Caroline Caddy (b.1944)

Wheatbelt

slipstreamed twist Trees once twice into the ground. It's like flying. Black suction out there gauge etched through on its lower rim. and the moon But the needle's dropped out! So this is the speed of light. Hours away we begin our descent toward that town stretching in one dimension bunching like flat astrologies and dawn -'so the moon-man and the star-girl pressed a button and the collapsible house of the sun sprang up ...' glide path through Lorentz transformations grey gros-grain ribbon emu feathers mallee scrub. Touchdown in the country of the fifth element air fire earth water salt A woman steps out bends to the window g'day ... She hands us a map but no matter how we fold it where we want to be is on the other side so much space between the lines. Did the old surveyors tethered to horse and camel Know they were making these flight plans? slingshot from an unploughed crease to a patch of scrub no higher than a man's arm

raised above his head it is a man! And what's he waving pay-day at the gangers' camp givus a lift? On the move we learn oaths of naturalisation hands held apart in the static clap of track alignment measure of camaraderie and keeping the Croats from the throats of the Serbs. Signalman! Dialect of pure action. We must have tripped a set of points a town pops up where the mechanism of sight seems to be a broken windscreen that cockpit feel main street like a run-way control tower pub with its white bionic ear. We taxi to the meeting place of roses and gum trees shade of crossed arms crossed legs They disconcert by liberties their limbs take on dry earth we only allow ourselves by water. Sinews of movement tied to bone make them distance eaters with nowhere to go rights wound down to privilege and that stele over there totting up wars it moves! so slowly we can't follow.

A micro-shift of universe and someone's hand brailles -'and after he saved the village he put this stone here ...' At the hangar vellow bellies of wheat wagons shine in long emissions from the mother lode engine they are moved by. She pulls the horizon up over her face but keeps her finger on the pulse one shunt and they roll all the way to the sea Port Beach Esperance Geraldton where green glass bars lift the swimmers by their chins. One inland surfer waits by his board. It's a Holden ute white it's got to be white that special additive that lets him 'appear' win the maiden find the grail without a word. And for a moment he does one hand on the swell of the hood the other pistol-gripped at his thigh. In the dark behind him or is it ahead someone shoulders a door power-plant hammering out light. Then quiet almost to the point of believing still cores exist but for softly vast from between parked cars please 'please we've got to talk' ... Vega the weaver girl and Altair the herd boy found their way across the heavenly River last month.

But sleep sleep till the sun pulls white sheets and airbrakes add hectapascals to the morning's blue expansion lifting walls trampled rugs of grass a man at the co-op with a heavy drum angled to him steering out past the depot where mighty grasshoppers with blades in their guts push air. Past dip-stick lakes on-line one lane gathering speed thinning thinning the bitumen till it has to distort to let us through welling out at the last minute and we're there again no incantation necessary no word wish not even just pull the sprung pin hardback watch the steel ball and let go ... the land of no geography tables out from our hips.