



## **The Rumour**

Beneath her solid skin the woman of stone is a mystery. She has lain on her bed forever; but being so heavy, of course, she has sunk far beneath the ground. We are told that she rises from her sleep when there is no moon, for she is shy and self-conscious. She only travels out in the pouring rain so that there is little chance that she will be seen. We have been told that on stormy nights one can hear her footfall even in the great distance. Her heart, if anything that's said about her can be believed, is a concentric rainbow of agate. It does not beat, but simply exists in the hidden colours of its being, which is equal philosophically to a thudding heart. Those of us who know her only through rumour fell in love with her immediately. But she is as prodigious as mountains and would be unaware of our courtship. Some have claimed to have glimpsed her. Some have even claimed to have slept in a wound of her skin. Some claim to have pieces of her in their pockets. But those of us who truly love her have no need to claim her. We delight in the not-knowing of her; in the not-having of her. We delight fully in the rumour of her; in the not-her of her.

John W. Sexton, Kerry, Ireland