

Spring 1986

Cattle Mutilation

Mark Rozema

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Recommended Citation

Rozema, Mark (1986) "Cattle Mutilation," *CutBank*: Vol. 1 : Iss. 26 , Article 15.

Available at: <https://scholarworks.umt.edu/cutbank/vol1/iss26/15>

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Cattle Mutilation

Casner and I
were checking rain gauges
when we found the cow,
stiff and bloated
like a balloon, her ears
neatly clipped off.
Casner shuffled away,
cursing. It's been happening
more and more, we find
one here, one there,
with glassy eyes
round as the moon.
sometimes the lips
sometimes the eyes
sometimes the testicles
or even the heart.
And no blood, as if
it had been drained
beforehand.

Helaman Noyes thinks
Satan worshippers are
the cause of it.
Glen Ekker says
It's them goddamn
government people
doin military experiments
the sonsabitches.
Whoever it is,
they leave no clues.
It gives cowboys the creeps.
The strangest thing,
the worst thing,
is how the carcasses
go untouched. Crows

(no stanza break)

won't pick at them,
coyotes won't come near.
We left the cow
and drove away.
It's about time
we had some rain
Casner said.

— *Mark Rozema*