

## **Drought: Now This**

In the down under, over there,  
fire thunders, licks through  
homes, farms, cattle, leaving  
charred remains of what was  
once life.

People by the thousands  
hunker down at ocean edge,  
soles on sand,  
knees trembling,  
children clutched tight,  
faces flickering  
in and out of focus,  
red and orange shadows.

Ash, smoke, soot  
pelt down on bent heads,  
a dog moans.

Otherwise, only  
heaving walls of flame,  
blazing tongues of fire,  
consume everything,  
while humans wait  
in disbelief,  
on a failing shore.

*- Marcia Rutan*

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