

Song for a Passbook Torch

Bring back
Nelson Mandela.

Bring him back home to

Soweto,

and when his
memory comes,

do not seat it
in a sleigh.

Do not roll it in
the Macy's Day

Parade.

Bring back
Nelson Man
de la — of the

Freedom
Charter gym,

un-halved,
un-smiling,

un-Santafied.

Bring back
Nelson, dancing

in corners of
defiance, "Tata

Madiba"
stenciled

PASSBOOK TORCH

on his trunks.
I want to see him

walking hand in
hand with full fighter

recollections.

You will find
no reindeer

in that camp,
or yuletide carols

there – except for
those that say

forgiveness
wrapped his knuckles,

and no chestnuts ever
roasted

on an open
passbook

flame.