The one room
for my sons

I sit under the apple trees and see the grey of the back fence
roses pruned down to stumps did you know
that hair grows even after death? I know about the cat
her sly poops behind the TV she's old now and grumpy
a dove cooing on the shed clinking
on razor thin feet if the birds are singing there'll be trees
a plane thunders down the Bell street corridor and banks
a magpie calls and I see the farm the lawns the steep
drop of my father's silences our heartbeats hanging
he said don't-you-know-what-you're-getting-yourself-into? as if
all that undertow can tie you in knots if you're good at smiling
nip it in the bud my mother had said indefatigable gardener
I sent them postcards from Japan waiting for the chink of keys
on the low table my Japanese husband reeling me in
we're looking at the same moon she wrote back
when I look up I feel so much closer
I looked down at her in the coffin
brushing her white hair with a baby's brush I thought
now you can stop growing if this is all one room
Rosellas screech among the ripening apples
I can't ask you to love the cat just help her that's all
your father waiting in the cold of the UK if I can travel lightly
photos on one side clothes on the other
giving away and making room I know how my parents felt
when I left holding the line where there wasn't one
but if you let the apple trees die ...