

# Wildfire

*by* Larry Strattner

Last night the rain began.  
It always rains in winter here.  
Fires go out and many folks are saved  
Except those resting in clusters of bones  
Cradled in ashes of what once were homes,  
upon a time.  
Built by people  
who should have known better  
But whose thinking's  
often ruled by ambition and pride

So, from windows or patios  
On the edge of ravines  
They savor panoramas  
through hungry flames  
whose goal is to devour, masticate  
and digest,  
Regurgitate, show no mercy  
To any who thought, a beast would care  
for them, other than as fuel, fat sputtering, cooking,  
eating the walls, melting driveways, twisting steel frames  
of tricycles, none rode to safety,  
Let alone to laughter or childhood games.

The world is harsh in our forest primeval.  
Cold and unloving, the blackness of night.  
In its shape of nothingness and spite,  
not inclined to ever make anything right.  
Those marked to be eaten, are eaten.  
Those chosen to eat, consume the unlucky  
And anyone else, who is just passing through.

The deepness of darkness will conceal who it must  
outcomes of lives which have been deemed unjust:  
cursed by twisted equations, which determine the arc  
of the searing knife's joyful, killing thrust.  
Flames gutter, and go out; for a year or two. Respite  
granted to me and to you  
Until another spring beckons majestic clouds.  
Wandering jewel-blue skies for a time  
Before spiting a fiery bolt down a snag  
just enough to guide flame to the ground,  
reintroducing, the eager Beast, all around.

