

I have before me a photograph.
Not just another picture to be looked at and casually turned aside but—
One of monumental significance
To me—

And to all the world.
It is the picture of a man.
A working man.

“Hear—spinning world,

I am hunger and represent all that is privation and misery.
I represent the scourge of generations—
Eternal theme: DEATH, by slow starvation.
See in me the strife,
The sweat,
The sorrow of all mankind.
I am listless. I am slowly perishing.
See my slumped shoulders once
Straight and proud;
The stringy sinews
Of arms that once could flex with power and sureness.
I am a daylight ghost,
Fit for naught—but company with
The dead.

And the history of a time is
On my emaciated face.
Etched deeply are the lines of strife and sorrow;
Hunger
Is clearly defined in my hollow cheeks.
And I am filled
With a dull pain.
Is no immediate pain
Mine
That will hurt and pass away,
But a pain born of hunger
Slow . . .
 tortuous . . .
 starvation . . .
That has reduced me to a mechanical being
Comparable to the cold machinery that surrounds me
Day by day.”

LESTER ISAACS