John J. Curtis

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My name is John J. Curtis,
My age is twenty eight,
I was born in Scuylkill County
And there I met my fate.
So now with your attention
If you will be so kind,
I will tell you of that fatal day
That I was stricken blind.

It was on a bright May morning,
As the sun peeped o'er the hill,
The little birds sang loud and sweet:
I seem to hear them still;
My heart was filled with purest joy
As to the mines I did stray,
To earn an honest living
In the colliery of Morea.

At eight o'clock I climbed the pitch,
And to my work did go,
I drilled two holes and loaded them-
Touched one and fled below.
It soon went off; I then went back
To the one that did remain,
When by its mouth it too went off
And blew me down again.

I lay there in the darkness;
I was buried in the coal,
The blood in streams ran down my cheeks;
Great lumps o'er me did roll.
When I got free, my cap and lamp
Was all that I could find,
And when I struck a match, 'twas then
I knew that I was blind.

Now kind folks, do have pity
On whom you chance to find
Wandering through your city,
That in both eyes is blind;
You know not when your day will come

That this same path you'll stray,
So be kind-hearted while you can
To the miner from Morea.

From Minstrels of the Mine Patch, Korson
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