

Burning Season

By Nell McDermott



Coarse green blades
emerge from stalks,
thirsty, demanding,
capricious.

Faces red-radiant,
sugar-scorched breath.
Black snow billows,
swallows dusk.

A tempest turns,
stalks, enshrouds, burns;
raw flesh howls
down to bone.

Clenched cracking fingers.

Ash-crusted blisters.

Peel away cling-wrap.

Scrape away husk.

Search for a vein of sweetness.

Harvest it with flame.

My son—

Violence is a kind of love.

Image: "[Cane fire](#)" (CC BY 2.0) by [robstephaustralia](#).