

## The Puddler's Tale

Stan Rogers

They neither know of night or day,  
They night and day pour out their thunder,  
As every ingot rolls away,  
A dozen more are split asunder.  
There is a sign beside the gate,  
"Eleven Days" since a man lay dying,  
Now every shift brings fear and hate  
And shaken men in terror crying.

The molten rivers boil away,  
A fiery brew hell never equaled.  
To their profits the bosses pray,  
And Mammon sings in his grim cathedral.  
His attendants join the choir,  
And heaven help us if we're shirking,  
Stoke the furnace-altar fire,  
And just be thankful that we're working!

Do this, then, charge the hoppers high  
Lest you endure the foreman's choler,  
Do this, then, drain the tankards dry,  
And let us toast the almighty dollar,  
That keeps us chained here before the fire  
Where heat and noise set the weak a-quaking.  
At the siren's infernal cry,  
The open hearth sets the ground to shaking.

Do this, then, raise the babies high  
And make them shriek with love and laughter!  
Do this, then, kiss your woman's eyes  
And raise a song unto the rafters!  
Wash the steel mill from your hair,  
Heap the table 'til it's breaking,  
'Nor let terror enter there  
And in the hearth set the glasses breaking.