

Classic Poetry Series

Emily Holmes Coleman

- poems -

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The Liberator

Keys turning
rattling in the loose locks
 opening high the doors
that close again
like death-hours coming faster

the walls are white
and the line of beds is staring
all the bars go up and down
and none of them lead outward

and leaping eyes
 and stiff limbs
follow the crunch of the keys

I am powerful now
and I will break those that carry the keys
 with little hammers
small hammers
 which you will make for me
 and hide in the porridge
I will break all their heads
 and lay them in neat rows
 and we shall wave high the keys
 and open wide a million doors
and all of us shall dance in the snow
and that poor woman in the spiral casket
shall warm a wooden doll to her dress
 and lean her hair in the fire

the grating shall be taken from about the fire
 and the woman and the keys shall go within
 all of us
 shall
 dance
 within

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