

# Miracle of Wood

*Anita Tanner*

—that wood could come in  
that thin and blonde  
for kindling  
after the dark bark,  
after the ax whack  
and the crack  
of white opening,  
the stria of wood  
gouging, indenting  
my armloaded skin

—that I could feel it roll  
piece by piece  
into the bottom of the woodbox  
layered with wood chips,  
chunks of bark,  
the hint of pinecone  
mixed with damp earth

—that wood could come in  
from a cold dark shed  
and give off so much heat  
in a snow-blown frozen winter,  
sometimes the only light  
in the early morning farmhouse  
—that the colored fire  
could make jewels of our eyes  
and surprise us

—that even a split log  
frozen and snow buried  
could load our fire  
with sizzle heat,  
the moisture dropping,  
never drowning out the coals

—that wood could like loaves  
of Mother's bread,  
the hardened crust,  
the sliced steam,  
my teeming nostrils  
welcoming