



Cornell University
ILR School

Labor Research Review

Volume 1 | Number 3
*Fighting Rust: Labor-Community Struggles in
Smokestack America*

Article 7

1983

Child of Steel

Anthony Massaro

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by DigitalCommons@ILR. It has been accepted for inclusion in Labor Research Review by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@ILR. For more information, please contact catherwood-dig@cornell.edu.

© 1983 by Labor Research Review

Child of Steel

Abstract

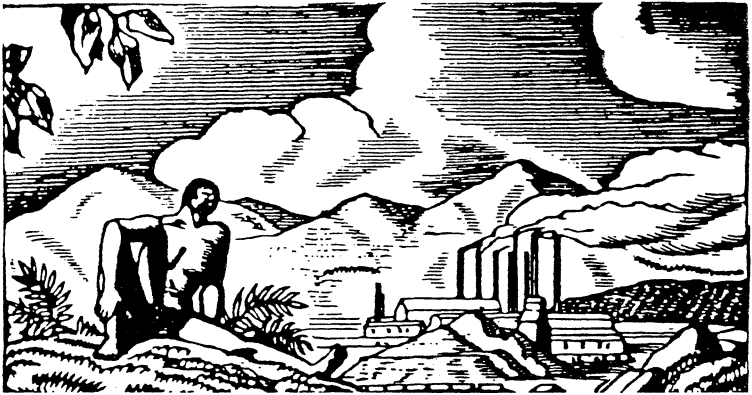
[Excerpt] After several months of thinking about what is happening to the working class, particularly the steel industry and the whole system of labor, this poem came to me.

I drive by Homestead Mill every morning to get to my job and to get home I drive past the J&L Steel Mill. Occasionally, I drive through Braddock to the house and street where most of my life was spent.

These are some of the contributing factors which also helped to crystallize this poem.

Keywords

labor movement, worker rights, steel industry, union, poetry



Child of Steel

From *The Mill Hunk Herald*, Spring 1983

After several months of thinking about what is happening to the working class, particularly the steel industry and the whole system of labor, this poem came to me.

I drive by Homestead Mill every morning to get to my job and to get home I drive past the J & L Steel Mill. Occasionally, I drive through Braddock to the house and street where most of my life was spent.

These are some of the contributing factors which also helped to crystallize this poem.

Children of Steel, laborers, inheritors, watch tower figures
Father, Brother, Sister, Mother
Low tides surround the child of steel
Polish, Italian, Hunky man, black, oh woe!

Too small are we, what to do
What to do, rotten world
Cheap clothes, cheap thrills
No food no more, no money
No smiles, no steel no more, no life
No god that sees us, no love.

Can't do nothin, no work
Can't do nothin, but make steel
Can't do nothin, nobody cares
Too small to fight, too big to cry.

The fires are out, the mills breathe clean
The child is sick, the steel sits cold
The child lay dying, the steel decays
No time for us, no need for us, no promise for us
It is done, they took our bodies, they stole our minds
They took our bodies, they stole our minds.

Anthony Massaro