7-2012

julC2012

Robert Kelly
Bard College

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

Recommended Citation
http://digitalcommons.bard.edu/rk_manuscripts/387
I caught my cuff on the cliff
and couldn’t fall.

Somebody else
had to shout the word
I would have called
out in falling.

There is always
someone else. Always
another word.

But my word would
never have been said.
I must try the cliff again
plummet into what it means
by letting me fall.

5 July 2012
I’m getting too moral.
If I reached out
you’d feel the dry
crinkled page of a book
touch your wrist
a dead leaf fallen
into your lap. So I keep
my advice to myself.
I am weary of knowing
what everyone should do.

5 July 2012
Catching words by music
you dreamed a net
of sound  
seven clarinets
spacing out a song

it could take years
to write down
in letters or quavers
what that song said

dreams do that
just a little nap
asleep in the sun
and so much comes

you have to catch
the shining filaments of
the net that caught you
and see where it goes

from whom it comes.

5 July 2012
Something between us and the moon—
roundish shape like a seal’s head
or a bird with folded wings and beak tucked down
out there a thousand miles in space—
what if it wakes? what if it comes down?
Or flies away forever? What do we do then?

5 July 2012
They move from book to book
they are allied with Jericho

we tore their tents down in the night
and drenched them as they ran away

groggy back into their shabby hills.
But why did we use wine when

water would have worked as well?

5 July 2012
Try to find it now
the blue forgotten

the part where the will
grates on the rock of the city wall

and soldiers gasp for breath
when they rouse from their siestas

and is that the same bird in the sky?

6 July 2012
Men want it all the time because it is the gate to everything. Women want it when they will— for will is all, and self-embodiment of will and be invisible till the image she chooses to project.

2. The two races have such different entrances to being with.

3. Every woman doubts her lover or herself. Better by far for her to doubt the other.

6 July 2012
The things that please us
have cages in them

open desert still a prison
all pleasure reeks of the past

recognizes and comes again
but no step forward

pleasure is regressive
hence repressive

the same old hardware
of excitation and release

then nothing more.

6 July 2012
PLAISIRS

Pleasure is our share of evolution
the circular tunnel we
burrow through year after year
and what makes me happy makes me dumb.

*

That’s why the old so often seem to be
killjoys—they have learned all they could
learn from pleasures and now want something else.
Is pain their teacher now?
Is it the shadows of death
cast on those fair young
bodies dancing the old read
as hieroglyphs instructive and sinister.

*

Don’t begrudge the young their pleasures—
until we know what pleases us
we don’t know who we really are.

6 July 2012
PENTAGRAM IMPERFECT

Unfinished star of magic
dot the i, unpiece the weaving
go back and forth at once

find the original center
of what you’re doing
what you are

the red ball bouncing
in the woods
the waterfall of milk

blood of the trees.
Take off everything
put everything on

believe the shadows
the imperial purple
of your body’s folds

so much magic so much
listening heard
your words inside dawn
there was a cry
caught between us
like the cry of a gull

in an empty sky.

6 July 2012
So that is magic
that is the singular
air moving
and beast desire

to know the other

I put my flesh at risk
to learn what the gods have hidden
inside your clothes

inside these creatures who pass
around me miraculously
different from one another

each living being is a gospel
it takes my whole life
or all my lives to read.

6 April 2012
No images left
they’ve all been sung

now what
the chipmunk wants to know

is it all just
the shadows of leaves

the silent wind?

6 July 2012
I tried to make you sit down in my mind
to measure your displacement
the surface tension triumphed over
shadow I can rend with my teeth.

6.VII.12
My defect, I cannot
speak to war—

horrors
is all I can hear

current behavior
of our house

and Homer said it all.
And it should never have been said.

6 July 2012
Trout on the wall stars in the well
the music ripens apples
out of the fallen tree
almost rotted away
the fruit of
       the sun says something too.

A house is always
on its way back to the wood.

Deer looks at me from trees
read me read me
more books less reverie
and most be beast.

6 July 2012
The dust of Aristotle
swirls through my window
motes in sunbeams
planetary systems
every system imitates itself
quickens lust
and you know why.

All round us animals
research the light
broken feathers on pebbles
whisper in the ear
your breath says
more than words will.

6 July 2012
In those days men and women could hear—
air was a kind of chemical mistake
we took the giddy risk of breathing—

o that compromise, that first
inhalation of the atmosphere—
no orgasm fuels such rapture now

and then we were here
in the garden of beginning. Sinning.
And who knows what we are.

6 July 2012
It might have been a balcony
or an organ loft a song
in Italian but she forgot the tune
only the words only the words
and even those I forget
only remember
the smell of her breath
she breathed a little
island into my head.

6 July 2012
A man who goes out of his house

goes to act things out

he performs an identity

he thinks his own

sparrows scatter like girls laughing
dew dries on his lawn chairs.

6 July 2012