

THE DEATH OF ALBERT METZ

*[In late summer of 1973
Albert Metz, a recluse for
over 50 years, was shot on
his secluded farm. Both
the killer and the motive
are unknown.]*

In Anthony Kansas
skulls are exploding
like matchheads in the
blistering summer sun.

An invisible
bullet flashes deep;
a body topples
like a limp bundle of

fodder in the settled
barnyard dust. Albert
Metz is dead. His only
friends, a pack of dogs,

fetch the bloody stick;
they rip his flesh under
quiet skies with only
the wind as witness.

In Anthony Kansas
tombstone trees hold vigil
while the moon hangs high like
a lone ivory target.

—Jeff Worley

FIRST KILL

I saw you come
tumbling,
twisting,
through bronze trees
in orange
autumn air
only to
crumple
at my feet:
one wing torn in
two from the shell,
disbelief in
your horrid stare,
breast throbbing
red with fear.
I was ten and
had to ask my
father to close
your accusing
eyes with still
another shot.

Once there was
a young boy
who drew pictures
of butterflies
and nursed
fallen robins
after a storm.
—Jeff Worley

CONFESSION PIECE

I dreamed
my brother
Mike died
last night
we set him
on a slab
but he kept
falling off
and laughing
uncontrollably
if only my
grandmother
had but not
even the
humorless
mortician
could get a
smile
to stick
to her
weather etched
Abilene face

Why did you
die
so old
before
I was
young enough
to love you

—Jeff Worley