

Recess

By Maria Hummel

This is the sound of the bell. It rings,
full of brass and the end it brings:
once for the children, once for the child
who sits alone. His eyes hurt and mild,
he waits, holding his things.

Time should hold no meaning
for him yet. You don't learn
how to play; you forget. But he knows a while
well, and longs for the clang of the bell.

A bell is a room of nothing.
No, a dome with a hidden swing —
a will, a sway, a tone, a peal,
the beginning of song. The wild
crowd nears, passes, laughing.
Here is the sound of the bell.



Maria Hummel is the author of the poetry collection *House and Fire*, winner of the 2013 APR/Honickman First Book Prize, and two novels: *Motherland* (Counterpoint, 2014) and *Wilderness Run* (St. Martin's, 2003). Her poetry, fiction, and nonfiction have appeared in *Poetry*, *New England Review*, *Narrative*, *The Sun*, *The New York Times*, and the centenary anthology *The Open Door: 100 Poems, 100 Years of Poetry Magazine*. She lives in Vermont with her husband and two sons, and teaches at the University of Vermont.