

The Call

by Charlotte Mew

From our low seat beside the fire

Where we have dozed and dreamed and watched the glow

Or raked the ashes, stopping so

We scarcely saw the sun or rain

Above, or looked much higher

Than this same quiet red or burned-out fire.

To-night we heard a call,

A rattle on the window-pane,

A voice on the sharp air,

And felt a breath stirring our hair,

A flame within us: Something swift and tall

Swept in and out and that was all.

Was it a bright or a dark angel? Who can know?

It left no mark upon the snow,

But suddenly it snapped the chain

Unbarred, flung wide the door

Which will not shut again;

And so we cannot sit here any more.

We must arise and go:

The world is cold without

And dark and hedged about

With mystery and enmity and doubt,

But we must go

Though yet we do not know

Who called, or what marks we shall leave upon the snow.