

TYPES OF COAL MINES

MARTHA COLLINS

At first they picked it up from the surface
but then they found it ran under
the surface & so they made open pits—

but then they found it was buried too deep
& constructed shafts or slopes or drifts
to take them underground where at first

they blasted but later made rooms & pillars
with picks & shovels & later with machines
that made longwalls that had no pillars—

meanwhile back on the surface they learned
to strip the land of its overburden
in strips or following contours & then

they learned to remove whole mountaintops
which meant using fewer people & bigger machines.

WHOSE

MARTHA COLLINS

whose lungs were lost to coal dust black

coal to black lung now rock dust to lungs

whose jobs were lost to strip mines to mining

machines to natural gas or paid less because

who sold mineral rights to land when farming

replaced jobs whose farms subsided were lost