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Sons of Sisyphus

Charles D. Moskus

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SONS OF SISYPHUS

Worst job I ever had
but I needed the money
so when I read the notice
in the window I showed up
the next morning in the dark
and climbed the rattling back
of an ancient stake bed truck
with other men who needed money.
We lugged the telephone poles
up the hillside on our shoulders
the way ants stagger to the tune
of instinct and cooperation.
When the hill got too steep
we dragged the poles with chains
and come alongs tied to trees,
inched them to their destination.
We stopped to rest and eat.
The fingers of the man
sitting next to me were tattooed
LOVE and HATE in the blue
and simple script of jailhouse art.
When he saw me staring
he shrugged and said that now
he wished he hadn't done that.
We dug the holes by hand
hauling up the dirt in buckets,
breaking rock with jackhammers.
Eight to ten feet down and never
shored them up, trusting luck
to be with us for a change.

by Charles D. Moskus