

## Wilderness House Literary Review 8/1

*Shirley Salemy Meyer*  
**The Aftermath**

Pine needles and leaves litter floors, from mudroom to attic.  
We sweep, but once again floors are awash in detritus from the storm.  
Close the door and take off your shoes.

No power, but heat.

After hours of cold, damp darkness, we snip wires and bring a bit of voltage. By the grace of God and the shine of a flashlight, the boiler reignites.

A clatter of pipes breaks the silence.

The acrid smell of steam in the radiators is an aroma akin to pumpkin pie on Thanksgiving Day.

The crushed-velvet couch warms up. Hardwood floors, icy even through thick socks, become bearable.

Milk and bread have been absent from the grocer's shelves.

A neighbor brings over an extra loaf. Need milk? Gallons were delivered this morning. Get in my car—it still has gas.

It's all right if you're in pajamas. Everyone looks like that.

Bedtime is early when so dark.

We rise early, too. The littlest one says it's so light out that he thinks the power is back on.

Not yet, you're just confused by the brilliance of daylight.

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### Crocuses

When our snow-covered yard yields to soggy sod,  
And crocuses rise along the muddy paths we trod,  
Restless children let out cheers and applaud,  
Winter's over, they think, and eye their fishing rods.

Even weeks after these purple flowers peter out,  
Breezes still chill, our memories of warmth we doubt—  
Summers of swimming and fishing for rainbow trout,  
Daisies and dahlias in bloom near lakeside campouts.

But soon, the rain makes our grass lush and thick,  
Buds on rose bushes appear so quick, as if a trick,  
Sneakers replace snow boots, we stow hockey sticks,  
At last, winter's flame no longer flicks.