

## Passage Grave

I'm in the dry centre of the passage grave,  
looking at interlocking circles  
carved by stone-age hands,  
when the guide tells us life expectancy was twenty-five.

I'm dead, then. The guide adjusts the electric light  
to create a gold glow  
and asks us to imagine sunshine,  
December sunshine striking silent stone.

I imagine I'm Neolithic  
and pregnant, standing here,  
knowing I may die soon from wounds  
or childbirth. I'm taller  
than the other women. When we celebrate I

chew berries and paint my face purple with their juice.  
The women say  
I'm a wicked goddess. We laugh  
together in the dark, and a woman  
kisses my stretched abdomen

where the baby's head  
distorts the skin. She kisses my foot, too, all its firm callouses.  
We laugh together in the dark  
among dry stones and I'm

standing in Newgrange and I imagine I'm  
already dead like all those who  
didn't—who stepped into the sea and went under,  
who never disgorged the pills. I have a year left, I have fifty, I watch

the electric light glow gold, imagine  
stone-age sunshine striking stone,  
and a December goddess laughing in the dark.

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