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## Settling Down

Jeff De Bellis

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## Settling Down

Snow comes and hides the other seasons,  
the subnivean tunnels of memory.  
The tired year tucked neatly under winter's soft blankets.

The morning sky gives no indication of the gray, wet spring ahead.  
December, it's quiet contentment. The smell of wood split in cold,  
released in fire.

Snow weights the spruce boughs like a worried mind. On the ground its soft  
undulations mimic the curves of your ghost.

Sunlight reaches the forest floor in small patches;  
the snow holds it without melting.

*Jeff De Bellis*

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JEFF DE BELLIS studied geography and worked on trail crews for many years before becoming an instructor and guide at The Mountain Institute. He lives most of the year in a small cabin in West Virginia and commutes to work on cross-country skis whenever the weather allows.

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