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### **Witness Accounts From The End Of Twelfth Street**

There is a streetlight in the town where everyone comes but no one stays. It sits on the end of 12th Street, the metal pole stretching to the sky and the lightbulb surrounded by moths who don't know any better than to follow the light. It stands near the bus stop after the three identical houses on the rest of the road. Sitting beside the light there is a mustard orange bench covered in engravings from teenagers who believed it to be their form of rebellion against a town they found themselves trapped by

The streetlight became the night's sun for those who passed and a sanctuary for those who stayed. Its warm glow radiated from the lightbulb above the group waiting for the bus to arrive. None of them had any idea where they were going. All they knew was that they were running from something they would be confronted with come morning. Perhaps from the crazy ex-boyfriend, or the mother that smothered instead of loved or maybe from the confines of the pines that this godforsaken town was surrounded by. But the morning didn't matter, not yet. Not as long as they stood under the streetlight's warmth.

The streetlight is unfazed by the storm surrounding the pair of siblings. One, too young to know the streetlight's warmth, the other too old to acknowledge it anymore. They stand together, the older one praying their mom doesn't call asking where they are, while the younger is simply wondering when she'll get to see her favorite unicorn stuffed animal again. And as they step onto the bus, the oldest can hear the low buzz of the lightbulb.

The streetlight was brighter than the small flicker of the lighter above the man in the long coat's cigarette. Snow fell gently beside him, melting away the moment it hit his jacket. He watched as the light in the room at the end of the house turned on and silently prayed the bus would show up soon. His wife must've already woken up. He could hear the moths clang against the lightbulb and watched the lights go back out as his phone began to ring. Instead of answering, he turned it off and continued to wait for the bus to arrive. If he looked closely enough towards the end of the street, he could almost see the faint outline of his daughter's face in the darkness.

The streetlight would remain bright until the sun rose the next morning and then return again the next night. In the time between the sun falling and the streetlight turning on, the road was consumed with darkness until the light arrived again. The pattern would continue until the lightbulb went out.