

Joannm Davis

How far you walk, in evening, not long after rain,
past the park and a sports-field squared to the suburb
by a double lane main road,

one in the phonebox drops coins into distance
explaining, coercing and changing the angle
of a troubled hard hurt voice;

underneath blue gums slide shadows of house-cats,
hunting — instinctive, primeval, as silent
as fledglings high closed safe,

hard by the tyre-swings looms an old roundabout,
swish of wind and breath and my foot
to the gravel worn bare grey,

stars are a dizziness — bounced in this circling,
car lights corner and rake round the branches,
Who travels past fast free?

rowel-eyed tail-lights supple as blossoms
drag tracers on gleaming stretches of bitumen,
are leading here there gone;

frogs claim the acre, a flying-fox swoops
from this denseness of figtrees past bones of a goalpost
by the leaning board score cheer —

sharp smell of leafmould . . . sudden the rain
steady rhythm: my footfall on rough mown grass
transcending night touch home,

urban, exalting, man's essence in nature
flows faster than raining, the running, the breath
stirs the steaming wet warm flesh . . .