

**Second Language**

I am a tenant  
in this glorious palace,  
running through rooms and hallways  
someone else has decorated,  
sleeping in a bed  
as if it's my own,  
my dusty boots lying on the floor.

I try to earn my keep  
so I spruce up a bit,  
only take small sips  
from the wine in the cellar  
--or did I buy it?  
I can't remember  
what's mine and  
what I have found here.

I feel quite welcome  
but I keep  
a suitcase ready,  
just in case.  
Once in a while,  
I nail one of my own portraits  
On a burnished wall.

*Natasha Garrett*