

BURNING LAND

(Neil Murray)

On February 7th 2009 it was only 11am but the mercury had hit 47 degrees. I opened the back door and stepped into a furnace. An apocalyptic wind was howling from the north. Dust obscured the horizon. It was eerie- I almost expected smoke.

I found a swamp wallaby reclining in the lee of a drying pond, trying to keep cool chewing on a few blades of green grass that still grew there. I wanted to lie down and embrace her and sob tears into her pungent belly fur, crying sorry, sorry, sorry for fuckin the weather up.

But I turned back, with the scorching wind hissing at my bare legs and retreated indoors passed the birds-desperate for relief- cramming the dog's water bowl.

The radio brought news of vicious fires breaking out in the east and fear gripped me - I had no fire plan. Except to flee to the middle of our dry lake bed and watch the inferno take my house - best not be attached to dwellings anyway.

But we were spared - no fire visited our district that day, but elsewhere- whole families were incinerated.

I went out in the wind - hottest day there'd ever been
Hottest day there'd ever been - I went out in the wind
Sky as black as coal - flames above the trees
Burning land far as I could see
Burning land far as I could see

Sorry for the birds, animals and plants
Sorry for the birds, animals and plants
Sorry for them people- didn't have chance

Burning land! What have we done?
Burning land! What's gone wrong?

(wotwegunnadowotwegunnadowotwegunnadowotwegunnado,wotwegonnado)

Once there was a lake -now its dry
Once there was a lake- its gone dry
Save one last river - river save us please!
Save one last river! River save us please!

Burning land! Far as I can see!
Burning land!

(wotwegunnadowotwegunnadowotwegunnadowotwegunnadowotwegonnado)

Cry for them people - didn't have a chance
Cry for them people - didn't have a chance

Burning land! Far as I can see!
Save one last river! River saves us please!
Cry cry cry- Burning land!
Cry cry cry - Burning, burning land!

(wotwegunnadowotwegunnadowotwegunnadowotwegunnadowotwegunnado)

Burning land!