

Albert Bender
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Editorial Commentary

She waits for a sign from above,
a monitor blinking its bloodshot eye
to wash away the commercial.
It flashes red
ON THE AIR.
Editorial time,
two minutes to wrap up the evening news
with views not necessarily those
of the Evening News.

*Open is strange
Starts not this
Strange*

She smiles thinly,
under blazing yellow lights,
looks into the bulging black eye of Camera One
and says:

In keeping with this station's policy
of bringing you the best in violent news,
stories bathed in misery, steeped in blood,
this just in--

A thirty-four-old woman
has just killed herself
for no apparent reason.
Details are sketchy at this time;
stay tuned for all the lurid developments.
She breathes heavily, *language weak?*
her blue eyes moist,
her white hands dry,
then puts a .38 to her head
and fires.

Amid screams and shouts
and the chaos of people
running over to help
or staggering away to be sick
Camera One stays focused
as someone covers the newscaster
scattered in several places
on the floor.

The station shuts off
for a few minutes--
time to organize,
reflect,
mourn,
then pre-empt the next half hour
so another newscaster can feed
the hungry viewers
eagerly awaiting developments.

*I'd suspect
this alone does
everything you need
in this poem*

*Why not
begin here?*

*this is
the climactic
moment -
after this,
everything else
is far less
important*

*Very strong. Packshot run
editorial punch. Second
Stanza does not all, I believe.
The rest feels too much
& hence distracts from
your emotional
in fact*