



POEM | John Charles Ryan

SHEOAK REVERIE

Allocasuarina fraseriana

Welshpool Road mounting
the Hills above Perth City
soused in eventide spawl

sheoaks rummy with radiata pine
all fogging together
my auto reverie cut short

by the uphill travail of three
cylinders, I lapse into a mindset
bevelled into white or red oaks

ejecting lacquered acorns
to the boreal duff somewhere
on a tenebrous broadleaf floor

lore hunts us down the same
Nantosuelta lurking on the plain
feminine oak or the settler's bane

tiny teeth are your verdure
neither as leaves nor as needles
but as cladodes, unlike the pine

you see, where I come from
winter is roughshod and slaps
the rubicund faces of boys and trees

threadbare smiles crack coldly
fall in brittle leaf potshards
marrow congeals and turns to ice

and just when you get used to it
the thaw barges in overnight
I know, this is somewhere else

but further on, at the roundabout
the bald tyres of the Daewoo skid
on the slick bitumen to Kalamunda

and I end up turned backwards again.