

A L E X W A L S H

I've Heard People Relate Well to Small Stories

A girl on a cobbled road
has been dead for two days,
a bullet buried

deep in her brain,
metallic skin poisoning
even residual memories. The shot

was an accident: a tired soldier
had aimed for a rebel, but in the winter
wind his whiskey-skewed

machine gun twisted
its godless maw without warning,
soldering its blind wrath

into the girl's
undeveloped cortex
like a knife through cake.

Slaughterhouses

Do you know we kill cows
for baseballs? Finish 'em off
with a quick shock between the eyes,
except when it doesn't work
and they're still braying
on the assembly line
as we saw off their legs.

A familiar face scowls
from my mirror. Familiar nose,
chin, but somehow
the scars don't seem real,
battles sewn into my jaw
like baseball seams.

Now I know why there's blood:
if nothing red gushed out,
then maybe we'd be able to kill
without dying inside.

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