

7-2005

julC2005

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Recommended Citation

Kelly, Robert, "julC2005" (2005). *Robert Kelly Manuscripts*. Paper 801.
http://digitalcommons.bard.edu/rk_manuscripts/801

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Heavy rain on purple flowers.
My father 105 today where
does he live now?

A fifteen year old stripling
racing trolleys in Vienna,
or a Nepali maybe
shy, sly, watching sanctimonious
neo-hippie pilgrims
jog round stupas, he

would never believe less than everything.

8 July 2005

TROLLEYS

Where do the rails remember
when they're hoicked up out of cobble or asphalt
and melted down as scrap

all their limits still in them
their call stops, their final destination,
the gloom of Monday passengers.

What is buried in the thingliness of things?
Can I make it talk by talking
the way you can make a cat purr by purring?

As if every memory that comes is a caress.

8 July 2005

= = = = =

Every nearing ending come.
Java Street an Indian dove
Mohican manners power
storm drain gutter flotilla
jump over it show your knees
are not just Hadrian marble
a city is all about bending
about making old stuff new
not letting nature in
don't turn your back on nature
for a minute the death is there!
rivers of asphalt and Deborah
plump histories of street lamps
harp-bent over sidewalks
hold the light down!
interanimate this green point
we grow stone steadies our aim
around us. Encyclopedia! Mass storage!
Technology like any other flower fades
(Brunel! Albertopolis! Trylon! Perisphere!)

8 July 2005

= = = = =

There are streets that walk around us
and the swale below some Indiana farm
waits for your frogs, muchacha,
everything you've got is ready
to belong, and not often to you, just
to the Owners of the world, those dark
tempestuous underlings you hear
when you think the trees are talking.

Ants know them. Snakes
are their ill-behaved ambassadors,
don't worry. Christ is of their company,
you remember him, the man
made out of wood, with blood,
with bread, whose tears somehow made you
and made you glad.

How can these things
happen to me. You think and think again.

How can a girl be made just out of weather?
You thought the rain was silver,
you thought the sun was gold,
you knew the sky was just a stone
one more among so many.

Like the hard sea. You are still scarred
from its water. The little drops of mercury
bead on your anklebone. You are true
even if everything else tells lies. I love you
you keep telling all the things around you.
But never in so many words.

9 July 2005

MEMORIAL GUSTAF SOBIN

Arles no rain a shade
across stone bleachers
waited two thousand years for
our one conversation continues
continues

*

But also how we failed the words
by using them
he so few and I so many
and all the stone wanted
was the weight of men sitting there in evening sun

thinking such thoughts as men
ten thousand years ago cut
idly into shale or limestone
a thought you can share with a rock
revolution of the sign

*

rich men are so cautious
so sage, a spell of satire

wakes them, suddenly
sunlight in wet woods

*

Bardo: remember
when you get there
don't talk about the weather

women never do and you
are on your way through the Woman House

couloirs, miroirs,

sunlight at the end of the hall
a bowl of flowers – what kinds? –
silhouetted against the strong light
but flowers are also a kind of weather
even though the crack through rock
so do not say the names of the flowers

*

a letter from the president of the republic
waits for each one of us
they read it out loud
in the funeral parlor

trying to imitate the gesture's of the president's hands

they wait for the whiskey to dry
on our mournful lips
so we can taste our skin again
the final answer

*

the letter is never signed
all letterhead and boilerplate
and you there spiral in the afterlife
waiting to be you again
a wait we share
who are non-one'd by such passage

*

it comes back
to coming back
no way out of the Arena

some days they fight bulls here
a ceremony in sunlight
that seems to me a shadow
of our conversation

and beyond that, before that,
of some action long ago
a different bull a different kind of man
and who knows who would win

but in our hard world we always know.

9 July 2005

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If they were the same as me they would listen

does limestone know how to sing

can an arch dance

uto keep the bad light out

against photographers – who

are mosaicists renewed, who

take the pieces of the seen &

recompose them so that some you

looks enough like you

for me to pin it on my wall

and yearn for what it shows –

mosaicists, like Moses too

who broke the single Law

into ten absurdities

until the law's an idol too

---have no Gods, not even Me

is what the voice meant

on the mountain, a mountain

is where you hear things spoken

you need to hear but never
bring them to the plain
where people just as strange

and magical as you are
are trying to get on with
such ordinary lives, oxen & Audis?

Search me the old books said
bible gangsters guitaring at a fountain
all you need to have a city

is one blank book. My eye.
The Church is grit and garnet dust,
good to work against

sharpen your fangs on, philosoph,
grapefruit in the pope's kisser
I am such an old movie.

10 July 2005

= = = = =

When I hear your name I just think cloud
Portuguese lemma leave me out of this
a single fly inherits the whole sky,
leaf. Can drive a child out of the room.
Neurosis. Repression. Bilge in the rowboat
bottom, a lost oar. Yours.
Baltic passage, those foggy ships
I studied from low cliffs. *Ost.*
On this side it means east on that side cheese..

When I say cliff I mean your profile
licking your lipstick off as if the dawn
could be kept away. Cold alba,
lost in all the Russias. Never
much of a money problem,
it was getting the light right, and the wood,
get the grain to line up, to be near
the harbor, to smoke. White Sea
dreams me, then I dream you, you demur
a while then dream us both.

10 July 2005

= = = = =

To get things right before you die
your whole life's a kid's messy room
has to be neat and then death comes
in the isles of Langerhans a pirate ship.

You were my cliff and you leapt from yourself
leaving me a suicide note in Dutch:

There was an age of the world
when the whole sea was not flat.
Discover that. The brass ring
is hidden there and then
I'll marry you, and music.

10 July 2005

MY LINDEN TREE

My linden tree
has an elephant foot
a leaf like my heart
or yours. I remember
your nickname not your real.
Are you or were you
ever real, or was it only
'always already' music?
Do ants know it
when they're walking
upside down do they
know it, do you?
You could live your life
inside a piece of wood,
avenues and grain
a heart plugged in,
everybody loves me but you.
Broadband scandal.
By the Victory Column
a parade of noisy losers
who think that having nothing
is the same as love.
I don't even have
the tree that I call my.

10 July 2005

= = = = =

The rain dries
the sun dissolves in cloud.
There is a bird inside me
knows these things.

Auguries of alchemy
a number sticks
to my fingers, thinks
yellow and I hear

not far away a string
vibrate as might
another age be music.
So many leaves.

10 July 2005

= = = = =

The immeasurably actual
daunts anyone of course.
I scare easy but still want to know,
that's all, whatever it is,

a pirate ship, a goose
waddling beside the Nile
a blouse still buttoned
yanked over the head

satinly pale in dawn light.
Know. Want to know.
Where things lie. Know
where this road leads.

The rain that made the clay
that made the brick
I want to feel that now,
be wet with origins.

Till the mask falls off the sun's face and I see.

10 July 2005

= = = = =

The simple rage a someone knows
to be some other – that’s what all
the fuss’s about, backstage, footlights,
locker room, boudoir, nite spot, morgue.
A love show, an argosy of otherness
sailing up your veins against the flow.
Beating up the heart. Heart street. Who.
I know you’re there just not your name,
I see you curtained by the living leaves
and the quick bodies of the other others.
Just can I get you before my enemy –
my other’s other – seizes you for its own self
and no more forest? We are born in Act II
and Act V comes too fast, a couplet
rattled off by sleeping actors and we’re done.
Before I even know it you’re the one.

11 July 2005

MOWER

The lawn bleeds sound
be sure of this
just write it down
talk your way to silence.

11 July 2005

WRITING

The page with ink on it weighs
more than the empty page. It's good
to know writing does something
to the world. A momentary glint
of sunlight on wet ink, a change
later in the heft of things.

11 July 2005

THEODICY

If only I were all of them together again
I would connive a beginning
all ballad a blue
wake-up call over the sleeping lovers
in Courbet how will you ever
mount to that sky where no one sleeps
tied down as you are to her satin
amplitude so compressed – *a trim excess*
a street in Alsace, a car –
venture me so much is moving now
Robin Hood and Micklejohn the outlaws
are symls of earthly-licit energy
made illegal by base polities –
Nottingham by name but wvw
by kapital – and Friar Tuck
shows what religion ought to be:
a means of adding to human pleasure
by adding to the fleshly joys
a host of supersensible entitlements –
our deepest lover is Sophia, she
waits for us hungry on corners in the sky
surprise me, sufis, with your mint green tea.
So much for Sherwood (a Persian name)
Forest, the subway is our sunny glade,
our wolves and their attendant bears

I study the kneecaps of my admirers
across the aisle who look me in the eye
and we love each other shyly till Grand Central.
Somehow you belong in all this
you who are not beside me
– a world is what is absent from us
to be conceived, the elsewhere
that makes sense of here, predicament,
crystal palace, head in your hands
trying to figure out how to succumb
to my demands, teach me to make noise
to celebrate your lodgement in my cells
the memory drench that soaks this time
with those faces it's always faces
ponderous messages decoded from old books
that lead me not by easy steps down
curious corridors to the door of Mme. You.

12 July 2005

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I must be a satirist
since I talk about things

when poetry is all lyre,
Liebe, swoons of praise.

12 VII 05

MIDNIGHT

What it meant was
what it always means is
lust, the obvious

—contours hungry
for your hand
the textures talk

and tell you stories
that keep you from sleep.

They tell what it would be like
to stand under even this.

How can there be such hunger
for a feeling when you feel already
what it would feel like to feel?

12 July 2005