

MINING STRIKE

Time feels as if it is going unnaturally slow as I open the door, but deep down I know it is due to nerves. I feel as if what I am about to do will make everyone see me as an outcast; a scab. But then again, what choice do I have?

Slowly, I wander through the door to the main hall, attempting not to notice anyone, however failing. I make myself think of my wife and children, if I do not vote to go back to work then they will starve. We have been living on the limited food from packs given by the women in kitchens, but now they have run out. If I don't return to work, they will be ill, starving and upset. Family first, always.

A familiar face smiles at me from the other side of the room, my brother. Suddenly, a pang of guilt hits me hard in the stomach. My brother is a miner, just like all the recent generations in my family, they are all devoted to the mining industry. Don't get me wrong, I am also, hence why I have struck for so long. What if my family disowns me? Not just my family in fact, my whole home town will not want to know me. I will be a scab.

Abruptly, I am unfortunately returned back to brutal reality when I hear a voice shout "Now we must vote. All those in favor of returning to work, raise your hand." Unable to bear the looks of dismay I will receive, I shut my eyes so tight it hurts. I deserve the pain though, in a matter of seconds I will be a traitor...

Trembling, I slowly raise my hand into the cold air above. I can feel the glares that will now be looking in my direction, piercing me like daggers. Once again brought back to reality, I hear the same voice shout again, "Well, I believe the answer is obvious. The mines shall be re-opened!"

Absolutely astonished, I open my eyes to discover that everyone else also has their hand raised. So, does mean we are all scabs, or one community with choice? My nerves change to relief.