

# Poetry Porch: Poetry

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## Metal Detecting

By William Doeski

Behind the factory, mullein stalks  
jab at the cold. We're scouring  
for brass, bronze, or copper scrap.  
Good metal civilized us  
by polishing weapons to gleam  
with threat to ensure compliance.  
Iron, tougher to smelt and work,

replaced bronze for swords and spears,  
but copper and its kin remain  
essential for quality plumbing,  
electrical work, and deterring  
savagery smelted in our hearts  
by the spread of inferior matter—  
cheap pot metal and plastic.

Your metal detector sings.  
I scoop up an old brass fitting  
and bag it with the other junk  
to peddle by the pound. The day  
reeks of corruption. Even bronze  
will oxidize over centuries,  
staining grave statuary green.

The factory has stood abandoned  
for half a century, machines  
scrapped and windows broken.  
*Unsafe to Enter*, read the signs.  
The metal detector sings again.  
I dig and find a wedding ring,  
eighteen carat gold, still worn

by a skeleton finger. I slip  
it off the bone. The inscription  
reads *From Me to You with Love*.

Yes, I recognize it. Move on,  
and let's find some real copper  
to sooth us before the early dark  
alloys our grim expressions.