

# Kill Deer

Sarah Hill

Before the sun has lowered to the hill  
where sugar trees stretch, black on orange sky,  
I hurry home; my traps of blood-stained steel  
and rifle clank each step on hip and thigh.  
Beyond these woods a mile the hay fields lie,  
my boots are weedy, wet, I'm half way there.  
Brown birds wheel out from underfoot. They fly  
off, skimming grass, their black stripes pierce the air;  
they call to me, kill deer, the bird-cries tear  
the sky, that once fell soft as guitar notes  
when I would walk the fields. The name is theirs  
if we can name what rises in their throats.  
And still they sling the cry at me, kill deer,  
or that's the way it sounds against the ear.