

JOHN KINSELLA

FIRST LINES TYPED AT JAM TREE GULLY

To hold the walls of valley  
down-thrust limbs of York gum  
liminality, flakes of granite  
and lichen scored as sun inland,  
glitterati, this Toodyay stone  
broken where the building  
has opened precipice,  
erodability, that movement  
where we walk, dislocating  
weight of conversation, even  
meditation, to contravene  
our visibility, perched  
up on high, sidereal.

A drawing out, the day  
lessens, rampage  
of dead and living trees,  
entire collapsed structures,  
signs of fire as jam-tree bark  
blackened crumbles with touch,  
all working shadows thin  
up the hill, *the hill*. Kangaroos  
stir from their shady places—  
the heat so intense at midday  
they don't do more than lift  
their head as you approach.

In the dirt, laterite smudgings,  
hard-baked patches of sand, coarse-  
grained breakdown of quartzite  
in its granoblastic glory, a sheen  
of mica and feldspar configuring  
a sandstone past, a declaration

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of origins; what grows in what  
was here before? It demands  
reconnection or the hill  
will despoil to its granite  
core and nothing more,  
nothing more. Dazzling  
anomaly of pyrites, breeze  
sharpened with “fool,” “fool”...  
welcome here... don't cling  
together, give us roots  
to nest among, cling to.

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Common bronzewings heavy across the blank  
of an arena we will fill with trees: sandy  
spectacle, where horses rounded  
on their tails: I see them twitch.

Internal fences down and out. Fewer  
divisions. To predict a fate, changes  
sweeping over an old old place; ring-  
neck parrot feathers no divination.  
What has chiacked in place  
of undergrowth?

Weebills are here! And mistletoe birds  
have been where mistletoe fruits have prospered,  
have seeded jam trees, where nectar-hungry  
birds of many varieties test the hardy flowers  
drooping in swatches from thin, straining necks;  
the parasitic engenders its own chains of being.  
I am not asking to be part of it. With time,  
something will click, I have no idea what. No

second-guessing, despite the weight  
of hexagrams, I-Ching. What else  
I might read. Weebills are here!

Horseshoes and sheep skulls strewn across the block.  
Rare new growth, so late and odd. Fire wardens  
watching afraid of vegetation? They have their own  
version of prehistory, their own version of growth.

The making of place as a dynamic of couplings,  
as if love and trust are omens, odds in your favor.  
The sun burns but also fringes the leaves.