

II. Read the poem below and answer questions 7 to 12.

**THE FACTORY HOUR**

The sun up through a blue mist  
draws its own tide: this is the factory hour.  
As I drive east, I pass dozens like myself  
waiting on the curb for buses, for company train cars,  
5 for car pools; grey plastic lunch buckets,  
safety boots, old clothes. All of us pulled  
on the same factory tide.

The plant's parking lot  
is the dock; the small van of the industrial caterers  
10 has opened at the furthest gate through the fence: coffee, cigarettes,  
sandwiches. Walking in through the asphalt yard  
we enter the hull of the vessel.

The great hold is readying itself for the voyage. Steam  
rises slowly from the acid cleaning tanks  
15 near the small parts conveyor and spray booth.  
We pass to the racks of cards; sudden clang of machine shears  
but otherwise only the hum of voices, generators, compressors.  
Click and thump of the cards at the clock. The slow movement  
of those already changed into blue coveralls.

20 The hooter sounds, and we're cast off. First coughs  
and the mutter of the forklift engines.  
Then the first rivets shot home in the cab shop's metal line.  
Air hoses everywhere connected, beginning to hiss, the whirl  
of the hood line's drills. The first bolts are tightened:  
25 the ship underway on the water of time.

Howl of the routers (machines that cut metal): smell of fiberglass dust.  
Noise of the suction vacuum, the cutter, the roar  
of dollies trundled in for a finished hood. And the PA endlessly calling  
for partsmen, for foremen, for chargehands:  
30 *Neil Watt to Receiving please, Neil Watt.*  
*Jeff Adamanchuck to Sheet Metal.*  
*Dave Giberson to Gear Shop . . . to Parts Desk . . . Sub-Assembly.*

The hooters marking the half-hours, the breaks,  
the ship plunging ahead. The PA sounding  
35 *Call 1 for the superintendent; Call 273; Call guardhouse; Call switchboard.*  
Lunch at sea: sprawled by the hoods in ordinary weather