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Bessie F. Collins

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The Climate of Singing

BESSIE F. COLLINS

In the deep dark of every man
 A poet lies,
 A sport of singing in the memory,
 (As ancient seed waits in forgotten tombs,
 To wake to sun and rain and earth,
 As if the centuries had never been
 Conceived.)

A poet lies there waiting
 For the elements,
 The essences,
 The synthesis of time and place,
 The alchemy that bursts the shield
 Of slumbering,
 And pushes up into a blaze of words.

And though a slave can feel the words
 Surge in his breast,
 Most drown in tears,
 And those that reach the light,
 Bloom pale and brittle through the links of chains.
 Where freedom is the poet leaps

With a glad quickening into full life,
 The tongues he speaks uncountable
 As feathers of a flock of birds,
 Or sequined scales of fish;

And if his words must weep they lave
 His brother's wounds;
 His laughter is a moon that shimmers fear,
 Compassion from his pen is bread and salt.

Where freedom is
 A peon rises to etetrnity
 Celebrating love.