

AGAINST MACHINES

Matthew Roth

Had I not found myself in need of connection
to all the light and heat and motion they give
in return, and at great cost, for my affection—
the machine in my pocket, the machine I drive,

or stolid, grave reactors, flashing their lights
to warn at night the careless pilot who
flies too close to the ground, unaware what heights
our vigilant machines are rising to—

then I would not this hour imagine my death
as meltdown, as nosedive, as a powering off
of sight and sound, of tongue and heart and breath,
but instead as a leaf decaying, black and soft,

beneath the branches of a maple tree,
or a slip of sand dissolving, grain by grain,
diminished without force or urgency
in this cool, uncalculating summer rain.