

7-2007

julD2007

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Recommended Citation

Kelly, Robert, "julD2007" (2007). *Robert Kelly Manuscripts*. Paper 696.
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Sick day
churn inside
no knowledge
holds

each breath
a step
upstairs

who lives
up there?

14 July 2007

= = = = =

a little thing
no bigger than the sky
might be enough
the blue the single day

14 July 2007

= = = = =

Or could there be another
like this tree. No.
Nothing is again. I have come
to the end of the sentence.

Patch of late sunlight
on the Buddha's cheek.
He can hear the light
the story runs on.

14 July 2007

= = = = =

Rhapsode telling on the battlefield the simple mode of grace a charioteer has to know to bring the vehicle to the encounter, to favor the spearman's in his thrust. Not killing but furthering the kill. Athene for Diomedes. Krishna for Arjuna. We are delivered to the place of our deed. We complete an action planned elsewhere and by others – including perhaps our 'own' former selves in lives gone by. I know this from a walk in the woods I didn't take today but lay the whole day away sick on the couch watching from dawn to sunset and beyond the meticulous unfolding of the act.

14 July 2007

THUNDERSTORM

The branches fall. Bombardment
of the summerhouse. Walnuts, twigs.
The rain comes in and soaks the chair.
Anybody could tell you this.
My business is to make it up, *invenire*,
the forgotten priestcraft of Atlantis
to make things happen, compose
an alphabet for the rain to use
to inscribe inside our natural fear
the delicate self-awareness that we need
to go on being wrong, to rule the world.
Then let the thunder stop. Every drop
of rain can be a kiss again – his book
is dry and closed. His work is done.

15 July 2007

ALMOST DARK

the air thickens
between the trees
a mist
with fireflies

something breathing
upward
into the visible
that usually speaks

by feeling alone.

15 July 2007

= = = = =

Prayer is setting the stage.
For what. For the reality
of what it images.

*

It says the words
into which the actors come
to do their work.

*

We pray ourselves into the place
we want the prayer to take us to.
The destination becomes the road,
we treat it as already here.

It brings us to itself.
This is the real work of the imaging mind.

15 July 2007

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Revising? yes, the contriving.
Making what is natural essence
rise through the static of its accident.

We love it both ways.
The chapel cabaret.

16 July 2007

= = = = =

*...your shoulder
spattered mauve from afterglow*

Something to wait with,
to wake you thinking
thinking of what the night
swept away in its apron

the waitress always leaving
only the bare table then
the light crept in
and understood it

wood is something
the same as itself,
your lover is vague but he is there,
your mind is keen but thinking

cannot get past the circle
you call the moon
there is a kind of pain inside
like the thought of a huge city

smoky polluted awful
that you will never get to visit
Mukden or Mexico
but the lack of it burns you.

You shiver, it is twilight,
the dark creeps along your skin too
and you wonder why you keep
looking. But you keep looking.

16 July 2007

PLEISTOCENE

Something trying to come into our world,
not making it out of the rock, a hand
with too many fingers with no fingers
a hand in a rock reaching
tries to get into the city
the gate is never closed that's why it is a gate
everything goes it

2.
there might be a pain connected with it
the two double-basses one white one cherry
both old and dirty in front of the pawnbroker's
don't you have a cello hey they had a cello
a child's size I found when I played it
played it with a fiddle bow, nothing
is the right size, only the dirt really fits

3.
how long it had to wait for my hands
like music, or this music (Elgar, cello concerto,
last movement) gorgeously whines Pity me, pity me
for I have lost myself in music
and have no way out. The cello forgets
that everything is gate. But a cello is all about forgetting.

16 July 2007

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Some things are not things at all
and then it's really scary. Frightening
I mean, even to an adult like myself.
Or the self I take most days to be me.

There are differences everywhere—
some things stop being things only
for limited stretches of time – such
things are merely disconcerting.

But other things just stop and I'm gone.

16 July 2007

= = = = =

Getting into the day like a dabble
a would-be swimmer in a cold sea
I have to know how far the horizon is
I can't guess I can't trust my senses
when could a man ever trust his senses
he'd be married to every tree, the wind
would make wax of him, he'd take
the shape of every thing he sees,

the hard day, because it's here
and my body keeps changing its shape its size
the water is up to my knees of it
the cold goes higher though, to the balls of it
the arch of back the twisted column
that still contrives the hold the engine up

the heart is in the middle of the body
the brain is in the middle of the air
it's the kind of broken pretty summer day when that makes sense,
just on the porch. Just on the steps.

17 July 2007

= = = = =

anybody nearby to know me
or hope who
is coming up the drive
in a cloak of leaves
to know me

rings on whose fingers
and even her frown was smiling
the drive was long
the tree was low
the heart-shaped leaves seemed to know something

I hate it when things know more than I do
and nobody knows me.

17 July 2007

= = = = =

You can't remember its name
because it has no name
I have given you this lesson before

*

And so it spoke, a helot in the head,
obedient to a further god – but maybe
its further means closer to me? –
could I be closer to the truth than
the voice that tells me,
could it be coming from me?

*

So is the word
nearer than far,
further than far,
nearer than near?

*

Jean Gabin mugs in the mirror over the banquette, over Arletty's shoulder.
He likes what he sees, a tough guy's face, a woman's pale bare shoulder.
What should he write there?

People of a certain age. In old films nobody is young. Even child actors
back then look like clever dwarves.

He pours water from the carafe into a dingy tumbler. Marseilles. Algiers.
Toulon. She is looking over his shoulder at something moving in the
middle distance. It makes him jealous. He doesn't show it. He's a tough
guy. He'll beat it out of her later.

Or not. She may know something he does not. We all do. Poor Jean
Gabin! I made this up, there is no film just like this. I made it up the way
(if you'll pardon me) God made the Bible, seeing it suddenly, clearly, in the
mind, then saying it to somebody else. In this case you.

I'm sorry I had to use you this way, but I had to. Let me buy you a drink.
It's the least I can do. I love the way you look tonight.

17 July 2007

AS WAS THE RAIN

last note in the music box
then the spill
of silence, a wet world
but nothing falling

Wake to that music
Magician, wield
the sound of after.

18 July 2007

= = = = =

I wandered
in your silence
till a cave
found me

wet withinly
you again and again
you, kabbalah
of the sky

nothing seen
horns
of a mockingbird
desert waves

the clouds say it
in shorthand
till heart in my
throat I say
your unname.

18 July 2007

= = = = =

if anything there it waiting for me
defining the shape of what happens

happens it maybe
a Persian shadow on a yellow wall yes

prompt to misunderstand I
am waiting for it too

so that a union or what the shade
calls line of separation

between me
do you know what I'm saying

no nothing waiting no nothing saying.

19 July 2007

THE CLEMENT THE ALMOST

Isn't the weather enough to say?
What else really happens on earth?
Or do you think you are as real as rain?

Don't you understand that what you call just weather
is an ancient performance art
we are meant to follow closely?

Don't you understand
you're supposed to understand a single raindrop
sometimes more important than mercury

I am telling you something important
you keep forgetting
the elemental force that drives all the rest,

change, we shamle through its show
not even thunder
wakes you from your busy torpor.

19 July 2007

THE WEATHER POET CONFESSES

Writing about the weather
is close to crime,
writing about music as a way to listen,

being weathered by the day
whispering to the rain
as if I were the prompter

the hidden memory of the rain
the weather loses in me
so that I stumble into saying

what I forget the wind just said.

19 July 2007