8-2012

augL2012

Robert Kelly

Bard College

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

Recommended Citation
http://digitalcommons.bard.edu/rk_manuscripts/253

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.
Woke in the dark
so quiet I could hear
the saliva drying in my mouth
a soft assortment of
the roaming tiny creatures
that make up me.
They play as I sleep
the way mice celebrate a house
when no one bothers them—
small moves, small sounds,
the huge dark.

30 August 2012
Let us be afraid of one another
for we have power
and the power you have
overwhelms me when I try
to treat you like a person in the world—
the same for you about me.
We damage one another
by trying to be natural.
We have to work this through
or wind up one more sad old myth.
We have so little access to the ancestors. Even their language is lost in us. Maybe only the breath keeps track of them a little. Maybe some of them some of the time breathe in us. Maybe they say what we say. But how do you know a grandfather is speaking, or which one, how far back, when you wake with a strange word in your mouth?

30 August 2012
Because you never
and I never

the sun’s reluctant
to come out

but then it does
a blaze of it

scorches us
with forgiveness

and I can be at peace
with all I didn’t.

30 August 2012
= = = = =

Let them be lonely while they last the prince decided before his mirror—

only men—and none too young at that— know how to use that glass, they see what is to come

and let it, or turn mindfully away to some poetic consolation prize,

art, religion, love.

31 August 2012
Wield the body
as if the mind
had just come down
to live in it—

awkward grace
faithful as a shadow
walk that way
and never leave the stage.

31 August 2012
What we learn from our devices:
update the mind at waking
check to see if any
part of me has left a message.
Any new applications for the brain?
Adjust brightness of the eye,
make sure the soul is connected.
Delete the water residue of night.

31 August 2012
Castigate the mirror? I will not give it the satisfaction, I have not looked at one in days. One, I say, as if all mirrors saw, or showed, the same. Hypothesis readily doubted: I never look the same. Always a different me. Or is it the wall or cabinet the mirror’s on, the room, the tawdry ethnic washrooms, the gleaming plate glass at Bergdorf’s, where I pretend to examine an incomprehensibly expensive autumn ensemble, but in reality gaze into the glassy eye of that other mannequin, myself on the sidewalk, a feral creature born to look in.

31 August 2012
It’s pretty
as we used to say
groovy being me.
Making do
with what’s around.
A loner
among stoners,
waiting for a new
religion,
a box of you.

31 August 2012
SOLOMON

again,

this time singing.

Angel us
to demon street
wing the bell
to peel the ape.

Girls attend his song,
and Greeks from Smyrna
imported to admire
in fluent prose
his merest raptures—
what matter if their
alphabet makes him
dizzy with its swirls,
they keep the record
for posterity,
who is the cutest
dancing girl of all.

2.
Or is it he?
Could another
fit that velvet
crown or bear
the splendor of
the ruby in it?

None of my wives
is my wife

my true wife
is yet to come

that sounds like him,
the king himself,
who else could sing

always arriving
never here

and be so glad of it?
He puts a brave
face on loss
and calls it you.

31 August 2012
What I learned from the decimal system:
put a little dot
after everything
and roll some circles out
so anything after them
gets smaller and smaller
till finally I reach
a number I can handle
far off in the distance
the ten millionth part of now.

31 August 2012
Vote for miracles.
The sun

    was like you once,
a chance remark in the noosphere
overheard by gravity.

And it came down
to warm us and blind us
and make us dependent on
seeds it summons from the ground.

So being is inexplicable,
life a riddle. Only death
holds the explanation.
Bother death for an answer,
prod at death
till it finally speaks.

31 August 2012
(first poem composed in Shafer House)