

The Call

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.

Charlotte Mew