

## **The Cold Within**

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Six humans trapped by happenstance  
In black and bitter cold.  
Each one possessed a stick of wood,  
Or so the story's told.

Their dying fire in need of logs,  
The first woman held hers back  
For on the faces around the fire,  
She noticed one was black.

The next man looking cross the way  
Saw one not of his church,  
And couldn't bring himself to give  
The fire his stick of birch.

The third man sat in tattered clothes;  
He gave his coat a hitch.  
Why should his log be put to use  
To warm the idle rich?

The rich man just sat back and thought  
Of the wealth he had in store.  
And how to keep what he had earned  
From the lazy poor.

The black man's face bespoke revenge  
As the fire passed from his sight,  
For all he saw in his stick of wood  
Was a chance to spite the white.

And the last man of this forlorn group  
Did naught except for gain.  
Giving only to those who gave  
Was how he played the game.

The logs held tight in death's still hands  
Was proof of human sin.  
They didn't die from the cold without,  
They died from the cold within.