

Caroline Caddy (b.1944)

Wheatbelt

Trees slipstreamed twist
once twice into the ground.
It's like flying. Black suction out there
and the moon gauge etched through on its lower rim.
But the needle's dropped out!
So this is the speed of light.
Hours away we begin our descent toward that town
bunching stretching in one dimension
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 —
earth air fire 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

