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## Deliberate Fire-Building in the Coldest Months

Kristine Aman  
*Denison University*

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## Deliberate Fire-Building in the Coldest Months

Winter wind shot at me  
Through the split in the wooden  
Outhouse's door.  
I pushed off the heatless seat,  
My thighs wondering how something  
This cold could be considered romantic.

In the coldest month  
Each person retreats,  
Coiling in our beds  
Like frightened worms,  
Protecting ourselves from  
The harm of touch.

Snow tickled the back of my neck,  
More lightly that fingers do.  
Wind slid against my jaw,  
My teeth chattered like they needed  
Something to bite on, and  
I shook in frustration.

In my coldest month  
I watched fires kindle,  
Too apart from them for the  
Shivering to dwindle,  
Rubbing my own skin, but the wind  
Rushed by me.

Lauren Mallett, 2016

I stiffly collected dry wood  
And my cracking hands stacked  
The slabs, creating  
A careful pile to ignite,  
And I began to sweat just  
In assembling it.

Kristine Aman, 2010