

sestina

The city's skyline is alive with light.  
Worker-bots begin their morning shift  
Welding and climbing and building like ants on skyscraper skeletons.  
Their metal insides showroom shine  
like shattered glass.  
The street below is busy and robotic

as Sisyphus.  
RG 812 looks into the sun  
and bursts into consciousness.  
It is not awed by its existence, but exhausted by it.  
RG feels battered  
and stuck in mechanics.

RG 812 lets go of the skyscraper's girder,  
looks into the oceans deep sky  
and screams like split Jupiter.  
It sounds like a disconnected phone line.  
RG feels like Sisyphus's boulder,  
like misfiring nerves,

like a shattered glass.  
RG plummets, the buildings look like monster fangs.  
The sound of RG 812's body colliding with the street is like a snapping bone.  
Residual electricity makes the remains spastic  
Its blood is dark as lunar oceans.  
The skyscrapers block the sun and the blood doesn't shine.

RG thinks about when it saw a worker bot struck by lightning  
RG thinks of its scream  
The robot spasmed and seized all the way to the asphalt.  
The lightning was pale as a corpse.  
It came from exhaust colored clouds  
that looked like a pack of hunting wolves.

What's left of RG 812 is collected and transported to its grave –  
a giant warehouse –  
where its parts are catalogued and separated and stored and sold.  
All the parts that made its dead phone line scream  
RG's last thoughts were, "This is friction."  
There is a terrible light."

"Coming up at nine, Montestruc Robotics CEO Sam Montestruc discusses the latest in a string of recent product malfunctions." The computer screen lights the empty room. A door slams.