

## Back to the Campfire

by Mary Ricketson

This foggy morning takes me back  
to campfires and tents. Smoky Mountain  
trails, me and my pack, I found home for the night  
by a clear running stream and dry wood found by forage.

Evening flames lasted late, created comfort  
that set up residence and never left me.  
A well-stoked fire kept embers hot till dawn  
when I rubbed my eyes, tripped through the flap,  
found my poking stick, and built up the fire.

Coffee lasts a long time when you set your cup  
on a hot rock smack in the fire. Mist filled mornings  
lasted long as I reviewed yesterday's hike  
and thought toward today's trail.  
Water on my face never felt so cold.  
Bacon and eggs never tasted so good.

In time I packed my gear and bid goodbye  
to trees that felt familiar after only one night,  
but the mist that enveloped me then  
left its moisture with me.  
I made acquaintance with peacefulness  
and I have never been the same.