

STEELWORKERS' LOCKERS,
PITTSBURGH HISTORY CENTER

The Forlornness of Metal they might as well
Be titled, these salvaged relics, props from a set
Long struck—the lap-welds and louvers
And green latch-locked doors bolted in line
In assembly, each the width of a man crammed in
Or hung in parts as in effigy. The bench hard
As a pew. Beyond, the mills were medieval,
Rows of stoves set four to the furnace, chimneys
In groves, hoists where they elevated the stock.

In the locker room, at the start of each shift,
Shucked aluminum suits got lowered on pulleys
From their ceiling roosts. We changed into
Forge-proof shoes, the hardhat's Day-Glo halo,
And stepped among flames, out into the annealing,
Where the world was turned to steel.

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