

near El Dorado

by Anita Skeen

they nod on & on
warmed into rhythm by the
Kansas sun
necks dipping,
rising, dipping
contented to suck long
suck deep
drawing the black stream
from the veins
of the Flint Hills

the cattle pretend to be
undisturbed
by their presence
munch yellow grass
among the swaying, sleeping shadows
even the sunflowers
stand calmly around them

and i imagine them
watching,
rocking,
waiting for darkness
when with slow-motion groans
they uproot themselves
from the land
tromp the still flowers
beneath steel hooves &
in magnificent herds
run silently,
boldly
on the thin line of
the horizon

morning

by Anita Skeen

morning

gathers
in leaves

among wildflowers
& red barns

washes white
farmhouses

at sunrise
i watch (motion-

less) a blackbird
watch me

October

by Anita Skeen

i hear the season change
a rush of wind

brittle in the trees
snaps leaves & throws them

to the dry ground
the grasshopper leaps

across the leaves
touching one

touching another
fragile

crips as the
spot he stops on

the grass goes brown
with slow sounds of dying

i become the sum of the autumn sun
the leaves the wind

soak up the season as it
spills around me

moving west into the
Kansas plains

i bring these last warm days
before snow falls