

Roper RTW4640YQ1

by Gary Hardaway

The smarter the machines,
the less predictable their noises.

With the washer before,
you set a few dials, punched to start,

and off it went, filling and sloshing
and spinning until it's silence said "clean."

The new one clicks and chirps
in no known progression,

balancing stuff, conserving power,
locking the door against dangerous

human curiosity and forgetfulness.
I cannot read the replacement's voice

and in unsettled dreams, it chirps
and clicks out orders to platoons

of clever new appliances
in war against my peace mind.

