



11-15-2008

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Recommended Citation

Coleman, Earl (2008) "Mining for Happiness," *Westview*: Vol. 28 : Iss. 2 , Article 21.
Available at: <https://dc.swosu.edu/westview/vol28/iss2/21>

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Mining for Happiness

by Earl Coleman

Mining for happiness
brought him further under-
standing of its evanescent
properties.

He tried pursuing it
but it receded just as he
was reaching for his sack.

There weren't trams to take
him to its core or cart back
what he'd not yet found.

In his heavy-handed way he was
delicate, reduced his expletives,
banned explosives which might

shatter it, or sharpened instruments,
curses that might pierce, or even
frighten it away, fragile as it was.

When he was ninety-one he sat erect
in bed to contemplate the Herculean and
futile struggle all those years

and he was happy.

