FACTORY GIRL
Ralph McTell

Hurrying across the bridge before the siren calls.
This morning she's racing her shadow, all along the factory wall.
Then through the gate, where she will wait in line,
To cross the yard, to clock her card in time,
And under her scarf her hair set in curls,
The day begins for the factory girl.

For a while the girls try to talk, but their voices soon drown in the din.
Their eyes watch their hands do the work, and a new day's rhythm begins.
No change today, like yesterday, the same
But it's dinner soon, then afternoon, then home,
And hurrying home in the fading light
The factory girl is going out tonight.

Her mother says, "Don't be late, you've got to get up again before eight".
"Yes", she cries, but there's joy in her eyes,
As she runs down the path through the gate.

And out on the rainy streets hoping that her night will last.
No whispering palms on the beach for her,
Just the swish of the cars going past.
But she believes no one could feel the same,
Touching and whispering in the rain,
But the rain takes away her beautiful curls.
The night is soon gone for the factory girl.

And hurrying across that bridge before the sirens call.
This morning she's skipping the puddles all along the factory wall.
A starling sings and shakes his wings, she smiles.
Then at the gate, she hesitates, for a while.
Then from inside the gates the sirens roar
And across the yard runs the factory girl.