

1975

## Farm III

John Ashbery

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### Farm III

Small waves strike  
The dark stones. The wife reads  
The letter. There is nothing irreversible:  
Points to the last sibilants  
Of invading beef and calico.

Pretty soon oil has  
Taken up the place of  
The dark around you. It was all  
As told, but anyway it never came out just right:  
A fraction here, a lisp where it didn't matter.  
It has to be presented  
Through a final gap: pear trees and flowers  
An ultimate resinous wall  
Basking in the temperate climate  
Of your identity. Sullen fecundity  
To be watched over.

### Oleum Misericordiae

To rub it out, make it less virulent  
And a stab too at rearranging  
The whole thing from the ground up.  
Yes we were waiting just now  
Yes we are no longer waiting.

Afterwards when I tell you  
It's as though it all only happened  
As siding of my story

I beg you to listen  
You are already listening

It has shut itself out  
And in doing so shut us accidentally in

And meanwhile my story goes well  
The first chapter

endeth