

This Hearth, This Narrow Bed

This cabin tilts, creaks under tons of ice.
The chimney breathes pink embers into flames,
a night so cold beams crack, spring blizzard

at sundown stalling cars below the pass.
Snowplows grind through drifts to find a path.
Ice rims the glass, the rafters shift and snap.

Last year, we left good neighbors we adore.
Slowly, the overhead door creaked down.
We heard the phone but ignored it.

Picking up speed, we waved at friends
and drove on, ranch with no TV or phone.
We own this bunker of snow, this hearth,

this narrow bed. Guarded by bears and dolls
a thousand miles away, our grandchildren sleep,
far from this storm banging the windowpanes.

—Walt McDonald