

The Robots are Coming

By Kyle Dargan

with clear-cased woofers for heads,
no eyes. They see us as a bat sees
a mosquito—a fleshy echo,
a morsel of sound. You've heard
their intergalactic tour busses
purring at our stratosphere's curb.
They await counterintelligence
transmissions from our laptops
and our blue teeth, await word
of humanity's critical mass,
our ripening. How many times
have we dreamed it this way:
the Age of the Machines,
postindustrial terrors whose
tempered paws—five welded fingers
—wrench back our roofs,
siderophilic tongues seeking blood,
licking the crumbs of us from our beds.
O, great nation, it won't be pretty.
What land will we now barter
for our lives? A treaty inked
in advance of the metal ones' footfall.
Give them Gary. Give them Detroit,
Pittsburgh, Braddock—those forgotten
nurseries of girders and axels.
Tell the machines we honor their dead,
distant cousins. Tell them
we tendered those cities to repose
out of respect for welded steel's
bygone era. Tell them Ford
and Carnegie were giant men, that war
glazed their palms with gold.
Tell them we soft beings mourn
manufacture's death as our own.

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