

kaat badarbiny

relearning language –
running a tongue o
ver grass trees and wel
comes to country, words
that unpick and re
sew, words that staunch the
bleeding. the wounds? too

many. Yagan, head
in a jar for a
freak show on the oth
er side of the globe,
Wagin, nineteen thir
ties, barbed wire at six
p.m., and Wadje
mup (Rottnest), Tent Land
across a centu
ry of incarcer
ated bones. today –

more bruised cumulous –
army home inva
sions in the Alice,
hooded and haunting
in Don Dale Deten
tion Centre. morrow?

remouthing the pho
netics of a land,
maarpa – hush of un
spokens –

man in coun
try, countryman be
sides tree, tree along
side man, man with man

Kevin Gillam

(“kaat badarbiny” – Nyungar for thinking.
“maarpa” – Nyungar for shared silence)