

# Mormon Conversions

*Laura Hamblin*

The songs mutate  
like a virus in my blood:  
"I Am a Child of  
God," "Firm As the Mountains  
around Us," "The Golden Plates."  
I am twelve, have spent  
twelve years learning  
my insufficiencies,

my inabilities.  
I will never spread  
the white cloth, never  
break bread or fill  
the tiny cups  
with water, never  
speak sacred words over  
them, pass them.

Under the bright even  
sky, boys with shellacked  
faces play basketball.  
Closer to God (in the  
next life with numerous  
wives), they know power,  
vertical like the mount  
of Zion and wide—

I begin to bleed,  
am taught with the other  
girls to crochet, to knit  
a pattern of life,  
a pair of slippers  
for our fathers.  
Ah Penelope—  
unraveling woman.

Now, on the rock our fathers  
planted, in this house  
of love, making  
covenants, the congregation  
stands. We sing "The Spirit of  
God like a Fire  
Is Burning," and the live  
coal of reality ignites.