

11-4-2013

novB2013

Robert Kelly
Bard College

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

 Part of the [Poetry Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Kelly, Robert, "novB2013" (2013). *Robert Kelly Manuscripts*. Paper 20.
http://digitalcommons.bard.edu/rk_manuscripts/20

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.

THE GLASS OF WATER

A man holds it
in front of his chest
but his eyes are not on it,
they look out at you,
viewer, querent,
whatever you are.

Unknown to him
or at least unnoticed
there is a woman in the class
small, perfectly formed,
eyes open, rather beautiful
she is, and she's looking
right at you too.

This is Melusina,
the elemental
daughter of water and air,
you need her to live.

When the man has drunk his water,
all of it or the only some
she will still be there,
sadrift before his eyes

**and yours,
floating
out from the image
into your world
or whatever you call it,
this thing around you.
And then he gives it to you.**

2/3 November 2013.

THE LAST IMAGE

**But if there were a final card,
last trump, a picture all sleek
and elegant as you know what,
some young body flexed to
spring or pleasure, a smooth
remembrance, nothing
more needs to be said?**

**Divinatory meaning of such
a thing what could it be?**

**You have come to the end of asking.
You are oily with answers,
when you sit down you are Isis
and when you stand up, Apollo,
when you lie down to go to sleep
you are no one again.**

**It is the picture of a nude
young man or perhaps a woman
half-seen through shrubbery,
his or her hands are holding**

**something you will never see,
not even when, hours later,
when the sun is finally setting
and your cup of mint tea is cold,
you slip into the picture
and become him, become her.
And still don't know what you mean—
there has someday to be
an end to naming things.**

2/3 November 2013

=====

**Imperfect sleep amends me—
before dawn the radio's full of Mozart.
We are caught in a bodhisattvic space
where music keeps arising, telling**

**how to use our silences.
Science answers with its dreary certainties.**

**Could a man sleep in a woman's voice?
This spill of coffee on my table
could it be the river
Danube from Black Forest to Black Sea?**

3 November 2013

=====

**The music stops. A voice informs
Mozart often wore his own hair.
Daylight savings time has ended.
Information is implicitly ironic.
Like a museum, all that beauty
with a uniformed guard nearby.**

3 November 2013

=====

**Could the river remember
to flow, the well sit still?
It isn't much but it is too much
to ask matter to be matter
only. Everything trying to be me.**

3 November 2013

=====

ICI ON PARLE

language of a vanished people
who still are here—

Orestes says You
can't see them but I see them,

always around us,
the gleaming or the grim,

one more day
fallen from the dream.

Light speaks their language.

3 November 2013

=====

At 6:30 A.M.

the eclipse got

itself eclipsed

by clouds.

Some light in the trees

coughed a minute

then kept talking.

We imagine the world

mosaic'd of such

moments. A laugh

behind a curtain.

Bedsprings sighing

in an empty room.

Who are we after all?

3 November 2013

THE ULTIMNATE VACATION

**I am not the first to suggest
would be to transfer your whole
consciousness into someone else's body.**

**Let's assume the willingness of each
to be entered, and to enter the other—**

**just imagine the vigorous business
the finding pairs to switch,
then larger catchments so as to
orchestrate who goes where, A into B,
but B spends a few days in C
who is dancing in Rio in D.**

**Und so weiter. Money, money,
a lot of it to be made.
Neurologists, get to work!
Your feeble researches and feebler
scruples are impeding economic recovery.
We need all that money
to start moving
from pocket to pocket
as souls travel between
their soft new houses.**

**Just imagine the sheer pleasure
of even the simplest things,
tasting the first bite of food
in someone else's mouth,
what a thrill just to take a leak
from someone else's genitals,
or scratch an itch in
some part you never knew you had.**

**Forget rocket ships to outer space,
forget the moon. The man
next door is your Aruba,
that woman across the street
your week in Cozumel.**

3 November 2013

QUERENT OF THE CARDS

But what are you looking for
in all these pictures?
They're all dead people by now,
the Husband, the Child,
the Nun, the Prophet lying
drunk beneath his tree,
the Tree, the Cellar Door,
the Dog. Dead or fallen
ruinous and sad. Are you sad?
Do you come to the cards
the way you'd drink some wine
or call a friend you haven't seen
in years? Did you ever know him
anyhow? The images don't lie
because the images don't die.

2.

Did you know I'd be here
when you came in, a sly voice
no louder than a silken
dress on a thigh, a whisper
of light in the dingy trees
around your yard? Why
can't you take care of anything?
Do you want to wind up

like me, a voice yearning,
yearning for ears, doesn't
really matter, even yours?

3.

But I can tell you everything.
You whisper to the cards,
they whisper to me, I whisper
to you. A lot of susurrus
to go round, mice in the pantry,
tiny endless appetites questing
like you for anything. Like me.

4.

Because I began out there like you
then got trapped in it. I asked
and it answered, I leaned close
to hear every detail, and before
I knew it or could flee, the voice
became my own. And I've
been talking ever since. Now
what was it you wanted to know?

3 November 2013

THE AMAZEMENTS

**open their wings
like a barn on fire**

**corn roasting in heaven
o no loss, no loss
everything changes form**

**and nothing's lost,
the amazements open their wings
and you're an orphan again**

**nowhere to turn
but the door of your doubt
and you do you go in and it breaks**

**beneath your timid weight,
gravity still loves us,
things are on our side**

**you are free and able, so able,
the amazements open their wings
and you are them now,**

insofar as you are anything at all.

4 November 2013

=====

**Could all of this truth
be bad for me,
overwhelm me
with the obvious permanence of being
so I never have to be?**

4 November 2013

=====

**So quiet, Sir Mind
and quiet, Madame Consciousness,**

**the sun must be shining
all over the cold grass**

**25° just before dawn
and what are numbers after all
but the gentle snores
of sleeping intellect?**

**If you can count it
it doesn't count.**

**What you're looking for
is otherhow.**

And now you're seeing, no,

you're being it.

4 November 2013

=====

**Almost time
for time.**

**But not yet.
The euonymus
is blazing red**

**the young maples
still keep their leaves,
we want something**

**from each other
some broken crystal
of a new color,**

**a kind of kiss
that's a permission
just to stand still.**

4 November 2013