

POEMS

Mary Claire Pleiss

1

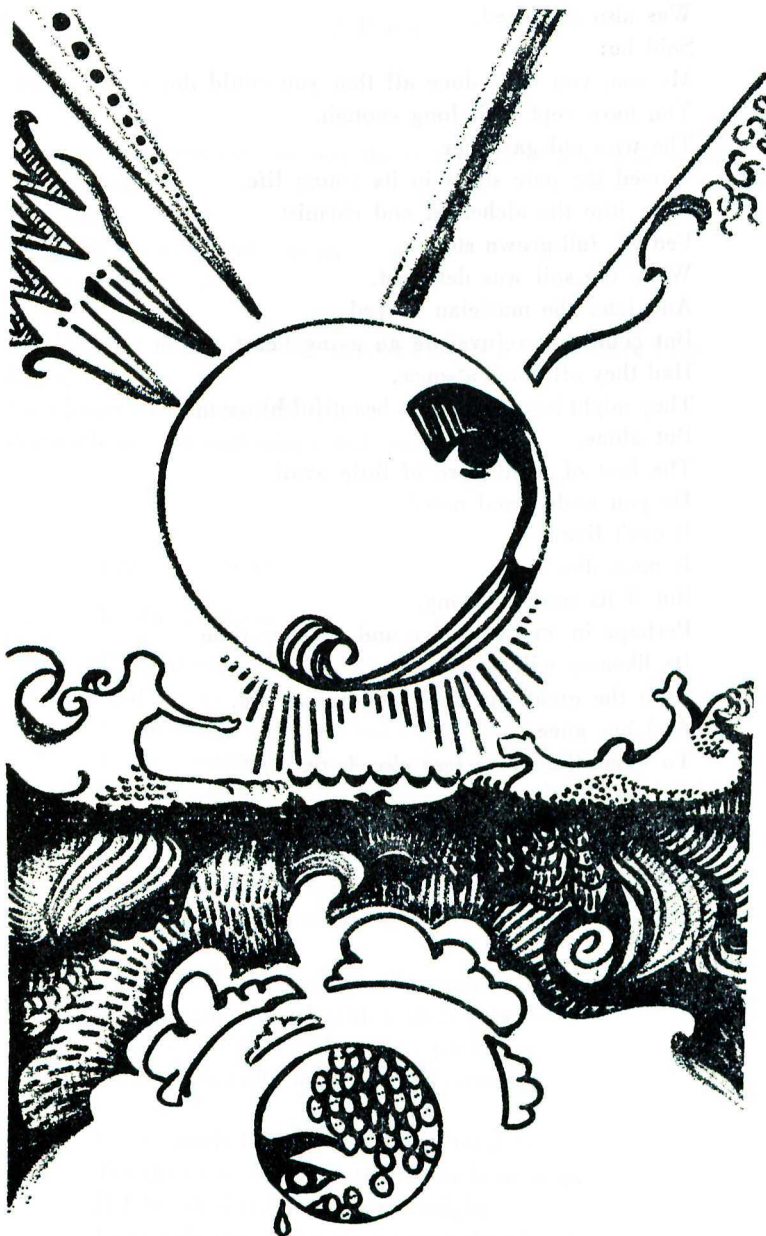
In the beginning no one,
Of those who noticed,
Spoke of the change.
Since they could not describe it very well,
They preferred to avoid misunderstanding.
Thinking about it was awful enough.

It should not be curious
That the children discovered it specifically.
They were playing in the morning,
As usual,
When the first stopped his play,
Arose,
And looked about him.
One by one the others also
Gazed thoughtfully round.
Looking aloft they quietly searched.
One of the littlest pointed to the sky,
And as one
All of the faces swung skyward.
The air was warm,
There were soft clouds,
And light was everywhere.

There was no sun.

2

One of the children
Had watched a flower growing all summer.
His name was Pukka,
And he despaired exceedingly when its three snowy petals
Browned and wrinkled.
His father, Afflatus,



Was also saddened.
Said he:
My son, you have done all that you could do,
You have kept vigil long enough.
The wise old gardener
Nursed the pale shoot in its young life.
After him the alchemist and chemist
Fed the full-grown stem
When the soil was deficient.
And later the musician played,
But could not rejuvenate an aging heart.
Had they all come at once,
They might have saved this beautiful blossom.
But alone,
The best of them were of little avail.
Do you understand now?
It can't live;
It must die.
But if its seed is strong,
Perhaps in another place and a better time
Its likeness will grow.
Even the great sun knew before we did,
And has gone
To warm the living seas elsewhere.