

Marion Downer

THEY SAY I'M LIKE MY GRANDMOTHER

My grandmother lived in a tall tenement
in Clydebank that isn't there any more.
Through the close and up the stair and there
the kitchen, room and bathroom.
A tiny castle with beds tucked in the walls.
From the room window she could see down
into and along the grey street
but when I knew her she didn't look that way.
She stood gazing out over the kitchen sink,
out over the back, over the middens, over the wall,
past the cranes and across the wide Clyde river
to where green slopes led to purple hills.
My grandmother, with busts of Karl Marx and the
King
upon the mantelpiece, with hope
looked out to the hills.
I look out on to a backyard of green but here
in the western suburbs of Sydney
I can't see through the fibro to the hills.
Through my kitchen window hills aren't seen.