**MINER**

I Dug Hard Black Peabody Coal.

For Neigh. On Forty Years.

Gave It All My Heart And Soul.

Now The End Draws Near.

Never Saw The Sun.

From. Dropping Down

The Shaft Before The Dawn.

Till Whistle Out

In Dark Of Dusk.

At Quitting Time.

Just Kept Digging.

Kept A'Keeping On.

Like My Daddy. Grandpa.

Did Before.

They Both Died In The Mine.

My Mom. Grandma.

Shed Dead Husband Tears.

Outside Cruel Burning.

Coal Dust. Methane.

Blown Shafts.

Thirty. Sixty.

Or So Hard Luck Years ,

Back.

From Deep Mine. Cave Ins. Blow.

Their Bodies. Buried. Rest.

Neath Tons Of Charred Black Rubble.

A Mile Or So Below.

In Those Deep Dark Mines Of Yore.

Twas Spring Of Forty Seven.

Fall Of Sixty Four,

Family Has Got To Keep Coal Mining.

If You Are Birthed In Them West Virginia Mountains.

Or Born. Kentucky Poor.

Now I Can Only Gasp. Wheeze.

Struggle To Get Take A Quarter Breath.

Drag Round An Anchor.

O2 Tank.

For Some Last Grasp At Relief.

Just Rocking Neath.

The Old Oak Tree.

Not Much Of Me.

Left.

Maybe A Year Or So.To Go.

Waiting On A Tragic

Black Lung Miners Death.

The Benefits Board.

Said Son.

You Are Plumb.

Out Of Luck.

The Company Lawyers Have Got You Beat.

You Ain't Got No Truck.

No Records That You Even Worked.

All Burned Up In An Office Fire.

Your Word Won't Do.

We Know You Smoked And Chewed.

We Got The Make On You.

All You Low Rent Hilly Billy White Trash Miners.

Are Dead Ass Beats.

Welfare Cheats

Dole Wanting Liars.

Now. My Boy. Grandson.

Son In Law.

Can't Even Work.

They No Longer Even Hire.

Men. To Shaft Dig The Coal.

Just Strip Mine.

The Mountains From The Top.

Blast. Strip. Haul. Dump. Reload.

Rip Off The Soil.

Grab The Black Gold.

Never Stop.

Haul It Off In Caterpillar Monster Trucks.

Five Million Bucks.

A Pop.

Twenty Tons A Load.

Leave A Worthless Hole.

Fill In The Valleys.

Kill Trees Streams With Acid Runoff.

Ten Men For A Thousand.

All They Need To Steal The Coal.

Rape The Land.

Crucify Its Soul.

We Can't Work.

The Jobs Are Gone.

We Can't Hunt Fish Forage.

There Ain't No Herbs Shrooms Nor Game. .

It's All Gone.

We Can't Farm.

The Land Is Stripped Or Dead.

From Toxic Run Off.

Busted Dams Of Thousand Acre Holding Ponds.

It All No Pays The Same.

Where Paradise Lay.

Now Apocalypse Instead.

Life. Land. As We Knew.

Will Never Come Agane.

All We Can Do.

Is Soldier On.

Starve. Wait To Die.

Suffer. The Agony.

In Proud Stoic Silence.

Try.

To Endure The Horror.

Loss. Heartache. Shame.

Ravaged Ripped Off Woe. Pain.

Silent Tears Fall.

On Suffering. Deprivation. Desolation.

Like Cold Hopeless

Mountain Winter Rain.

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