

4-2008

aprA2008

Robert Kelly
Bard College

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

Recommended Citation

Kelly, Robert, "aprA2008" (2008). *Robert Kelly Manuscripts*. Paper 622.
http://digitalcommons.bard.edu/rk_manuscripts/622

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.

= = = = =

Collect these
feelings for later
when time's
to feel.

Not now.
Now is a hand,
then is a door.

You are arrow,
running dog, an
ordinary man.

Not getting there
is part of the road,
some of what you feel
will fall away
in the jolting
of your bones
as you run.

You will find yourself
a city or nice tree,

there will be
a hollow place in you
where feelings had been

and are not now.
But the pocket
where they hid
still is. For you
to warm your hands.

1 April 2008

Quand vos venetz al som del escalina

Mention me
when the elevator
door opens
and all the asthmatic
angels tumble
out on heaven's
kilims and sprawl
baffled in brightness,

mention me in
brightness.

When you
your former self
get to the top of the
Business hold
my name out loud
a moment in
your suddenly
sacred mouth
and say: He too
would be of this
company, give him
the breath to
waste on praises,
the wit to wait,
to climb the day.

2 April 2008

= = = = =

Things supposed to be
and are not, a ribbon
tied to the sky

leads the dazzled child.
Ego means I eat.
The self is eating,

a fasting one
turns inside out.

Metal is sheer miracle
copper shouldn't be
by nature, any
more than water should
be liquid
 where we are.

These things the child
felt quivering
in the fingers
that held the ribbon—
the sky explained them,

secrets even the light
itself doesn't know
but these small hands
guess

 O holy touch
that knows the real!

2 April 2008

= = = = =

Opulent newcomers
renovate the bungalow.
God knows what they'll do

to the old cinderblock garage
or in it. All the windoboxes
on it full of pansies
blue and purple, a little gold,
I loved them, I loved it there,
intimations of Pascal's terror,
the huge blue sky with one
oddly moveless shining cloud.

They tear down the world
as soon as I experience it.
Breathe slow, sunlight,
arguing your way through
dense maple saplings.
Beethoven was born here—
Earth, I mean.

3 April 2008

[from notes in the Gazebo, 11 January 2008, the one mild day]

IN KENT

Cantuarial: hedgerow presences
sly. Nobody knows that word, be
sly: Import evidence,
not the natural pronunciation
of – or become a halter
kid-restraining, reins of purple
doves or sparrows braided into ropes
to hold back flowers – no,
other way, means flowers
chasten birds and hold them
to our earth that we may use –
god, how do you use a bird –
restrict budgerigars to indoor skies.
Skyland the Blest. Your evidence
for that? Feel around dear lady
in your pocket and voila!

I speak a different estuary
mine stands straight up north
is all, it all depends on riverine
self-densities ('people') on my
barge and your husband waits.
Delusion! Dream the dream
I gave you, in color, many times
then take the pronouns out.
Professor What, the Napoleon
of time. Crime. Who-less
landscapes of middle earth
a moor for your mother and mire for me,
colleen. Or friendly me
with apricocks, song me with stillness,
a here-hawk on a brown loaf,
knife another, soul-cat.

Don

Dismisso fall'n from his condescension
grovels by the tracks. France afar.
Nobody waits for last week yet.
I sat on the cathedral steps in town
a-thinking Catholic thoughts

while men of business took me for
a beggar boy, with my accidental loot
I bought a one-way from Victoria
and went to see the sea. Unlikely
amplitudes of mere fluidity, appall'd!

You claim that smudge is France down there?
What else could it be. I was proud
and it got me nowhere. But it got me here.

3 April 2008

A SPY IN THE ROSES

What had been spoken
would have been close to you,
the road you rode on,
the word surprised you, long
sentence in a strange language
you thought you knew as a child

or heard at least,
sometimes,
when the pretty maid you loved
whispered in the rose alley with some man
and they smoked blue from their lips
and you listened,

every, every
street is like that now,
a serenity of lovers
stretching away from you
allowing you to attend

or wait for them
so long at the gate
by the pussy-willow,
you too
are part of their partings,
no less than their curious unions,
corners,
the baroque intersection of a city mind
and you still listen,
could he have been your *father* ?

But what was said
dissembled, the way speech
always does, some sense
lost into language, and you pour out
the joyous excess of your vocabulary,
child,
over this new thing,
this radiant whatever in the field,
the new thing,
the one that does not talk

yet

for all your listening,
so more words come, child, you learn them
with your lips,
the pale hibiscus, the blue hydrangea
wet all day long with dew,
how can that be,
how can those little water drops last so long,

as if, as if
each one, each word, could get you closer,
just a little closer
to that domain you still call by her name,
the one whose hips you hope are always listening
and who knows,
maybe she is.

There is a doubt in all these leaves,
child, you can't even name the tree
and their shadows on your little book
are all you really have at last to read,

you want them, want them
and only them, the natural word
the thing casts into the mind
you try to pick the shapes up with your fingers
and when that fails
you bend to lick the picture from the page.

4 April 2008

= = = = =

A little song
like Schubert
slumbers
in most things—

hear it
as it is
by listening
or by will

do Nietzsche
to its nature
and exalt
the shadow

till it is redder
and smells better
than the rose
that cast it

there, on the pale
mind of the ear
when instead of
listening hard

to try to hear.

4 April 2008

INTERSECTION

So that there would be a reason
to sing he made a city seem
to fall into place all round him,

Penelope across the street and this
charmer over here, the club at dawn,
to have a home and never go there

that is what a young man's heart
happens. Then the light changes.
But everything does.

5 April 2008

= = = = =

Wanted it to be near

like real estate in Costa Rica
almost speak some language

but never mind, I left mine
in the cradle and never again.

Language is too pure a thing to say.
And too far away.

This skin is all I have left—
do we dare to make it a garden?

5 April 2008

= = = = =

Leave a space between the days
for what happens but not in time.
Where is it then? Where your father is,
talking with your mother in another room
and toast with honey on it glistens in the sun.

There was a play here from which the actors fled
needing girl-love or Baptist tunes, a cat
ran among their running feet and who knows
how far they'll go before the words begin
again and draw them back, and all those gorgeous
dupes, the audience, settle comfy in their furs
to apprehend spirit lifted on the stuff of breath
make poltering noises on the wooden stage
as mere obedient beings pretend to really be.

I am a blackbird and I thought this by myself,
many a weary spring I've come to scream it
and finally this morning got Robert to attend.

6 April 2008

= = = = =

But would it work
to bring me close
to what is there,
the stone avenues,
a city carved
out of mere geometry,
Schönberg in the backyard
where the old grey fence
is greasy with sunset
light beyond the green
tomatoes, boundaries,
boundaries, Parmenides!
Listen to the summer.

6 April 2008

= = = = =

Charlotte saw it first.
Snow on an April Sunday
in Brighton, seen
from Steve Michelmore's
upstairs window is the inside
out of Childe Hassam's
snow on Boston Common

a hundred years three
thousand miles away.

6 IV 08

= = = = =

Salt signs coming.

Sun.

Shabby elm
the changes sure.

You could take care
of all this too.

The piece broken off
from the beginning.

7 April 2008

= = = = =

Faster more the urgencies of skin
screamed in the night when
one dream touched another.

Then who was waiting,
who watched. We wake
outside each other ever.

7 April 2008

= = = = =

Winter's towers tunnel fast
some green again and now
close to a month late
our blue flowers, start.

Slow spring, fish
swinging through the air.
Clatter of dead wood
when the wind and then

quiet as a bless again.
Nobody cares. Observation
is the food of live, see on.
Sparrows and some other kind—

the name will only help
a little till it does.
Cabin in the woods.
Looking after us they'll say

the most they did is houses.

8 April 2008

= = = = =

Of course to flee in a natural world,
Aztecs and Toltecs and Hawaiians
before the Methodists, the sun
for that matter before the moon. A time
when we could be drunk all the time
so as to get closer to the other
who is always waiting on the other side of sense,
beyond this green and brown pretending
that lies all around us as the natural
world. And I do mean lies, he said.
But they were slaves to it, or they kept slaves
and misbehaved to one another, I shot back.
But he: How do you know how much
their pain was pleasure? How intolerable
the sight of the same plain tree could be
every day out their parlor window,
habit is the only cure for repetition,
he explained. A filthy paradox, I thought,
but held my tongue, weary of his stupid tree.

8 April 2008