

Cage Load of Men (Joe Corrie / Rob van Sante)

Just like a truck-load of cattle
Sixteen crushed at the time
The yawning abyss beneath then
Awaiting the bottomer's chime
To leave all the glories of nature
And toil in the muck and the grime

Hard-handed stalwarts of labour
Nurtured to grin and to bear
Seldom a thought of the danger
That haunts every corner down there
Praying to Christ shift was over
but not in the language of prayer

Nipper so proud to be working
Granddad with hair like the snow
One with his eyes on the heavens
And one with his eyes on below
Free to stay up if they wish it
But hunger, oh, both of them know

One with the cares of a household
Weary and sick of it all
The best of his years he has given
Yet still with his back to the wall
Haunted with fears of the future
Dreading how far he will fall

Clang, goes the bottomer's signal
Down strongly silent they go
In comes another mixed cage load
Each man with a number to show
Cogs in the wheels of injustice
Grinding so sue and so slow