The gray woman lives there, in her gray house,
Made of ocean stone, glass all facing east,
Turn’d away from woods, fields, and others’ eyes.
Towards the gray scrape of the Atlantic.
They say she lives off lavender buds,
Seaweed, barnacles. Juniper and pine.
That she never sleeps, and wanders all night,
Along the rocks, walking with naked feet,
On jagged shale, through the brush of ocean.
Roses. So oft does she look to the waves,
That none have seen her face, only her braid.
Her grace burns bright as lightning, some say, or,
Her eye is dim as a fish, skin as cold.
Her youth lasts with the evergreens, some say,
Or, like roots below, she is old, old, old.

The gray woman lives there, in her gray house,
Made of a thousand stones, all smooth and round.
Receiving no visitors, no letters.
Eyes turn’d always to the salted outward,
Yearning, watching, searching, looking, longing.
Longing, the town watches her, wondering
But not approaching, never soiling
The whares she offers them. Her sacred gift.
Martyr on the cross of the perfect question.
The gray woman, there, with the hidden face.
Patron Saint of more Innocent Desire.
She nurtures earth’s secrets on her cool lips,
True Mystery, her hearth to keep aflame.
So it is, no one here has heard her voice,
No one has touched her hand or knows her name.

Say again, what is it you’ve been told?
Her youth lasts with the evergreens, I’ve heard,
Or, like the bones of whales, she is old, old, old.