10-2013

octC2013

Robert Kelly
Bard College

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

Recommended Citation
http://digitalcommons.bard.edu/rk_manuscripts/58

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.
He wonders what he has to say—
broken clouds revealed the mystery —
each cloud the city with a quick people inside —

running on the roads, whither? Why?
Can you view yourself as a machine 
and practice it? When you make 
the body work it won’t talk.
Or you train yourself not to hear it.
Less work, less food, less exercise, less and drink —

lie there and breathe a little,
listen as hard as you can —
this is your real work.

6 October 2013.
Maybe’s sickness is a form of listening.
When before there was too much noise for me to hear what my not-self is saying.

6 October 2013
TARNOPOL

The playoffs in Oakland last night
I watched the stadium,
filled with tier after tier of people,
40 or 50,000 of them,
they seemed immeasurable,
so many people, so many people.
A sea of faces as they say.
Then I remembered that if you took
fifty of these stadiums
every seat filled, standees everywhere,
they would not even then hold all the Jews
killed by the Nazis.
Tarnopol would have been one of them,
in the Polish Ukraine,
and the laughing faces I see on the screen
joyous at the rookie out-dueling Verlander,
turned into the Jews of Tarnopol
and something happens to my eyes,
the picture blurs, I turn away.
Maybe it’s an autumn cold.
We survive by thinking of
numbers, not the faces.
Not all those happy faces.

6 October 2015
Some of them are tired of the old ways of taking language from the head through the metabolism onto the page. They want to let the language talk by itself — always the language, not language. For language to escape from the language it needs to runs through someone before the reader gets it or it gets to the reader.

My father told me that running water purifies itself in a hundred feet. I hope you’re not saying my father was wrong. Language purifies itself by passing through actual mouths.

6 October 2013
Being broad
like a sea
is to be.

A fountain rides
up and down itself,
selfish, proud —

no wonder fountains
come from the Renaissance,
all the sprezzatura
of the old aristos,

water playing with itself
in the air.

While a river
feeds
and the sea breeds.

Be broad, be sea.

7 October 2013
Come back and cry again.

Wait till it lights up—
someday the keys will sing
as they lead you to the door.

Queequeg’s arm athwart your chest—
sweating together

rapture of wrong.

7 October 2013
The empty streets
of what I mean
or who am I
to intend?

We have no control over money
at midnight the child’s piggy bank runs away,

the sign preempts the sense.

So grovel at the gate, why not,
pride is a childish amusement
fit for kings and such
    glorious underachievers,

change the language—
make this mean that
now you’re doing something
worth the horse you’re sitting on.

7 October 2013
The meat of mountain,
Arjuna is Diomedes,
the goddess drives the chariot,
she who invented the wheel

a thing the proud Inka did not know
pride walks, wisdom rides —

the horses of King Josiah
where are they, where the bones
of that King

  who thought wisdom
was an old wife
to send

  off into the desert?

Music stems, stands,
from the unlikeliest spaces.
The axle comes to your chariot,
the horse you have to find yourself,
here, sit on this and travel.

7 October 2013
The other side of history is ancient whether,
what we carry with us in our lives,
the ones we remember,
the old names who stand clear in the mind.

7 October 2013
SACRED ERASER TAB CENTER

flashed across my doze.
Erasers made of stone.

How much do I mean
to the girl around the corner
or the man in the moon?
That smile, this sky,
the ripe posterity.

To erase the sacred with the stone?
An eraser that wipes away the stone?

Analytic languages
depend on plausibility.
No case endings, no certainty.

Sacred eraser wipes away the stone.
Wipes away the center.

Can there be a circle with no center?
Can there be a sacred without a circle?

7 October 2013
GLARE

The glare remembers
eyes that stared into it
looking for fish swarms to rise
or enemy aircraft, the enemy
always comes out of the sun.

How come the sun can sometimes
balance at the top of the street
uphill, St. George, St. Francis,
how can light hurt to hear,
how can light hide so well?

All my life I have written into the glare
hoping to find, and found, you there.

8 October 2013
They do a new thing now.  
They send a picture to the back of your mind.  
No prose essay on iconoclasm can dislodge it.  
It is stuck inside you, an image,  
many images clustered around one, they nest  
in the back of your mind.

Fasting and prayer do not avail.  
Sometimes you can see right through them  
and that’s a relief — are they  
made of the same light  
you and I are made from?

What a relief it would be  
not to see them but see through them.

I remember a woman once  
who walked across the sea  
and gave me back myself  
but all I saw was sea.

8 October 2013
Arousal’s statement.
A course of energies
spent into the Knowdom.

Where it breeds, chains, spools,
wreathes, comes again

and links to the mind of another,
many another.

So to feel anything keenly
is to speak into the Knowdom.

8 October 2013
What midnight teaches
oft dawn forgets.
Don’t let that white-out
blank your page.

8 October 2013
Meaning also that the sense of sin
lives outside of time
where guilt reigns
cueless and irrational
stained with all the childhoods
defiled in us by the law,

whereas there is no law
there is only what we do
among each other —

harming others is the only wrong.
Weird cults invent imaginary others
to be harmed by our
thoughts and words and deeds
whereas: no real other is injured,
no misdeed. This is Eden still.

9 October 2013
Blake’s Angels are the girls across the street
shimmer on a glass of water’s
surface, the bow of Eros its meniscus raised,
opsis, for what we see invigorates
old Adam and young Eve—

the sight of you
restores me to my senses —
to grasp by eye
the nearby other

who is the teacher best
of my own difference

where glory is approximate
in everlasting cloud,
the leaping word of the day.

9 October 2013
THE TEACHER

It poured from his hands like money,
he spent his thoughts on all the young
who sat beside him,

he comraded them with his palaver,
his insights their confusion.

He spent. And by night
(and it is always night where he is)
there was no thought left

but only thinking.

9 October 2013
Can speak again inside the glare
  to say your black turns brown
  your blue dissociates itself from fancy dances
  and stays there in heaven licking its fingers —

  October’s vibrant fading time — you too —
  I left you at the altar of Venus it sounded like
  a sacrifice of love for love’s sake, weird magic
  only lovers misdiscover
          — nothing works.

Flowers happen and unhappen — syntax is all.
  How it fits together. The women in the choir
dubious of the organist, above his topmost
keyboard a mirror shows the nave below —

  music flowing backwards through the boring service
and the women huddle together, admiring
their bodices and their bottom notes —
not all sopranos can get down there
where the animal at last begins to growl.
  Enough of churches. Our business is with weather.
Our far the children wander towards the cliff.
All my life waiting for the rain to start.

10 October 2013
IN MY SICKNESSE

Pepend sad delirium —
not sick enough for that —
imageless the mind’s bewilderment,
a whirring with words in it
and nothing seen — I give you
honest cloth, the moths
do all the lacy work
the light shines through
in a code I’m too feeble to read

10 October 2013
All I have to do is this.

Emaho! The word leaves me alone
with my wonder. I sift
mist through the trees –
this
is called understanding the place.
Because to be here is to be everywhere.
Quiet anonymity of space — as if we moved
but earthspin does all the work.

I am here again again ready to be gone—
I will depart into this place.

10 October 2013
Not to do more —
kettle on the stove
the long anxiety that runs the mind
let the opioid of cloud and tree release.

To ease the pain of always
needing to do more.
To have done with doing.

10 October 2013