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**Interstate 80/94 in Progress:  
Half a Year after August 2005**

Like a monstrous bird a construction crane  
lies flat upon the ground;  
its long and slender neck  
cracked,  
smashed against the concrete,  
where thousands of tons of metal caught it,  
mid-gulp,  
mid-construction zone.

An industrial strap  
meant to support the fatal, giant steel girder  
flaps  
in the breeze.

Like feathers come loose from a crane,  
it is tattered and torn at the bottom,  
where it finally gave way and said  
*ENOUGH*  
*I will bear your weight no longer—*

and let go its burden  
down  
onto the bird,  
the delicate bird-machine,  
which squawked and screamed a death cry,  
blindly tossed its vulnerable mind/heart from the basket-head,  
and  
dashed him to the ground.

The dead workman's body was removed immediately.  
The crumpled steel girder they removed a month later.  
Six months gone now, and the bird lies there still,  
the gaping neck wound a raw reminder of the convenience  
of the interstate highway.

-Naomi Buck Palagi