Hunger for Something

By Chase Twichell

Sometimes I long to be the woodpile,
cut-apart trees soon to be smoke,
or even the smoke itself,
sinewy ghost of ash and air, going
wherever I want to, at least for a while.

Neither inside nor out,
neither lost nor home, no longer
a shape or a name, I’d pass through
all the broken windows of the world.
It’s not a wish for consciousness to end.

It’s not the appetite an army has
for its own emptying heart,
but a hunger to stand now and then
alone on the death-grounds,
where the dogs of the self are feeding.


Chase Twichell was born in New Haven, Connecticut, and has lived for many years in the Adirondacks. A practicing Buddhist, she is the author of several books of poetry, and her work often reflects her spiritual practice. She has taught at Princeton University, Goddard College, Warren Wilson College, the University of Alabama, and Hampshire College. In 1999 she left teaching to form Ausable Press, a nonprofit, independent literary press that she operated until it was acquired by Copper Canyon Press in 2009.