



Volume 18
Issue 1
2024

Inflammation

Marda Messick

Inflammation shows
in cardinal signs—
heat, loss of function,
swelling pain

a hammered finger,
attacking heart,
slice of knife—
any *-itis* of many

warrior cells wield
a metabolic sword—
forged in furnaces
stoked by air

this body battles
the pyre of age—
my singed shoulders,
my welded knees

this mind blazes—
old smoldering rage,
desire's wildfire,
new creation's solar flare

my fierce burning bird
rising live, unharmed,
reborn from ash—
sings of the torch

About the Poet

Marda Messick is a former nurse and caregiver living in Tallahassee, Florida. Email: mmessick@embarqmail.com