

7-2017

jul2017

Robert Kelly
Bard College

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

Recommended Citation

Kelly, Robert, "jul2017" (2017). *Robert Kelly Manuscripts*. 1402.
https://digitalcommons.bard.edu/rk_manuscripts/1402

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.

JULY

**For Julius then
let it begin,**

**and squirrels on the property
and the linden tree in bloom.
Basswood it corrects me,
the best Americans can do**

**for Julius, for ancient Rome,
codex and civil law,
birds on the feeder, Devon nights,
Camelot and Kensington,
we try our blossoming best.**

2.

**But not enough for thee,
thou restless Bushy Tail,
I've never seen a tail so big
you bring today to show me
my way into the poem,**

**the place where infants
learn to babble
what fond elders
charitably contrive as sense,**

**3.
yes, poetry,
made in America,
made of squirrels
and self-consciousness,
even the sun gets
lost in our trees.**

1 July 2017

=====

1.

**Why not yesterday,
as good a cellar as you'd find,
slippery dance steps of the magical child
blood-relation to everyone.**

2.

**And from the tepid den you'll see
from time to time a flicker
of the skin that once empowered thee
walking over the clover of the afternoon.**

3.

**Spiritual nuptials
in the unused coal-bin,
sleight of hand by candlelight,
cobwebs in the window
break and quiver hallelujah.**

1 July 2017

== == == == ==

**O slender pen
in big fat hand**

**the world itself
is made of opposites,**

**we sleep in daylight
under a busy tree.**

1 July 2917

== == == == == ==

**Clouds are my favorite
things of all. And blue
flowers. And last night's
rain still gleaming in the sun.**

1 July 2017

== == == == ==

**The green of id
I dare disclose**

**the ferns have waited
all this while for you
to be their simple
magic once again
by summer rain.**

1 July 2017

== == == == == ==

**I feel like a leper
rotting in the corner.
Come clean me, heal me.
Only you and the wind
can cleanse me now.**

1.VII.17

=====

**Crows seldom land on man-made things,
wak my lawn but skip thepatio.
Sometimes phone lines or cables — but those
are things we just stuck up in their sky.**

**What are they saying when they won't
walk on our sidewalk but the roofbeam
allures them, they sit up there and rule the world:
try anything, rule everything, pay attention—**

**that's what they're saying as they join forces
to drive the hawks and pergrines away.**

2 July 2017

== == == == == == ==

**Read between the lines
furrowed on my cheeks
and see the virgin child
who still believes in
every blessed thing he sees.**

2 July 2017

=====

**All this silly stuff
about girls and crows and roses
still manages at best
to save your immortal souls.
At worst you get a chance to rest
a few minutes from money
labor learning travel —
all the wicked things.**

2 July 2017

=====

**Lokk at me looking at the woods —
what do you think I expect to see
much less to find? The brown bear,
theGreen Man, the witch of the locusts,
a saint telling his rosary by touching the leaves?**

**Clearly 'I'm after something
because I keep looking.
That's what eyes are for,
to make things be there
when you need them or
just a little while before.**

2 July 2017

A FAVOR ASK'D

**Be at least
a different color
every time.**

**A beast of difference!
A priest of holy novelty!**

**And this too will be you
under all the shimmering hues.**

2 July 2017

=====

**Corsican manners of course
and the blue glint of blades
in comic books (*like Achilles's
hair*), we woo the chick away
to test hen's reflexes, superb,
a red car hurries past the mouth
where the alley hides garages
from Chicago and the West.
Napoleon I mean, always prompt
to seize some Egypt from the past
and call it his (*the Mother
fled there with her infant Child,
long years they lingered*) until
the Antecedents (call them gods)
wearied of his foolishness at last
and sent him home. So many islands
caught him (*seven cities where Homer
was born, none where he died
and no one knows where he is buried*)
because a man is an island, sort of,
he grieves and walks along the shore.**

2 July 2017

LIEBESTRAUM

**by Liszt used to scare me
the way it was used in a movie
about a pretty woman taking
over a couple's life, moving in,
dream of love, piano but all
too tempting to orchestrate
I sat and fretted in that cloying
beauty, hers and its. A strange
pretty woman, I've met her
many times since, the music
was never playing though
that could have warned me.
But warning is not what music
or love or dreaming are about.**

2 July 2017

== == == == ==

**And what the forest said
smell of lindens in flower
at *the well* no well is open
before the gate the gate is plastic,
sturdy though, secure—midnight
the window fan—hot night—
brought the fragrance closer, all
around the house. What is scent?
What is an absolute?
Perfumes and philosophers speak it,
seek it. Is there another side,
silence in the olfactory? Is there
anything sweeter than this?**

3 July2017

RIMMON

**But where the pomegranates grew
a low coast let me land
and let me simply wade ashore
in mind, dry-shod, not moving.
And there they were, still
naked in their orchard
sporting with imagined things,
seeing how they taste or smell
or feel rubbed rough or smooth
against their skins, the only
actual substance in that place.
Taste this fruit too, and this
until we find the one at last
that banishes us to reality—
no God forbade it, but we know it's there.**

3 July 2017

THE CHRISTENING

**Wine is too thick
water too slow—
what shall we use
to baptize the child?**

**Serpent venom stings
and cow's milk stupefies,
apple cider dulls the wits,
beer leads to games of skill.**

**What shall we use
to sprinkle the child
to keep it safe from sport
and church and entertainment?**

**Maybe just hiss some
silly words on him like these
he'll spend his long happy
life making sense of?**

3 July 2017

=====

**Voices in the trees
and all our loves behind us.**

**Shadows in the grass,
deep smell of flowers.**

**I caught the sun
and held her in my hands**

**afloat on water
from my own well—**

how deep the pronouns go!

3 July 2017

== == == == ==

**Almost noon.
The sun comes over
the big tree,
gives me my orders.
Flee from what I'm saying
into what has been said.
Liturgy. History. The rule
the *regula* by which we live.
And have some breakfast.**

3 July 2017

=====

**Can it speak now
after its long furlough,
a pen, a scrawl on the wall,
a heart set free
by silence alone?**

3 July 2017

== == == == ==

**A witch is one who remembers
somewhat from past lives,
knows a few substances, fluids, odors
what they mean and what they do.
Has no children. Has an animal.**

3 July 2017

== == == == ==

**Less word than sigh
a sign**

**something off,
wroth, ready or not
here I come.**

**A game it turns
out to be I took
so seriously
 but we all do—
how else would the ball go up?**

**I lift my fear
like a torch by the door
the wrong address,
 the score
from some other game,
 *venue.***

**Where you come
 to be.
Where the ball comes down.**

4 July 2017

=====

**The veils are poetry
the flesh beneath
is something we still have
not discovered
in ten thousand years.**

**(Send this to your friend the scientist,
tell him to stop looking at galaxies and gluons,
ask for help instead, to find out
what you really are. And he is.)**

4 July 2017

=====

**Always fun to ask for help,
their frightened puzzled loving faces—
of course they're up to the task
for all their anxious embarrassment—
how could you possibly come
up with something they couldn't do?**

4 July 2017

== == == == == == ==

**Lemon on the counter
cut in quarters
then in eighths,
sharp knife, good
spelling's all you need.**

4 July 2017

=====

**My last mistake
is saying this.
Just like my first—
her body like a range of hills
my shy heart a rainstorm hovering towards.
And always always a river between.**

4 July 2017

OF RIVERS

What river is your color?

Nile? Or Red

**toppling through spaces
everybody comes from and nobody returns?**

**A river is pure myth
without a mythology.**

**All thje stories are wrong,
juekbox musix, sins of, sounds of,
commerce,
shove another quarter in.**

**History is a river
all rapids and no traffic**

**nothing comes down to us
just th water alone**

the time told.

**I told the tree to listen,
it rebuked me: only Rilke**

ever listened hard enough,
soft enough,
to talk with us—
with, not to
or from,
with, the sacred preposition,
hearts entangled like roots
of adjacent trees,
the species don't matter
only the message counts,
roots talk with roots,
it is the message loves you
not just the dialect of pine,
that *tall tree in the ear*.
Then it was silent.

How strange that English has
no single word for that,
like *schweigen* or *taire*,
to keep or fall silent,
in English we have to keep going,
we have to use more words just to shut up.

But the tree, that polite uprising,
didn't tell me that. The river did.

**In Kingston, at the Ondout,
the tide can come in fast,
a hundred miles
from the seacoast the sea still behaves,
I watched it ripple inland toward the hills,
a pair of lovers watched it too
as we drove by, my love and I,
the only ones who counted, lovers,
on this river.**

**This myth
of going
and being here still.**

**A color. A color goes nowhere.
There are too many mercies
in the world for us to be sad,
scared.**

**Natural flow—
the universal rapture,
let it go, you need
no neighbor but be good
to one you have.
Discipline of rivers,
be here always and be gone.**

**The religions of rivers are various
and all human religions come**

**from listening to specific rivers.
Brahmaputra. Yangtze. Ganges. Nile.
Danube. Rhine. And the Jordan
of course, you get the picture.**

**Only Athens had no proper river
and so they tuend religion into law,
theory, dialectic, doubt.**

**Imagine what it would be like
to have a river of your own.
No more dry nights. And every morning
mist to thrill you with its subtle touch,
the asir itself rivering soft on you.**

**Something like that —
fabulous fluencies:
look at your reflection
in any river
and see what you look like
naked,
clothes have nothing to do with nakedness,
not even bare skin does.**

**It's something else,
something evefy river knows. Shows.
But you have to bring yourself to it.
You have to look.**

5 July 2017

== == == == ==

Alms

**words are
for the uneasy
silences within,
the little mutenesses,
not the grand
thrilling Silence itself
at the heart of any self.**

5 July 2017

== == == == ==

**Reading about me
silences me.
As if I've been found out
inb my imposture,
pretending every
day to be me.**

5.VII.17

== == == == ==

**Chipmunks acrobatic
everywhere. Blue
sky static through leaves
and just beginning to fade
for evening. Soft
losses.**

**Colors. They
leap up my ankle, her lap,
chair, table, porch rail.
This is how history
happens. Huns
invading from heaven.**

5 July 2017

=====

**That sometimes knows by name
something stiff. Gas jet Bunsen burner
Duchamp Philadelphia. *Schluss*.
I asked the poet what he thinks
happens when we die. *Schluss*, he said,
slapping down with an empty hand
some upstart thought, Finished, over,
done with, nada, nothing left for
anything to happen to, *Schluss*.**

**2.
Thirty years later I still hear his voice,
that fierce hush, vascular, a porthole sealed.
I want to believe him. I want him to be wrong.
Right. Wrong. Who knows what we really
want when it comes to eternity?
I know too much to know so little
and the other way round.**

**3.
We come close to music
without hearing it.
We come. Say Bach
and note what happens**

**in your head, Say
Mahler and check your heart.
Is the afterlife like that,
semi-permanent overtones
or what the brain remembers
of what it felt when we
alive were feeling? Something
that has always already
happened and still does?**

**Music is the priest the dying
patient to in each of us always
listens to as long as he can, all
packed for the journey or not.**

6 July 2017

=====

**When did we reach the climax
of or in our social geology?
Who won the volcano?
And our own eroded peneplane
out there, the Blue Mountains,
who buried the temples, granaries,
agoras under those hills so oddly
symmetrical? A city is always
coming into being. Dig down,
look for a human city everywhere.**

6 July 2017

GNOMIKA, 1

**And the engine points to her.
The middle of anything
is the longest part.
Where are you dwelling
asks the impertinent machine—
everything wants
to know precisely where you live.**

GNOMIKA, 2

**Decisively ambiguous
a choirboy surplice
on a naked otherwise girl.
Sing. Sang. Song. Sung.
We call this *ablaut*,
it changes the rules, so
it changes the world.**

GNOMIKA, 3

**Lighting a candle at noon
is pure creature fun
like pissing in a big lake
or putting your aunt's
fancy hat on the dog
and you have no dog.**

GNOMIKA, 4

**Chipmunks jump-
ing around. Hop.
They weigh nothing but
clatter when they run.
Jump on the table
leap into the lap.
Ontology is just like that,
little to do with substance,
everything with accident.**

GNOMIKA, 5

**Dangerous to sit outside
calm in the gloaming.
Any minute you might
start thinking. Or even
(dark in the trees now,
robin saying good evening)
you might begin to gloam.**

6 July 2017

ORGANIZE THE OBVIOUS

**again,
repetition never hurt anyone
except religion medicine politics war.**

**The obvious is always waiting
to be seen
known.
Nobody sees it.
It is ob viam, right in the way,
anyway, whenever we think we need
to be somewhere else
there it is,
right in our faces.
Mostly we walk around it
our minds omn something else.**

***But what is really here
and who am I to see it?***

**Threnody of the cardinal last night
obsequies for blue jay killed**

**we go too fast
on too many roads
that's obvious from accidents.**

**Why should moving hurt you?
Why so many dinky little wooden crosses
with faded roses
offered at the side of the road?**

**Death on the berm,
death in the gutter.**

**It's time to organize the obvious
maybe we'll wind up seeing it,
able to see it, them,
their *Dasein*, it goes
through you like a sound,**

**sound of water, rivers, ain-day
in the calendar, blood
pulsing in the cave, tension,
dark of the ears, tenso, canto,
singd its way into us.**

Being penetrates.

It's obvious.

**Put up
your parasol for rrain,
spread the umbrella for sun,
start by being opposite,
the oposite is close to obvious,**

**exalt every difference
just like the papers tell you to,
depending on what you read,**

**all value's in the difference—
isn't it obvious?**

7 July 2017

== == == == == ==

**Not sure that anything is done
until one walks away and leaves it
bare and bright in sunlight
like the rocky bed of the Delaware
exposed in the dry summer of 1948.**

7 uly 2017

== == == == ==

**I learned the word 'berm'
from a Jane Heidgerd poem
and I still hear her voice
whenever I see iit or see one,
a mouthful kind of word,
roily, round in her mouth
enjoying the feel of it.
And at first I didn't even
know what the word meant
for all the thousands and
thousands of miles of berm
I'd driven alongside. Strange
commerce of poetry,**

7 July 2017

=====

**Maybe music will
help the old
woman cross the street
the bridge betwixt
the life and the life**

**white pick-up truck blaring
really bad country rock
pauses at the crossroads too long
too loud, goodbye, then
slowly the silence**

**or the old man up the stairs
bargains on the mezzanine
new lives for old.
And maybe not. The boy's soul
wrapped in his bike's wheels,
the girl scared of her own hands,
what they might pluck
out of a drawer or from her own
backpocket, read once, put down,
never be the same again.
We have to answer. What
**can she do with what comes to mind,
to hand, love song, phone bill,
a letter from a liar?****

**And most of us are, have to be,
truth hurts the skin, eyes dazzle,
breath aborts in the honest throat.
What can we do with what we know?**

**Her head *in shade* under the *Japanese maple*
she lies on her *lawn* and reads *Heidegger*. Being
is an obligation. He doesn't come out and say that,
he's scared of scaring her. It is our business to be.
Being needs us.**

**Music is no help here. Music, though it seems now,
music *was*. What we hear always has been, is not now,
never now. We are left alone with the need to be. The
obligation.**

**And music is always the other. She lies in her own *garden*
allowing another to touch her being, *a book*. Allowing me.**

**So what about *today*, coming to here, to hear,
to amortize the losses of the night?
Do you remember all you dreamt last night
or any of it, them, the ones you knew then
and knew you and now you forget?
Where did you hide these treasures from yourself?
We slept in splendor but woke in weather.**

**The old man totters on the stairs,
pauses, stands—
one step seems as good as any other.
He stands a long time.
The bridge is empty,
no traffic, no sound.
Put the music back on,
lie in the garden and
hear it from the house,
it could be the radio.
Or even softer the kind
that won't stop in your heart.**

**8 July 2017
End of NB 405**

=====

**Talking to a poet
is comforting a child.
Sometimes he says
surprising things, mostly
just absorbs your consolation.**

9 July 2017

== == == == ==

**There. That's said.
Now we know.
Now we turn
our attention to
other trees.**

9 July 2017

TREES

**And all of them
are waiting for us
over there, you think
it's just green
darkness but it is
these. They are
themselves the sciences
systems roots
alphabets you need.**

9 July 2017

== == == == ==

**Only an alphabet
will deliver you
from the singsong
of the priests.
An alphabet pronounces
sacred texts silently.
So you can hear
your own voice
talking to the gods.**

9 July 2017

== == == == == ==

**Texts can be lost,
memories forgotten.
Dawn of a new
day at last.**

9.VII.17

=====

**I wait for architects
to discover and study
the human gait,
the kind for which
they build such
illustrious—if seldom
luminous—enclosures.**

**Hard for me to find
a house that wants me in it.
They trip me, punch
me in the shoulder,
crack my skull,
knock me down the stairs.
And it's all my fault—
humanus sum, a groundling,
a dweller on flat surfaces,
two legs missing, arms
full of stuff I only think
I need to carry.**

Quarry

**a cave for me
out of pure light,
builders, and let me hide
my wrongnesses inside.**

9 July 2017

== == == == ==

**I suppose you could think
of houses as alertness machines—
surrounded by hostility of things
we must be mindful. A house
needs constant attention,
like a dog we have to live inside.**

9 July 2017

== == == == ==

**Or let the reflected light
examine the cellar window—
two hundred years it has looked out
but in all those days so
few have looked in. Alchemy
of basements! Where the house
dreams itself into being
the place around us, meaning,
menace, shelter, danger,
consolation. Only the light
looks in, and O what a house
knows to do with light!**

9 July 2017

=====

Enough to look
or linger at
jogtrot,
 help light
bounce off my
window please, leave
a sunspot on my knee

as if tit made curios,
in credenzas line the wall
with crystal items shelved
in color and calm
soft tinkling maybe
of light made audible —

don't you ever think
to comfort the light
that pours so fervently
through all our designs?

Comfort and pass.
Walk with the light
by the little river
surplus'd with yestreen's rain,
hold light by the hand
and promise to marry her, Luce,

**as soon as your marriage
to darkness dissolves—
Freudian lawyers are working on it now.**

**It is a cool morning, Luce,
as if you have brought
the keen air from the mountains
down with you to us,
darling, and left the stone behind.**

9 July 2017

**What good am I if I
can't tell a mountain
from a lake? By measure
alone (big—wide—there!)
no help. Why can't I drink
the water even from here? Why
can't I count the eagles
glaring down at me from those peaks?
Oh the fierce glance of an eagle,
the insane eye, the eye
driven mad by seeing so much?**

9 July 2017

=====

**I'm guessing the day
by the crocodile past,
the world is calm today
who knows how wet
tomorrow?**

**Bite bite
says the animal,
lifting its maxilla the way they do.
Puff puff
says the word, the wind,
wondering where you are—
they're all out looking for you**

**all the time. Time too.
Me, I'm just a hazy flower
of no account, find me
on any old lawn now or then,
I think I'm terrific actually
but I'm really just blue.**

10 July 2017

== == == == ==

**Hold onto this — hedonism
matters. Children exemplify
the proper use of hours.
Time is smaller than the merest
toy. Pleasure is all. Never forget it.
Weird beings are always waiting
to chain you to some useless wheel.**

10 July 2017

== == == == ==

Pronounce that cloud for me—

**the one over the rose bush
right now, and what is language for
if it can't say a simple thing like that,
puff of water vapor, whiteness,
shape in blue sky. This very cloud.
Or does such a thing like love
need tender silences to be at all?**

10 July 2017

== == == == ==

**Thought I was being rigorous
was rigid.**

**Thought
I was being opulent—
just fat. We tell
ourselves amazing stories
words we learn from books
or preachers ranting.
But wwas I even listening?**

10 July 2017

== == == == ==

**The flame on a dying candle
burns you as much as a new-lit one.
Old men lose their religion,
find it painfully again on their death bed.**

10 July 2017

SCHERZO

1.

Wen time comes round
the wrong unscrews
the delicate machinery
works again —

beware

rebuttals, Latino intervals,
be glad you have a leg to shake,
a cloud to shield you
nights from the Demon Star,
not Algol, the other one,
so softly tangled in your hair,
go down the cellar stairs
grumbling into the dark

2.

Sad scherzo after all,
Malinche,
we came here for you
pretending it was land we wanted
and gold and gospelling.
But it was only, is only, you.

3.

**Around raoper Pit Bull his dancers
with beautiful joyous meaty coarseness
collect all my information,
scout it out, seize it, sort it,
analyze me, read me with their movements,
their writhings an alphabet, can inscribe
the numbers on my Visa card,
my mother's birthday, my favorite color.
Nothing their bodies do not know.**

4.

**Everything comes back to that
what we want from, in, each other,
when you spoke Nahuatl
and we still said Meshico.**

**Time, our subject (our master),
has not been nice to us,
Kronos, Chronic, the *complaint*
*built into the system.***

**We wake,
we make the best of it.**

5.

**Now compliant, the rapture
reaches.**

**Rapture means another language
takes us,
your shoes on my feet.**

**And we wait, grievous infants
of yet another lady,
the lovely prime,
original upheaval,
and somehow (somehow!)
these dancers know it,
know where the pain is
and how to solve it,
dissolve it,
so it eventually, religiously,
comes back
and makes us dance
again
to rid ourselves
of time's stagnant
morality.
Mortality.**

11 July 2017

=====

Devyushka plachut
it sounds like
the girls are crying

Meadowland the Real
Housewives of Orange County
are weeping, follow
it far as it goes
the maidens the tears
where they flow

the war is always
with them, inside them
the song comes later
Kora singing from hell,
you know the story,

the Red Army Chorus
all the men together
all doing all
that men know how to do—
women with men who don't deserve them
carved on the architrave
over the dream house

**but there is a woman
who gives and forgives
and in her all my hope,
will you believe me
now, here is her face in the photo
Pacific beyond, the blue harbor
always full of speaking,
her face coming towards me
close, kindly, again and again.**

12 July 2017

== == == == ==

**Classic Form
neglects the waking mind,
inhabits steely
noon-light, perches
eagle-ish on whitest stone**

**classic form abhors
moist dark places
where life is born
but classic form**

**abstains from avaric,
owns all the wealth
already, fears no storm—
but o little songbird**

**perch for me
on the noble pediment
sing and leave your traces
too, sanctity and mess.**

12 July 2017

== == == == ==

**Stay in the shade
where the huldras hold
their raptures,
 untouched
by civilization,
 that brief
weekend post-cave and pre-rave,
you may remember
the great names, Biber, Zelenka,
Talles, no? well, anyhow,
when most people followed Abraham
into the desert and got lost.
Despite Rameau and Hasse and Schütz—
oh, them neither? OK,
I woke up this morning thinking Mahler,
I went out and gazed at shadows
in the trees up the ridge
beyond which our little river
carries like every river
everything away.**

**The shadows
moved,
 but no one there
to move them
 that I could see**

13 July 2017

== == == == ==

wo nehm' ich...
die Schatten der Erde

**asks Hölderlin,
 he gives us, rhapsode,
permission to take shadows,
handle them, bring them home.
Poetry is all about Permission.
Permission means freeing,
fleeing, from the Law.**

13 July 2017

MYOPIA

**Whose fault am I?
I thought the person in grey
walking a furlong away
was the front half of a small
elephant (*Elephas indica*)
before realizing that animals
always bring all of themselves
with them when they travel,
unlike me.**

13 July 2017

== == == ==

**Walking on water
has its own logic.
Because we have language
we think we're thinking.**

**But there are miracles
maybe, and conscience maybe
in not just habit, scraps
of my moral education,**

**spraypainted with a sense of sin?
I want to praise
those who said what they said
quickly, pungently**

**so the thinking is not lost in the saying.
Hamann, not Kant. Novalis, not Hegel.
And maybe Heraclitus just wrote in fragments.
The bigger the book the less it says.**

***Take the prose away
and leave the pith, the poetry.***

13 July 2017

== == == == ==

**Little jeweled casket
anthems of flowers
obne word is good as another
Bastille Day is an opera
at the back of the mind.
You hear it in your hair
when the wind, that old
romantic, sighs.**

**Happy birthday, Pierre,
the gold is sleeping
deep in the Ancram hills—
wake it with music —
tand silver needs a song!
Bonanza is never far away.**

13 July 2017

=====

**Edge of order
dark listening
the chest is open
always,**

**no
way to close it.
The light streams
in and out.**

2.

**How
did we see
so much with
such closed eyes?**

3.

**Waking the body
from the world**

14 July 2017

=====

**Waiting on the levee
by no river.
The flood was an animal,
a passion, a passing.
Who is liberty?
We keep waiting for me.**

**2.
It almost means.
We ask too
little of language.
A shine in the sky
a shadow amongst us.**

14 July 2017

== == == == ==

**Azimuth high
look up the columns
that support the word
as once in Salisbury
I stared up the steeple
my cheek pressed to the stone
and saw high above me
(highest tip in England)
the very point where the steeple
balances the sky.
For example. Find
the point in the word—self
that holds the whole
language comes in place
and write it down, write
around it, let it
be for an hour or so
your mind, then
see what you see,
see what you let yourself know.**

15 July 2017

== == == == ==

**Came back from hospital
to find the first rose of Sharon
looking in the window at me
middle of summer truly.
Still here this morning.
The glamor of 'accidents'
is the truth of the saints.**

15 July 2017

== == == == ==

**I wanted to be a bird
only a little while
till I minded
what they have to
put up with—
the whole sky.**

15 July 2017

== == == == ==

**Sky so bright so blue
so day's with little clouds
but it's getting dark
down here —
 the darkness
rises from the earth,
floods the bushes, the trunks,
even the lofty treetops
leaves pierced with sky.**

**The dark lives in the ground
around us, in us, the Sun
holds it back as long as she can.**

15 July 2017

== == == == ==

**Can I say
what it means
me to?**

**The afterlife of silence
surrounds us—
this is the Paradise
where words, those magical
beings, caress and possess us**

**their agent, I
hurry to speak—
one word as good almost [?]
as every other.**

== == == == ==

**Noctilucent vocabulary
road through the sky
no stars involved
pure shimmer alone—
like the Lights once
over Canada,
light made of light.**

== == == == == == ==

**Be where the sun is
while the shy Sheila lets.
I learned that from Australia
where my ancestor went for gold—
whatever else he found,
he found the Sun.**

=====

**Try to write big
try to see what I said.
Say. Keep going—
never run out of words
they are the bones of thinking—
but what is the flesh?
And whose blood arterial—
mine or another's?**

= = = = = C=

**Every time I try to be me
I run into trouble—
better go back to being
Nemo, Nobody, pure
being (maybe) with no
one to be it.**

**But being It
is always the chosen,
the loser, fall-guy
one who has to close his eyes
while all the others run and hide.
when can I safely open my eyes?**

== == == == ==

**When one is young
one can believe
in miracles.
When one is old
one must perform them
or be saved by them.**

=====

**Here I am at least again
apostle of the obvious
or is there a street
I forgot to walk
in my own neighborhood
fifteen years?
That haunts me—
the grocery, dry cleaner, laundromat,
the girls in on a Sunday at ___ --
all lost to my adolescent neglect [?],
who dreamt of Suddon Place and the Left Bank
when all the while magic
percolated on X Street
cooked by Aldo and Gemma, Nunzio
and Josephine.**

16 July 2017

== == == == ==

**Asking
 what one can
do or two
is all.
 The answer
quivers
 in the morning trees.
Night and day,
 no other worry.**

**Is this a consolation
or a threat
no one can tell.**

== == == == == ==

**Mesmerized by ice
the thought of all
that floating chill
intact in a glass or
Antarctic flow.**

**Mesmer
never touched his patients, ran
his hands over their bodies
close, close, but no contact.
healed by the thought of hands.
The thought of ice.**

== == == == == == ==

**Writing a novel
or an autobiography?
One's life is the biggest fiction of all.**

== == == == ==

**How bad the Empire
had to wheel before
dragons squared the circle
and came down to play
with our vague consequences,
who? I asked the High Priest
of their civic cult [?]
how to address their deities
we have none, he said,
only the power to address
and await what happens.**

=====

**Signals everywhere!
Clowns pile out of taxies,
pigeons perch on traffic lights.
You can see all kinds of things
in this Paris of ours, every
hamlet a metropolis—
even now an ant
is walking on the ground.
In the galleries, artists
shiver in well-paid despair.**

== == == == ==

**The heat admires me.
Clings to my welcome.
Here, be hot. The pages
of *that* bible never run out.
Book with no end!
Ceremony of sheer going on.
Whenever I look
there is another.
Pray for me.**

== == == == ==

**Stencil pages
blank as being.**

**Elaborate rose work
of the evening breeze.**

**To whom are we praying
when we close our eyes?**

**Gnostic metaphors proliferate
the point is be good to everyone.**

Everyone. That is the secret.

17 July 2017

== == == == ==

**So I cried out
hoping less to be heard
than to relieve
the earth inside me**

**yet in the event I was answered
and the mountain spoke.**

**Do all the doing,
say all that can be said—**

**the rest will be your portion,
easy birth and hard dying
but in between
a commonwealth of pain you share
a Paradise of perfect joys.**

**Those are mountain words,
I took them gently
sometimes turning them round
the way time also dies.
I was content to credit
that birth and death always
belong to someone else,
never to the accident I call me.**

== == == == ==

**Emergency roses
leaping to our aid
off the hibiscus
summer ___ [floating?]
rose of Sharon—
to see one is joy,**

**these several now
lurk in leaf-dark
such hope having
year after year.**

**I am an old
farmhouse where they grow.**

== == == == == == ==

**You can tell I'm worried,
writing about flowers,
their soft eternities.**

18 July 2017

== == == == == == ==

**The word sets free—
“I am the word”
he said
“spoken from the dark,
you see it, me,
around you now as trees,
bees, foxglove,
river going by—
now you know.”**

=====

**Out of the hospital outpatient care
relieved of catheter and 75% of my anxiety—
hier bin 'i!**

**Where the other begins—
at first I thought it was Pennsylvania
___ the Delaware from Calicoon.
Then, astonishingly, it moved
to the Pike Place Market. Then Vienna,
then Darjeeling and there it stopped.
There is no other. There is only here.
This apple. This iced tea. My wife.**

BOWDOIN PARK

**Free enterprise of grassland—
in these years farmers have turned to forest.
But down here in the suburbs
this park is all of field, low trees,
expanses, river view, big sky.
Where we live, forty miles north,
sky is a blue thing that happens to trees,
through leaves. Here,
it's open as Long Island.
and Charlotte sees aspens on the skyline.
Sky.**

== == == == == == ==

**Far off
les voix d'enfants
sounds like opera,
that old everything-happening-at-once
medium, I won't give it up,
bread and circus, blood and wine,
the truth of all of us,
grease paint. Thunderous applause.**

== == == == ==

**I worry about the least thing
because it is the least
thing that does us in.
the big fat leather hilt
does no harm—the barely
visible blade tip slays the man.**

EXCALIBUR

explain the word.

***ebur*, ivory.**

***eofor*, boar, pig.**

***isga* - [Welsh, as in Isgathirwin]**

***lebor*—book**

= the chief book?

Literacy is the sword

by which words are marshalled and men are ruled?

**(Low flying plane.
Things with wings
tend to annoy)**

=====

**Sometimes one keeps writing
to keep oneself going.
Other times the other way round.
And never will I know
which when is now.**

19 July 2017

== == == == ==

**Sometimes better not to see.
Streetlights through the curtain
stars enough for us,
between, dreams alert
my own footsteps in the empty hall.**

**2.
Go back to bed
the angels say.
Up here, up
in this land of
lamps and curtains,
you only get confused.
Pronouns, for example,
grow indeterminate,
the gender of shadows.**

**3.
Then dream of cool places,
ice caves, Cubla Khan
(as Coleridge spelled him
and Xanadú his river),
museums, gorges,
subdue the heat of sleep
with wings [?]. Sleep
with images. Wake
and who knows what you'll see.**

=====

**Normative profusion
the fact of everything
exact measure.**

**Everything is an example
of it. Sparrow
at the dark window**

**knowing something
against the night.
Everything is ready. Yes.**

20 July 2017

== == == == == == == ==

**Knowing
should be enough.
The sky
knows nothing more.**

=====

**(My pain began a week ago—
a little life misspent
in sorry spirits, not so much
unhappy as fixated
on the pain and what-to-do—
I do not want to be
a scientist of my discomfort.)**

== == == == ==

**A crow called
when I came out
and makes me happy.
A clear sign
whose clarity is left
for me to interpret.
Omen accipio—
take it as good.
In the world of signs
good always wins.**

21 July 2017

== == == == == == ==

**Preparing to see
the end of hallucination
into the real world
wordless and free?
Could this be what
one prays for?
Cult after cult
let me be me.**

== == == == == == == ==

**Better to be sick
in the rain
when the soft
sky of evening
tries to help,
laves you, washes
your wound,
dissolves your tensions
if it can.
Let it, if you can.**

22 July 2017

WITHOUT A COMPASS

**Am I getting better
or only getting better at being sick.**

**How happy my books will make others—
the ones I bought, and kept I mean.
I hope the ones I wrote make
some people happy too—
that would be the gladdest.**

== == == == ==

**Pain is the silence of the body.
All the rest of the time it's busy
measuring the temperature and weight
and closeness and desirability
of everything all around it.
Then when it would turn your thought
away from world, it hurts—
pain is its method, and maybe its message.**

23 July 2017

== == == == ==

**Essor. Flight or else.
The ribbon that is the sky
controls the eye.
Night. Night.
No see
the blue of the hibiscus.
Night for others
kind of seeing,
the other sky.**

**Letters take off from the page.
they mean another place,
worry, charm, valley, thunderstorm.**

**Where is everybody
when it rains?
The things that concern me
are the things that are always true
or always there
places on a planet,
lusts of a man.**

**The ice field breaks off
and floats away,
waits for a current
to bring it to its work.**

**A man wakes in discomfort
on his couch, turns, stretches, releases
tensions, goes back to sleep. This is truth.**

24 July 2017

**FILTER ARDRIG[H]
THE THINGS OF IRELAND
FROM A DUNE IN
BACK OF MY HEAD
A VIEW COMES OF THE SEA
FOOTSTEPS LEAD THERE
THEY ARE MINE
TO SHOW ME MY WAY AGAIN
LOST IN SOME WRONG NIGHT.
SEA, MINE. ANY MINUTE NOW
THERE WILL BE HERE.**

== == == == == == ==

**BLUE ROSES OF SHARON
AS IF THE RAIN
HAD CONVERTED THEM
TO ITS OWN RELIGION—**

**TREMULOUS IN LEAFAGE
SILENTLY PSALMING.**

== == == == ==

**ALSTROMERIA
FROM ANDES
BLOOD RED LILIES
NAMED FOR COUNT ALSTRÖM—
THANK YOU, DARLING
FOR BRINGING THEM
ALL THE WAY TO MORNING.
UNENDING EXPLORATION.**

== == == == ==

RICKEY OF ROKEYB

**A grand man of an old clan
He'd been everywhere done everything
And didn't mind at all
If you didn't know it.
He took care of people--
Friends, tenants, neighbors,
He took care of things
Machinery houses the place.
He acted all the while
Like that rarest of mortals
A decent kindly man who knows
how to care for the place, on earth.**

25 July 2017

CYRILLIC

Д

**the D of *dom*, of domovoy,
house, household god
is a billowing sail
carrying the house fast—
Saint Doris Saint Dmitri Saint Damian—
nobody ever stays home
so the house and we who ride in it
and those who ride on us
race through the world
to be there on time
at the precise moment
when what comes to meet us
meets us.**

or

Л

**the L of legkii, 'light'
take the boom away,
the sail falls limp—
just be lucky
just lie up there
in the sky
dazzling the world!**

LEGKII almost like 'lucky'

3 AM

**Cool night.
Little animal cries
some of them
from outside**

25 July 2017

== == == == == ==

**Some things are seen
Christ's trumpet shouting from the grave
where he is not.
The empty tomb shouts loudest,
the rainbow body preaches forever,
heals, wholes, *this light*
from in you came
until it became you and you it.
First Blast of the Trumpet.
But in Germany they sing
Es schallt die Posaunen—
the trombones will sound—
louder instruments, deeper,
digging in and going far.**

26 July 2017

=====

for Charlotte

A word at least

**the most is leaves
anyhow, all
the dialects of green.**

**I need just one word—
the leaf you gave me once,
the leaf-meat gone,
the intricate gothic fretwork
of the beins perfectly intact.**

27 July 2017

THE HAWK

**I want to tell you the truth
about that young hawk in the tree,
he's not here for your chipmunks and mourning doves.
he's here for me.**

**He's reead those old Egyptian books
and knows thst s troubled soul in illness
sometimes needs a strong pair of wings
to carry him out**

**beyond being, show him
what being beyond being would be—
then bring him home. Tonight
I thanked him for his vigil, but told him I would stay.**

27 July 2017

= = = = =

**To be with the moons too
the lunacies**

**get me to town
on the caboose of the train
sp o lmpw where everything
is coming from,**

**I hear the dragon
in the forest, all the boys do,
hearing it makes them men,**

**whether what we hear
comes from inside our chests
or from the woods—
someday wise doctors explain me that.**

28 July 2017

IN HANNAFORD'S PARKING LOT

for Charlotte

**Memo from the war against the self:
there is no self.**

**1.
All the walkers are in the sky I see,
plenty, their cloud skirts almost
continuous with light.**

**2.
It's hard today to hear them,
but I try to let
their voluble peace
sink into me.**

**3.
At the intersection, between the plates
hung next to the traffic lights
and marked LEFT TURN ONLY
a sparrow you tell me has built her nest—
and she flies out even as you speak.
Evidently for her, hearing**

**is a thing that doesn't hold our traffic noise—
maybe the way I can't hear the clouds.**

**4.
A few aisles of parked cars over
girls voice loud and happy,
two or three of them, excited,
voices rising up and down.
How wise they are—
Life itself is an exaggeration.**

28 July 2017

== == == == ==

**Exalt in the alarm—
there are hummingbirds among blue roses.
What shall we do
with all our ancient symbolism,
blue women, a stone on fire?**

== == == == == == ==

**So, my Pythagoras,
I thought I knew so much
beyond, but you knew *it*.**

== == == == == == ==

**A girl lies listening to the moon
A boy lies listening to the sun
If only they were the same one!
Then, glad day, the new race rising.**

== == == == ==

**Way back when, in the roadless time
scarlet bogberries made our bladders strong
and bears wanted [?] everything. Learning
what we can do, while we
were trying to remember.**

**What part
of the sky to ask for what sort of thing
we needed, we wanted. We need. We want.**

29 July 2017

=====

**Catching on to something brave—
a name from the sky
out of an old book,
the prepositions never lie,**

**Europe is a woman
always been,
waiting for her man,
Kelt, Goth, Hun,
Mongol, Magyar, Arab, Turk
and since [?] they came
ex Africa et Syria,
she rejects them all
and wakes them here.**

**Europe keeps her mind
___ offshore
where some the earlier invaders
still think they're in charge—
“Keep the buggers out!”
they say, then let them in
and marry them.**

30 July 2017

== == == == ==

**Opening of a door
closes something.
Nothing. Make
up its mind
for it. For you.**

**Without you, it
is hardly anything,
without it, you
are hardly even that.**

**It is a miracle.
It is a door.
It is the most
important thing of all.**

FACING EAST

**It's the light's turn
to decide the mind.**

**The boat you built
in your backyard
still hunkers there
in the ivy leaves,
un___ , unfloated,
unsunk, a plausible
articulation of skill,
matter, desire.**

**I sometimes think I am this boat,
a sleeping dory safe in green.**

== == == == == ==

**The measurements mean me—
that much I know,
chair, bed, coffin, altar, nave—
one fits in what one has been given.**

**The Gloom of matter sometimes,
the gleam, glitter, effervescence,
soda on the tongue, balloons
solemnly ascending in the sluggish air.**

**All of this. All this could be true.
The pronouns flit in and out of the design.
The machine. It purrs in the dark.**

== == == == == ==

**Along the river
night rain
we wonder who
we others are
and why they come
and why we go.**

31 July 2017