

Machines

by Robert Pinsky

Leather and brass, wood, forged or die-cut steel.
Silicon, gold electrodes, chased gear, bronze pawl.
Silver wing, Iron Horse. Its hum or wail

Or white noise whispering of molten soul
Poured by makers into the tiny grail
Of escapement at my wrist. Or a roaring bull,

And I astride it, or inside at the wheel:
The animate engine of a golem angel flail
Thrashing the germ of spirit from its hull.

Or magnetic speakers, that ape the primate pull
To lip the air, voice matter—the tongue of will
Cleaving the material to its euphoric call.

from Jersey Rain (FSG, 1996)