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# Accountable Emily

Helen Walker Jones

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# Accountable Emily

Helen Walker Jones

A muggy Sunday, windows opened onto the pine grove.  
The congregation awaits soothing winds to wring moisture  
From their locks. Accountable Emily, age eight,  
Dreams of Gothic spires and silver domes,  
Disregards the glossy white tiles with chipped corners.  
She has learned of manna, Passover, the plates golden  
In black earth, mysterious elevator shafts. Sabbath.  
A Hebrew word. Emily presses the embossed organ pipes  
On a navy blue hymnbook, wonders  
If the water will be warm, imagines  
Drowning. Buried in white baptismal clothes,  
Her feet fading purple, pain-earned ringlets smashed  
In wet strands against her neck.  
Then remembrance of the Gift,  
The Comforter, the Holy Ghost.  
Will I be a saint? she whispers.  
Her mother nods, Emily sighs, her name is called.

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Helen Walker Jones is a poet living in Salt Lake City.