

Lock and Key

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Peace is withheld by the ultimate lock.
It's evasive, no virtue or action seeming
To fit its keyhole when exercised
By the individual. The peacefulness
Accumulates, trying to shatter the lock
And send peace bursting out of its
prison.

And the key to peace is tolerance,
Hidden under yet another lock—
A lock not as strong as that imprisoning
Peace, not eluding us as easily,
Yet still harder to alter than cold metal.

Tolerance's lock has its key, too:
understanding,
Also not necessarily easy to exemplify,
Especially when one lacks the key to its
Still weaker—still complicated—lock:

A key by the name of acceptance.
Like every other key unlocking peace,
Acceptance is guarded by a lock.
But acceptance's lock is more clever
than the rest;
It opens ever so easily when the key is
present!—
However, its key is the most difficult to
wield.

For to accept requires the ability to set
prejudice aside,
The realization that everyone isn't you
And that them not being you is good.
Unlocking acceptance demands a capability
To walk down the street and not judge a
dirty beggar
For being destitute; not judge the two men
holding hands
For being "gay"; not label the family
speaking Spanish
As immigrants; not label the woman in
Muslim garb
As a potential terrorist.

Tossing aside these and other subconscious
judgments
That have woven their way into society
Allows for acceptance.
Acceptance opens the jail understanding
Had been silently, patiently waiting in.
Understanding builds the step-stool and fits
The lock to unleash tolerance.
And finally, with contagious tolerance
becoming
The epidemic of the world, does a key fit
Peace's mocking lock.

Just enough people acting on a small amount
of tolerance
Could drop the heavy lock to the floor
To forever lay, never again keeping
Peace from the world.

And all it would take is a little
Tolerance,
Which simply asks for
Understanding,
Whose prerequisite is
Acceptance...

Which only needs the acknowledgement
Of the concept that:
The person across from you on the bus
Is his/ herself rather than you,
Just as they should be.

And once this has happened,
Peace can be free and ours,
Not cowering under a lock with an evasive key.