean to let the world back in,
it has a habit,
a history jones
she called it in Detroit
a habit of needing
and wanting,
the names of the dead who did this
to us,
our ancestors the fish, the founders,
Olson had it,
knew
the so-called facts
of times and places
are song enough
and what they did
is what song says,
a roaring metabolism of remember.
5.

Tamas has it too, the names he knows now of many things

so listen, sister, the song says.

Love the new poets answering the ocean,

knowing the song’s not in the throat
   (that’s opera, bud)

but in the mind.
6.

Hobbyhorse for rent
that’s me, ride me
to your quested shore
and I’ll be boat again
to take you there,
your secret place
doesn’t even exist
till we arrive—
an old word means
to come to the banks of a river,
stagger ashore—
now no boat, no home, no me

he said.
7.

Phantasy integers
keep the machine happy,
you?
   Numbers count nothing,

they are the dried stains
that colors leave
on the mind, the
“angstroms of affliction”
he called them
before he went away—

_hespera men ên_
evening and the conspirators
split blades of grass
and whistled through them
till the whole meadow
squealed and shivered—

go ahead, hurt my feelings,
punch the air.
8.

Well it usually does begin again.

It wasn’t what he thought but what he made you see, Brakhage, that genius, changed the way the world knows how to come at us, changed the time of seeing— Hall’s *Burning Glasse* lights up the mind—

speed was the trick

you can’t see at all if you don’t see quick.
9.

But it all comes down
to coming down.
Standing is more exhausting than walking,
when you walk
you lift the world,

snatches of levity
hoist you before the fall,

red books on a lazy table
students hiding from whom they read,
pEEKING sometimes through masked eyes,

they know something's
buried in there. David Jones,
George Barker, Thomas Vaughan,
Thomas Browne.

    The alchemy is all
    in the waiting, in paying
    attention.

In the athanor of the skull
a deathless peace.
Soul by soul the world escape.
10.

Pay no attention when they talk about the world. Nothing to be said about it it didn’t already say for itself.

So shush, hush, talk about something you well if you don’t understand it at least you want, or want it, or even remember,

    say the taste of fish after you cut yourself on the can.
11.

Think of it as an art show
an opening,

you’re standing
around waiting
for the pictures to open,

you understand the brie
on the gluten-free cracker,
sipping Saratoga,

is that

supposed to be a cow?

And there’s a woman with green eyes

how well the artist caught the fear in them.

Or is she a man. Or is it a mirror.
12.

The sly beauty of the actual,
that’s all.

Leave behind you bits of paper
scribbled up with writing

they’ll find the right ones
eventually,

your zettelbuch,
you can be sure of that—

nothing is ever lost, alas.
Her body changed while she was away from it. When she came home, the legs were longer, the floor seemed a long way down. thinner, less interesting.

She bought a book to tell her what to do but all it said was I love you, a useless sentiment at the best of times—

She dreamed she was a chandelier and streamed light down to fill an empty room

by then the ground was really far away.
14.

So something has changed—
the wave curled in at Brighton Beach
minutes after Rockaway—

we intercept our fates
traveling perpendicular
between Jupiter —that tyro star—
and where we are.

A line of fate
runs down the palm—

my head anyhow is full of Gypsies,
I am the tower of Babel
I am in heaven
you are angels
staggering around—

or is fate somehow
different from what happens?

A secret elsewhere buried deep in here?
15.

Not sure how to spell that
would you repeat please
(engine running driver asleep
hedgerows full of gorse and fuchsia
how the rain brings the blossoms on)
not sure if it was wheel or wither
was it wheat or west or mill,
truckload of apples, Avalon?
Are you sure? Does it bite?
Take off your house and wear the sky,
I know you’re shy,
keep talking fast, they won’t see your eyes.

16.

And down it sinks
the thing you mean—

no names please
we’re all lovers here—

don’t you think pronouns are beside the point?
17.

But *Hammerklavier* is what he wrote
music defined by its instrument,

the womb that bore it
brass and wood and steel

as if I were to call these words
men or women walking in a peculiar land

because you are my music too
I heard you with my hands.

11 September 2014