Collect for a Family Friend Killed in a Sabbath Morning House Fire

*Tyler Chadwick*

O, preening angels, voyeurs
of bright and burning things,
of underbuilding flare-ups and
flaming caved-in tinder, whose
breathing—plumed, infernal,
unforgiving—sweltered her last
daybreak with unholy invocation—
Please, if mercy be, if prayers
hurled—frenzied—Godward in
the heat of grieving
grace what’s passed, please
have taken her before she fell
from sleep, please, while
fever-dreams beatified
her mind’s cathedral, dousing it
with overtonal eager aching psalms,
best-known language of her flesh
billowing one last time from her
congregation choir, their notes
astray and breaking and, yet,

soaring beyond her organ, her awe,
please, that her leaving might have been

more requiem than torment—
For you are delirium and ecstasy,

the scald of endorphins
praising rapture and release—

Amen


TYLER CHADWICK {tawhiao@gmail.com}, an award-winning writer, editor, and teacher, received his PhD in English and the Teaching of English from Idaho State University. He teaches writing at Utah Valley University and has four books to his name: two anthologies, *Fire in the Pasture: 21st Century Mormon Poets* (Peculiar Pages, 2011) and *Dove Song: Heavenly Mother in Mormon Poetry* (Peculiar Pages, 2018); a collection of poetry and essays, *Field Notes on Language and Kinship* (Mormon Artists Group, 2013); and a poetry collection, *Litany with Wings* (By Common Consent Press, 2022). He lives in Ogden, Utah, with his wife, Jess, and their four daughters.