In deserted farm gardens
spiders are busy creating
lines of text spun upon
these lands. And as
they re-read assiduously with
finger tips their own braille history
of granite monoliths and swales,
saltmarsh and sand-ridge
the infinite numbers
of plant species, mosses, lichens,
and ancient animal life,
we other travellers haunt
the twilight of our lesser texts.

GRANITIC VERTEBRAE
‘The weight of granite will damage vertebrae’
John Kinsella

How to defy the universe
can begin with gravity.
You find a boulder, crowbar
it out of the earth to set
it as the base of your wall.

First align your feet to meet
the centre of this stone globe,
tense your calves and lock both knees
for a start. The thighs then must
take the strain as you stoop, grasp
the rock in an act of love
for granite; keep your back straight
and hope your Pisan tower
of stacked up chairs won’t totter.

It is now you may lie back
and think of your queen, or claim
good fences make good vertebrae.

SHARING
(for L.P.)

Suffering: it is a real woman’s task
to take finally the harder road
while someone listens to the pipa
far, far away from that music’s home.
They say such tunes are food for love.
But what sustenance is this? When
thousand after thousand ocean miles
drown out the singing of plucked strings
with sea’s rough work of waves and howl
of driven salt winds across the crests.

After the song has ended you walk
on broken paths in the desert silence.
Over granite rocks air shimmers as heat
rises. Strange mirages show plates