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Shadowbrook Lane

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Shadowbrook Lane

This day, like every other,
I drive the same path,
a solemn road that delivers me
to my place of habit
and brings me back
when the sun is nearly done.

Each bump, twist and turn
etched into my mind
with countless traces.
The back of my hand
could only dream
to be so familiar.

I drive it again,
anticipating the sharp turn
at the big oak tree,
the pot hole caused
by the thawing and freezing
of countless years,

the slow, bending curve
at the rain-smoothed boulder.
The automatic actions
allow my mind to ponder
tasks and chores awaiting me.
Out of the corner of my eye

appears a darting shadow—
no time to stop, no where to turn.
Then it ends in the fashion
of all life.

I stop the car, turn my head
to see the fresh death,

too warm to call a carcass yet.
I stare for awhile
thinking of the wrinkles
around my white knuckles
still fastened to the steering wheel
and of a road never to be known again.

— J.B. Allen '94