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In this open Texas field
dipping birds are
pecking down and rising up,
simulacra of dinosaurs
(before we knew they had feathers)
drinking their own blood.

Their tempo never changes;
minutely out of sync with one another,
a landscape made performance art
of minimalism and metronomes,
performers who don't know
they aren't soloists,
automatons striking the single key
of industrial player pianos.

Redrust heads in steel bridles,
nodding donkeys plodding,
their brays atonal counterpoint
to the creaks and grinds
of pistons out of tune.
Smooth and circular hip joints swing:
jaded and cold belly-dancers
stripped of their zills and coins.

The field is dry;
the earth drier,
but they dip, and dip,
counting beats in an endless
monotonous recital.