

# Late Echo

BY JOHN ASHBERY

Alone with our madness and favorite flower  
We see that there really is nothing left to write about.  
Or rather, it is necessary to write about the same old things  
In the same way, repeating the same things over and over  
For love to continue and be gradually different.

Beehives and ants have to be re-examined eternally  
And the color of the day put in  
Hundreds of times and varied from summer to winter  
For it to get slowed down to the pace of an authentic  
Saraband and huddle there, alive and resting.

Only then can the chronic inattention  
Of our lives drape itself around us, conciliatory  
And with one eye on those long tan plush shadows  
That speak so deeply into our unprepared knowledge  
Of ourselves, the talking engines of our day.



POETRY  
FOUNDATION