

Unflooded - Eleanor Malbon

it's not going to look like a city flooded
not here in this sheep paddock town
it's not going to be cyclonic winds of rain, hail
and afterwards muddied feet and tarp housing
here, it will be bushfires
burning forty metres high
heat-warped emergencies that you don't hear about
until the smoke obscures the sky
and the daylight is too hot to step into
it's not going to be pretty
but sometimes it will be pretty
the sun will still shine through
grass seeds in the evening
the moonlight will still turn
soft possum heads at night
a blue wren may hop through
anonymous bushes in the morning
some people will still see the people that they love
a couple might hold a wedding
with their feet between rubble and broken glass
halted cranes in the background
black against an ember-setting sky
maybe the tears in the eyes of a young woman
will warp the sight of the flames
so it seems like the Aurora Australis are
exploding in front of her in all their peaceful, touristic
glory
those warped flames in all their terrifying beauty