We walked another hour
before we spoke
and then we spoke
of the trees
by the roadside,
the red tin roofs,
the knee-deep furrows
carrying water
from the river.

Across the river
windmills turn the air,
cows bellow, voices
lift in song into the distance
into the bright—
blue midsummer sky. Karoo midday:
birds ride the wind like light
itself, careen
across the open fields.

From the fields
the road is quiet.
Acacias lace the grass
with white, and red stars
blossom by the roadside.

The displaced Dutch cathedral lifts its spire above the trees,
casts no shadows.

IAN TROMP