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These are Dark Times for Robots

I was born into an iron world
assembled in the winter of ’93 and proudly
Made In America.
My wind-up heart has more horsepower than a Mustang
and it’s twice as reliable.

I’m not the only one.
At any given moment there are seven billion
glazed glass eyes and stretched iron smiles
on any given street--
manufactured sleepwalkers.

We pretend we’re flesh.
“Social justice” “Family values” “Empowerment”
prevent mass mechanical malfunction and
distract us from the rust.

We tell our iron children stories of the past
a distant time when human meant more
and upgrades meant less
as we bask in a monitor’s pale blue glow.

Hearts have fragile gears and many cogs
that whirr and spin and sometimes
jam.
We search for thrills
yet we fear the junkyard.

Yesterday,
I slipped on a patch of ice
that my ocular module missed.
Wires frayed and sparked under silicone skin
and there it was, a drop of red.

Sometimes I wonder who wired my circuits.
I was born into an iron world
without an iron care to give
and yet I bleed.