

# Afield

*Anita Tanner*

Just off the highway  
in the setting sun  
cattle gather on a hill.  
My foot lets up  
on the gas while  
something in me  
unhinges. Perhaps  
around-the-corner suddenness  
or the field's rise  
of instant beauty  
loosens my grip  
on the wheel.

Buxom cattle  
graze on blonde grass,  
a monarchy  
just before winter snows.  
Red, russet, brown,  
and black mounds,  
stark against  
the curvature of land,  
force a quick intake  
of my breath,  
a slow, calming  
stare coming up  
from the dullness  
and fatigue  
of lost journeys.

The remainder of miles  
the image of cattle  
keeps brushing up  
against my thinking  
like a caress,  
all my desires,  
far-gone afield,  
come gathering in.

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ANITA TANNER, raised on a Wyoming farm, lives in Boise, Idaho. She has always loved writing and reading, and has published a collection of poems, *Where Fields Have Been Planted* (Kearney, Neb.: Morris Publishing, 1999).