

The Machine

The machine's shadow turned strange
with every house, tree, and fence it passed over.

At times we could see into it—
insects with translucent bodies and opaque wings,

the flora and fauna of a different world,
unfamiliar mechanisms moving in odd ways.

We ran after the machine as fast as we could,
as if someone we loved was trapped inside.

The sound it made was air whipping around skyscrapers,
metal grinding against metal, two people fucking,

a symphony warming up, a woodpecker at full tilt,
a jet engine roaring, the industrial revolution.

The machine's outward beauty blinded us.
We felt its burn as it made its way over hillsides,

above the rooftops of cookie-cutter homes,
melting shingles, igniting the wood beams beneath.

The texture of dead grass, the smell of burnt earth,
our eyes and skin on fire, the roar of the machine,

we crawled to a place as close to it as we dared go
and went down on our knees. We asked forgiveness.