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Ballad of the Triangle Fire

Ballad of the Triangle Fire
(Ruth Rubin)

In the heart of New York City, near Washington Square,
In nineteen eleven, March winds were cold and bare,
A fire broke out in a building, ten stories high,
And a hundred and forty six young girls in those flames did die.

On the top floor of that building, ten stories in the air
These young girls were working in an old sweatshop there;
They were sewing shirtwaists for a very low wage,
So tired and worn out! They were at a tender age.

The sweatshop was a stuffy room with but a single door,
The windows they were gray with dust from off that dirty floor.
There were no comforts, no fresh air, no light to sew thereby
And the girls, they toiled from early dawn till darkness filled the sky.

Then on that fateful day--dear God! most terrible of days!--
When that fire broke out, it grew into a mighty blaze
In that firetrap way up there with but a single door
So many innocent working girls burned, to live no more.

A hundred thousand mourners, they followed those sad biers,
The streets were filled with people weeping bitter tears,
Poets, writers everywhere described that awful pyre,
Where those young girls were trapped to die in the Triangle fire.

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