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## Two Poems by John Gery

### Lie #5: That Babe Ruth Pointed Out That Famous Homer

As usual, who knows where this is going?  
I met this guy once, damn good public speaker  
at sports banquets without no ladies present,  
who told me he believed, without quite knowing —  
like the gal who runs off only when you seek her —  
that fame assures our being obsolescent

by and by. Who thinks of Nefertiti,  
for instance, anymore? Her lusts, I mean,  
or appetites. Nothing remains in tact,  
and even the most monumental treaty  
among God-fearing states ain't worth one bean  
if everyone just buys it. Still, we act

expecting our gestures to be acted on,  
like children who fight their parents, imitating  
the action they resist the way *that* action  
resembles those by which amoebae spawn.  
I always thought of sex when I was dating,  
for instance, which became a great distraction

from having to get laid. The gals were pretty  
enough — I had this weakness for a dress  
and weighed less then than now, my mind awash  
in a fog too dense to burn off from the pity

of women — yet the moment to confess  
I was as ready as a butter squash

would pass silently, like an evening breeze,  
the kind you only notice in the summer  
caressing you: You raise an arm, then pray  
what you don't know will lift you through the trees  
to God. That guy said you can pick a comer  
by how he doesn't know the time of day

as well as what he's thinking he might do  
with whatever's left of it. I've since forgotten  
what else he said — on what you have to lose  
by taking risks. The point is that it's true  
until your body's in the ground and rotten  
your best bet is a temporary ruse.

## On the News of Our Foreign Intervention

The beauty sacrificed to go abroad  
is hardly mentioned, while instead  
they emphasize what dangers lie ahead –  
night blindness, heatstroke, odd limbs sawed

by errant missiles, insects, toxic gas,  
dysentery. Yet what's an eye  
without its own familiar stretch of sky,  
a nose without its fresh mown grass,

a cheek without that touch it's felt so often  
it senses when she's insincere  
and when she wants him back, inside, an ear  
without the song it's carried off in?

And here, how can the rest of us make news  
to move the world, when worlds away  
the news concerns unmoving heaps of clay  
made beautiful by what they lose?