

# John Taggart

Slash

to divide and to bring closer

to divide keep apart the white deer from the landscape woodland wetland landscape  
“the swamp”

white deer the animal the true animal body no jewelry

landscape in and around which wind the surprisingly narrow trails of the  
deer

to bring closer just a little bit closer the true the truth of that body

the mind and words in the mind a landscape also

“words are signs for natural facts”

facts of shagbark hickory some ash tallest sycamore thickets of  
bladdernut its seed pods Jane Colden’s “boxes” which rattle in the wind clutter the  
ground after wind and rain  
redbud corrugated hackberry and everywhere multiflora everywhere seedlings  
of everything

facts and the fact of water

deer in the landscape in twos and threes sometimes in greater numbers  
though this is not a deer-park privileged place of  
privilege for an old family paid for by an old family’s old money

the mind and clutter of words in the mind

some of which begin which begin with the  
same fatal letter

to make division draw a fine line slash and slashes to cut through the clutter

keep apart bring closer

the white deer is a fact most secret fact in the landscape what the landscape keeps  
to itself

what's kept hidden kept hushed held back in the mind first and  
last fact and after some of which

closer

the true the truth the true animal body a little closer.