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Lies

by Gregory Djanikian

It's a kindness, sometimes,
how you'd like to say one thing
but choose another, that "luscious roast,"
for instance, you could wear home as a shoe,
the "lovely dress" that reminds you
of a tent flap in a storm.

Yes, you say, it's a dazzling page-turner,
thinking where did the language go to die?

Such are the diplomatic swerves
one takes for friends and family, not to mention
one's beloved, and how lovely to offer them
a dollop of cream instead of the gall.

Of course, some lies are better left unsaid,
their footings crumbling to powder

even before the house is built

but some are so artfully conceived

you almost wish you were the object

of their attentions, *many thanks*

for your intricate efforts!

The world is your oyster your fortune says

with a sleight and a wink

and even *you* seem willing to be huckstered in,

looking for the sweetness in the salt,

and maybe the hidden pearl.

And isn't it too easy to admire the truth

stretching always like a clear expanse

without obstruction or change?

Nothing in its field to cast a shadow

or bend the light in a hundred ways.

Nothing of the lie circling toward you now

with a straight face and the faintest smile

as if to say here is the world, truth be told,

and here it is again, all tangle and curve.

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