

**We**  
*For Peter Schumann*

Remember what it was in the beginning  
We were rocks we were water

We lived for eons never wanting light moved  
Through us shadows passed

We ground blue mortar wrought  
Lines into the red wall

Lime from the mud  
Of re-precipitated corals

Pumiced husked broken we  
Felt no pain instead made sand and shell

Smoothed edges as the element of  
Stone dissolved into us we taught stone

The mistake of water which was to love you  
How our nameless rubbings burned us

The clouds where death drew lightning  
Up from the Earth soon grasses and trees

Were as masters of that slow dance  
Only the tree shrews and hightailed lizards

Who came down to smell flowers  
Earned the confusion of pain they

Bartered for love to end  
The pain of being dashed against

The rocks and struck by lightning  
Boiled in the foam or popped like

A bubble and blown like  
A weed the confusion of wonder

And this dream how do flowers do  
That we wonder we die

We become flowers

## **Mansfield Training School**

There were people sitting in long lines in day rooms  
I'm 61 years old now, but I feel guilty all my life  
Already, couch grass in the parking lot  
Every time I spoke with him it seemed, he had another name  
Mostly inner-city children who had committed crimes  
I was told, 'Never let them touch you;  
With a baseball bat for dirtying an aide's uniform during a game  
They are beautiful, even in their decay  
Dwarfed by an overgrowth tangle of trees  
So familiar from my own days in gentler institutions  
Tall and round, with graying hair and pinkish skin  
Jimmy had never passed through this doorway with anyone  
He greeted him with a gentle handshake  
Stepped hesitantly over the threshold  
The staff sat in the break room, playing Parcheesi or reading  
He demonstrated in a menacing roar that echoed  
And leave me there for 30 years, to "see how you like it"  
Sadly as we stepped back into the sunlight  
The permissions he needed to sign allowing me to look  
He was tiny, crippled but "fast as getup"  
They captured a serious child with curly black hair

## La Anjana

I.

An elf or a longing / writ human  
 Possessor of homes / spirits / humans

Like a nymph / amphibious / floral  
 Foiling los ojáncanus / visiting humans

Dresses made of saws and stardust  
 Submerged in fountains like witches / half-bit humans

A man can marry her if she is found  
 Brushing her hair / in a sunken trove / it's only human

She returns to heaven every four hundred years  
 As a nightingale or a beetle / flittering between human

They gather in the fells at dawn / scattering  
 Thornapple / bearing gifts for Cantabrians

In other regions las anjanas are as tall as  
 Humans / living in caves / echoing / unrequited / human

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**Poem continues next pg.**

**[Trigger Warning: SA, r\*pe]**

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## II.

Nature is pithy condolence / to a grieving mother  
Wave-blue / raped by the river / discredited by human

Seers / “would he long years and ripe / old age enjoy”  
but Tiresias could not bless a narcissistic / infant

“If he shall himself not know” / her strange love  
For her strange son / no mother’s wit nor human

Body could understand / As Hera transformed the seer into  
A woman / for killing snakes / to see if he liked it being human

No / Liriope can still identify him  
Through a one-way mirror / she recognizes the outfit / human

“that’s him” / “the face of Narcissus” / “who poured  
over me until I grew numb” / only dittoing human

Like my son / whose appearance urges  
Fish into the shallows / moonlit / human

## 22 Haiku from the Hempstead Diary (1755)

The leaves in autumn  
Blow colder than falls past  
Att Crossman's lot

Warm giving weather  
A little rain, I was att  
Home all day

I watched the dust  
Fall, free from this and that  
I was att home all day

SE & S fresh  
Gale. Toward night abated  
And clear

Farewell January.  
I never knew one so  
Moderate

A violent storm  
Of wind & rain & lightning &  
Hail & Thundr [sic]

I was att home all day  
I was att home all day  
I was att home all day

Before noon squally  
& snowed smartly & then fair  
but cold

Snow about 3 inches  
Deep. Keeny was found dead in  
A snowbank ys night

Fitted the draw bars  
& mended the stone wall  
By Natt's wheat

I pulled up the yellow  
Blossoms in the foren, I  
Pulled up the yellow

Then down in the neck  
 To see how the grass was grown  
 In ye meddow

Fair & hot showres  
 Violent squal of wind  
 In ye eve wet

Indian woman  
 yt lived at Capt. Lee's died  
 2 or 3 days ago

&then wind Rise  
 High & Rain Smart, a grt [sic]  
 Storm. Cold froze.

I killed my black long  
 Leged cow. Molly Eldrerdge hath  
 Milkt her 2 year

He trod on my foot  
 The blood started at the  
 Root of the nail

An earthquake before  
 Day. Perhaps I was asleep  
 At the first of it

Fair but lowering  
 untill near night & then  
 a flight of snow

Misty raw cold  
 I rid down to the cornfield  
 Put in my Red Steer

Shored up some fence  
 That the late highwind blew down.  
 I set out for home

Fair & pleasant overhead  
 I was att home foren.  
 I was att home all day.

**How the Deer and the Rabbit and the Red Robin and the Butterfly and the Poem Were Made**

At length the animals gathered the boys wanted to  
    grab them but they would not give themselves  
        up and then emerged the deer and the  
            rabbit they grabbed them by their tails but these  
broke and thus they still have shortened  
    tails there were riders on proud horses executioners with  
        nails and hammers in the midst there was our  
            Lord who was going to be crucified the grey  
robin flew quite close and drew out a nail as he  
    did a drop of blood fell on his feather and the  
        color shone on his breast just as it shines on every robin's  
            breast this day an angel brought the Lord the teeniest pair of  
shears and he bent over the Earth and started  
    snipping little pieces off of everything there were yellow  
        Butterflies those were the ones that had been  
            snipped off the sun and there were green  
butterflies they'd been snipped off the grass and there were blue  
    butterflies they'd been snipped off the slaves and there were white  
        butterflies they'd been snipped off the stars