

English 30-1
Five-Day Poetry Package
Day 5

1. Complete the reading-comprehension quiz on "For Little Boys Destined for Big Business" by Jan Motyl.
2. In a paragraph-length critical response, address this question: *Does Spera seem to intend us to respond to her speaker in the same way that Browning probably intends us to respond to the Duke of Ferrara?* (For the text of "My Last Duchess" see the file for Day 4 of the five-day poetry package.)

My Ex-Husband
Gabriel Spera

That's my ex-husband pictured on the shelf,
Smiling as if in love. I took it myself
With his Leica, and stuck it in that frame
We got for our wedding. Kind of a shame
To waste it on him, but what could I do?
(Since I haven't got a photograph of you.)
I know what's on your mind—you want to know
Whatever could have made me let him go—
He seems like any woman's perfect catch,
What with his ruddy cheeks, the thin mustache,
Those close-set, baggy eyes, that tilted grin.
But snapshots don't show what's beneath the skin!
He had a certain charm, charisma, style,
That passionate, earnest glance he struck, meanwhile
Whispering the sweetest things, like "Your lips
Are like plump rubies, eyes like diamond chips,"
Could flush the throat of any woman, not
Just mine. He knew the most romantic spots
In town, where waiters, who all knew his face,
Reserved an intimately dim-lit place
Half-hidden in a corner nook. Such stuff
Was all too well rehearsed, I soon enough
Found out. He had an attitude—how should
I put it—smooth, self-satisfied, too good
For the rest of the world, too easily
Impressed with his officious self. And he
Flirted—fine! but flirted somehow a bit
Too ardently, too blatantly, as if,
If someone ever noticed, no one cared
How slobbishly he carried on affairs.
Who'd lower herself to put up with shit
Like that? Even if you'd the patience—which
I have not—to go and see some counselor
And say, "My life's a living hell," or
"Everything he does disgusts, the lout!"—
And even if you'd somehow worked things out,
Took a long trip together, made amends,
Let things get back to normal, even then
You'd still be on the short end of the stick;
And I choose never ever to get stuck.
Oh, no doubt, it always made my limbs go

Woozy when he kissed me, but what bimbo
In the steno pool went without the same
Such kisses? So, I made some calls, filed some claims,
All kisses stopped together. There he grins,
Almost lovable. Shall we go? I'm in
The mood for Chez Pierre's, perhaps, tonight,
Though anything you'd like would be all right
As well, of course, though I'd prefer not to go
To any place with checkered tables. No,
We'll take my car. By the way, have I shown
You yet these lovely champagne flutes, hand-blown,
Imported from Murano, Italy,
Which Claus got in the settlement for me?