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Men Of Rock

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Tim Hoppey

MEN OF ROCK

I lived for hundreds of thousands of years as a mineral,
And then I died and was reborn as a plant.

I lived for hundreds of thousands of years as a plant,
And then I died and was reborn as an animal.

I lived for hundreds of thousands of years as an animal,
And then I died and was reborn as a human being.

—Rumi

Somewhere, shortcuts have been taken. Somebody's books are not in order. Somehow debits have been entered on the credit side. And now something has gone awry in the process of life. Somehow men of rock are among us, lifeless, yet living, and living without knowing how it is to hibernate for a hundred thousand years, to be born over and over again as a crocus or a bear, without knowing what it is to become human.

Even in this small city there are large deposits of these men. They are hardened men with chips on their shoulders. The night is theirs. Their pockets are caves that carry and conceal stalactites, dead ends, and fingers itching to erupt. They are men of rock, magmatic, dangerous, dumb, and they are among us. They've no accountability for their actions. Somewhere, in some way the ledger was doctored, the transaction of birth done crookedly, the transformation rushed, and now these men of rock move over this patch of Earth's crust changing it forever, and changing forever the way we live.

The doors are locked. The windows too. We live behind a slide bolt because somehow it's become all too easy to be a human being.