

6-2004

junF2004

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Recommended Citation

Kelly, Robert, "junF2004" (2004). *Robert Kelly Manuscripts*. Paper 854.
http://digitalcommons.bard.edu/rk_manuscripts/854

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THE SPEAKERS

Cloudless cool sun glare intense
on the water

someone next door on the cell phone
the one-sided conversations
that sound so reasonable

but nobody at the other end
I never believe there's anybody there

just wind, gull cry,
intensest listening.

Where are you now
asleep in the dawn warm
fists between your thighs
like the girl in Musil

how can you keep a little bear from honey

the man rattles on next door
so reasonable
about house and plumbing
and so many yeahs

as if he were agreeing with the world

maybe he is

maybe only you and I are not,

out of whack with stars and such.

An I were Prospero I never would
drown my book or think on death in Italy,
too easy and too easy,
the wizard can't just take off his robes
and be nude an awkward citizen again
for magic lingers in the air around him

you doe yet taste

some subtilties o' the ile

because the island self can't be undone,

not drown my books, not burn them,

not bury them

but speak them into air,

let that generous element amend them,

word by word discharge them

into the audient atmosphere

until the very world that we breathe in
is booked with magic and belief --
air's the element that will charm you yet.

Shorelines and *the mail* and *yesterday*
are words that come through now,
the fisherman next door
idly talking with his mainland wife
or Prospero at the shore?

and sulfur in the soil will make
the new hydrangea flower blue
but what will you catch
if you bait an inky squiggle to your hook
a word you wrote,
what fish will rise to such definitions?

I want the word you
suddenly to flesh
and press against me

you touch me this time
and be my natural light
incident upon my shade

as you fall on me and pass through my skin
I will in that same accident explore

the reasonable cavework of your instances

until there is no room between us,
no more than is between
the gull cry and the air.

20 June 2004

Cuttyhunk

<late> =====

the Thing they call Boomerang
regurgitates its trajectory
and comes home

the folklore of a bent stick
finds its way through the kind of dream
a man has when he's not asleep
and above him the sky with not even one cloud in it
dances with the crescent moon in it
and what he cast into the world
comes back to his hand.

20 June 2004

summer started two hours ago

Cuttyhunk

PARCAE

Here's us. Here's the sea.

In between, a house with a deck
in strong wind. In sun.

On the deck three girls are sitting
 round a table
sometimes standing mostly sitting.

On the table a big complicated jigsaw puzzle
they have been working on all weekend.

Why doesn't the wind lift the pieces?

Why is nothing lost?

You can tell who I think these girls are,
gay as they are, silent and together as they are,
the Fates, *les jeunes Parques*, arranging

my life. Our lives. Arranging
wordlessly, they never seem to talk

(but could I hear them if they did?)

no words, just putting things in place,

days they've been doing it
all the tiny pieces
of the single pattern
pieces of us, lives, she lifts
she considers she sets in place.

She puts us in our place.

And why do I say the wind doesn't shift or move
or lose the pieces,
how do I know how many of them, how many of us,
were there to begin with

how many they have to go on with?
I know nothing, they are girls
at their puzzle, they have been doing
nothing else for three days now,
sometimes they swim, at night
they go inside, I find them there
when I come out in the morning,
one of them at least, dark-browed,
bent to her work, even before the others come.

Once you got a look at the puzzle from the road
where it passes close to them, you said
the picture they were working on
was a picture of this island we and they and all are on,

does it show me up here looking down the field at them,
my anxieties, my desires, compulsions,
my ridiculous certainties, my deities, my faith?

And if they are the Fates
who is the wind
that lifts or doesn't lift or leaves alone
the pieces that we probably are?

21 June 2004

the bearer of all things
he pours from his urn,
his yearning,
all the electricity all the other
secret universal forces
still hidden from you,
like the law that makes the cell wall form
or the little one that makes
girls walk along the beach with folded arms.

21 June 2004

<late> =====

The thing about the ocean is
the ocean is mine.

The ocean is always mine,
yours, its beholder's.

The death it carries so beautifully is my death.
The cargo it is bringing is coming to me.

21 June 2004

=====

After I mislaid

for the first time
the keys

of waking
was it, steel things
in my hands
the sun rose

what could it have caught
me with
in my hands
too red gold ball
too hard to hold
anybody

a boat coming in
already gulls
why is there always
someone
the cloud decides

what more a certain
resentment

not to be answered
when I call out
a blind hysteria
that knows no season
and was here before
ever you were
to care for or
suppose to hold

the touch matters
sometimes it thinks
it is the only

because there is no other
way the sea has
but to impinge
upon the senses selves
nobody
could ever think the sea.

22 June 2004, Cuttyhunk

(first three lines woke me)

=====

When that boats me bad
a sheet metal ghost
on all terrain means
no escaping
he can find you where.

22 June 2004

STOP ANSWERING WHEN I ASK

Stop answering when I ask
and I will ask no more
already I have asked
too little too often

it should have been bigger
a demand as big as my demande
it should have eaten your legs and your lap
and captured your calendar

your breasts should have sated me
saddled me answered me
pressed to them what did my ears
ever get to hear of all your verities

and your clock should have squealed like a pig
inside my chest too,
it should have been you all the time
and no excuses

it should have been hook, ladder,

leader, liner, stateroom, foie gras,
gannet, goalpost, pillow,

the soft scissors of your legs the hard
paper of my rock

we should have annihilated
each other into our selves.

22 June 2004