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# "Giving Up the Ghost" and "Night Glimpse" (poems)

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### 82 LOUISIANA LITERATURE

### Giving Up the Ghost

JOHN GERY

What ghost would I give up, were I to give up, mostly, and release my preternatural self—like dye squeezed from ripened berries, or peace from edicts meant to justify

perpetually warring armies? Maybe I'd get hung up inside a vine, or sucked in by some Parsi baby or, poisoned from my own design, ooze into fat, or spread as rabies.

That would be that.

But this, this would melt away, no flesh left to be stashed with keepsakes of the self I felt should stay.

And as my body flashed before me, as my corpse's welt

went long past healing, feeling gone, heart hollow as a dyer's eye, my soul a hole,

still I'd be drawn to what I now know I rely, with disembodied sadness, on.

### 83 LOUISIANA LITERATURE

## Night Glimpse

An image fluttered just now, beyond the corner of my eye: A butter-

fly? A torn frond of palm tossing in the wind? A bright coin

no luck is spent with? Slightly bent, then gone, a cosmic ray

maybe, or like a thought when I am drifting at the end of day

and loss like light vaguely interferes with my private darkness,

it marks the limit of rest, a breath of what's out there, not

nothing, surely, but consummate as air or infinite beauty,

a small death early I'd best not care for.