

## *John Talbot*

1963

- Frost.     Who remain must choose: will they unfurl those hot,  
              Those molten flags that lick us from inside?  
              Blaze brief like you, and imitate the honed  
              Epigram's barb, the brandished reprimand,  
              Clip of the catalectic foot, mid-stride,  
              The fine sky-searing punch of the space-shot?
- Kennedy.   Let them stake ground like yours: to be holt-  
              And pasture-shrouded, winter-blaze attended;  
              To link limp iambs, make them rise suspended  
              Like virtuous cobras that jockey and recoil;  
              To measure, in their stride, New Hampshire soil  
              And care to see October's yield amassed;  
              To take their counsel from the thunderbolt,  
              Leave foolscap seared with signatures of frost.