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## **Five Poems**

## Joe Fletcher

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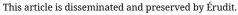
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# Satyr's Beard

## Joe Fletcher

The sanatorium to which
I withdrew was no more
successful in curing me
than the previous ones,
and many years passed
before I slunk away again
in search of the gods
who correct our desires.

I returned to my native land and roamed, like a convict loosed after an eclipse, the high chalk downlands and scruffy meadows, upturning leaves of dog's mercury in an ash grove or rinsing at the murmuring fernfringed rill running past an abandoned sheepfold.

There are in our existence spots of matter which nourish and visibly repair

our minds. I found this
efficacious satyr, this white
agaricon, pushing his beard,
limned dingy yellow with age,
from a mouldered gibbet
from which my father,
a murderer,
had once dangled.

While I descanted frenzied threnodies and lamentations upon the memory of the dead, this tubercule penetrated the hiding places of my power and unperplexed me of barren intermeddling subtleties, making me the gentle visitant you now see.

# **Trembling Merulius**

Joe Fletcher

One effect of contact with mystery is to increase the insignificance of the things people say, such as its name, which, when mentioned, ensures that the utterer won't ever find it, like those apophatic tracts of Basilides known only by references to them in compendious heresiographies, or the seeds of the fruiting bodies included in a list of nonexistent things.

Yet something must tremble on the abyss in accordance with quivering moonlight to produce this effulgence glistering out of its lurking place

in white ash seams in a series of semicircular caps in contiguous rows, resembling bacon, lacking stalks, shelving gradually away.

# San Isidro

## Joe Fletcher

As for the inner book of unknown symbols carved in relief as against an ocean bed, no one could help me read it, for to read it was a creative act, torment the Vedas as I might to yield a passage that would show me the hidden path through the homeless voice of waters.

Though this world be
the condensed emotional
debris of the 36th Archon
who recoiled in disgust
from the horrific Yahweh
she birthed, yet on good
Saturday nights when
everything is clicking
these angels ploughing
the land can actually drag

out this stuff from another dimension and let us play with it, which retains a state of incorruptibility despite our fervent acts of mutilation, embodied as it is against the flow of understanding, the provisional nature of syntax and the moving net of language, giggling at the pure coincidence that our mathematics can approximate its dynamics, which yields the proud and false belief in our command of the howling Tao. Look how it remains steeped in dreams of a different color, the blue bruises like blows from a god we cannot name, the matutinal gold cap.