

**Death of a Small Town**

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A shrill, abrasive siren blares  
piercing the silent darkness.  
Sidewalks roll up each night  
hidden behind a veil of starkness

where heavily draped windows,  
closed shutters, obscure from view  
remnants of a tiny town no longer  
alive to those passing through.

A lone train whistles in the distance.  
With clickety-clack audible in the night,  
it lumbers through the town's center,  
reminding its few residents of their plight

that ripped away most of the town's life;  
a community that should have survived.  
Desolate, in spite of the potential for  
a vibrant place that once thrived

and teetered on the brink of success, with  
planned expansion into a future that could  
be prosperous; it plummeted to its death  
without focus on the common good.

Now pensive train whistles carry across miles.  
Sidewalks roll up before each empty driveway.  
Latchless screen doors flap their unwelcome,  
and dust swirls across the deserted highway.