

On the Other Side

(CBS/AP) Some of the 12 coal miners who died in the Sago Mine disaster scrawled farewell notes assuring their loved ones that their final hours trapped underground amid toxic gases were not spent in agony. "Tell all I'll see them on the other side," read the note found with the body of 51-year-old mine foreman Martin Toler Jr. "It wasn't bad. I just went to sleep. I love you Jr."
--Could The Miners Have Been Saved? CBS NEWS, Tallmansville, W.VA.' Jan. 5, 2006

What can we do men?
What can we do but tell those
on the other side of the mine
that we're okay? We're tired
groggy and afraid but
whatever fear we face
here is nothing like what
we leave on the other side
our loved ones above us
waiting for word that we
are still here with them or
gone. We owe them simple
statements whatever we can
scribble for my son and brother
your wives and daughters
all those we love who
suffocate in sadness in
desolate fear that those
men who've gone to work
who toiled to bring them
food and clothing are now
simple words of a husband
or father no longer left
to touch. We owe them
our lives so we can move
wherever we're meant to
wander to whatever world
we hope is there for us
once we fall asleep
for good to wake
we pray on the
other side.