

Peddling Flame

CAROL TOBIN*

While men amend the world with cages
You come dancing down the ages
peddling sparks to blaze, set fire
when we—all box-bent—build yet higher

With wondrous ware of flashing flame
oh mountain melter, human smelter
You tame what naught befits Your name

With sword of flame and pillared fire
You best what men with might conspire—
might fix with some more clumsy mix
of creedal concrete heavy hard

Oh Spirit bard and humble tinker
You pour that pan of sparkling ember
on clueless takers

making thus a body burning
carrying forward all Your yearning
that ash on wind be blown away
leaving only on that day what holy ought remain

* Carol Tobin presently serves as Asia Regional Director for Virginia Mennonite Missions, a role that draws on her family's twenty-year experience as church planters in Thailand with Eastern Mennonite Missions. She and her husband, Skip, are part of the Early Church community in Harrisonburg, Virginia. Carol enjoys baking bread, swimming, picking berries, and receiving occasional poetic inspiration. She wrote this poem in October 2016.