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Shenango Valley

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Shenango Valley

The powerlines leading
into town sag
a little more each day.
Pretty soon they'll
be down scattered
across the roads and river.

There are still
mountain piles of coal around--
old women come
with dented wire shopping carts
to carry away their loads.
Further along the railroad tracks
naked children hide
among the rusting box car rows
and scavenge along
the river bank at dusk.

Coal-eyed men
sleep and roam, sleep and roam
stand along the mesh iron fences
that surround the black windowed
factories
and still hear their dreams die
like a dragon being slaughtered.

August West