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Poem Beginning with a Line by Traherne / At Arrowhead / Antimasque for Antonio

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Three Poems

JOHN TAGGART



John Taggart received a Ph.D. in the Syracuse University Interdisciplinary Humanities Program in 1974. Most of his work at Syracuse was done under Walter Sutton and Abraham Veinus. Last year he was awarded a National Endowment for the Arts writing fellowship and, this year, a fellowship from the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts. The three poems appearing in this issue are from a forthcoming collection entitled *Loop*. He teaches in the English Department of Shippensburg University, Shippensburg, Pennsylvania.

POEM BEGINNING WITH A LINE BY TRAHERNE

A *tree apprehended is a tree in the mind*
black locust with its bark put on in slabs
seams between the slabs ivy around them
the ivy around the trunk and further up
branches of the tree all their divarication
branches of the tree out over lawn and garden
myriad tiny leaves myriad tiny reflectors
leaves reflect leaves in parallel rows
the several parts of the tree extended in space
bark trunk branches tiny leaves extended
this extension is in the mind's apprehension
the mind's full with the parts of the tree
the mind is full and the air is pocked
the air this morning is pocked with emptiness.

AT ARROWHEAD

Whether seeing after seeing is of any use
whether after-seeing can preserve shadows
the shadows of ferns their ambiguity
whether there can be shadows without invasion.

Whether this kind of seeing is of any use
whether the shadows can be preserved
shadows of what was howling wilderness
whether there can be shadows without invasion.

Whether this sought after seeing is of use
whether shadows should be preserved
shadows of mountains playing hide-and-seek
whether there can be shadows without invasion.

Whether this seeing was ever of any use
whether there should be preservation
shadows of clouds blackening the mountains
whether there can be shadows without invasion.

ANTIMASQUE FOR ANTONIO

W

1

hat you want I've got it what you need is a face
no face and it's no dice rolled in no silence.

2

An actor to remain silent what you need is a face
word-face to remain silent in a space made of words.

3

Teeth all white skin brushed and without blemish
5 x 7 photograph hand-tinted for the sake of appearance.

4

Not a tinted photograph what you need is a face
I've got it word-face for the sake of disappearance.

5

An actor can be made to undergo gradual disappearance
curtain on curtain transparent curtain on curtain.

6

Yet I'm child of pain I have no transparent words
no transparent words what's left word of resignation.

7

One word of resignation not transparent resigned
resignation to move away in a space made of "despaire."

8

Move alone and move away move away from their wedding
not what you wanted not this kind of disappearance.

9

What I've got not what you wanted word of resignation
your face word-face one-word-face of resignation.

10

Not what you wanted not this kind of silence
no dalliance no smearing the bride's wedding gown.