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My Mother Said

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MY MOTHER SAID

Just off the highway to Park City,
One finds almost nothing.
"Almost" consists of open fields,
A closed bank,
A small cluster of even smaller houses,
A gas station, a truckstop, and a sign:
Park City, Pop. 600.
My mother said that understanding all about America
Is seeing the country.
Well, here we are.
Dad drives slowly;
Mom wants us to see all.
Funny that "all" is almost nothing.
No people;
Just homes, shacks, shells of life.
One, its roof is giving up.
Another, an animal shedding its skin.
We drive by the truckstop,
A metropolis of country life.
(Yes, that was what my mother said.)
Old and dusty,
Held together by peeling paint,
Ornamented with the broken plastic from its neon sign.
Inside, the passengers of a Duster, a Nova, and two huge
Peter-bilts.
Yes, I tell my mother, it is certainly thriving.
I yawn, the rest of Park City passing by,
Except for alone shack.
Weathered and peeling,
The front porch buried by a heap of retired furniture,
Chimney sagging, roof drooping,
It frowns on its own dilapidation.
The excuse sits in the sideyard,
A tremendous black monstrosity.
I've seen them before,
In civilization, now so foreign.
Soon, even the satellite dish is passed.
The highway isn't far now.
I think of what my mother said
Of understanding all about America,
Then I think about Park City.
Funny that all is almost nothing.

Kay C. Hope