

*Collaboration: Pastoral on Fire*

This is where I once recognised the beauty of the briar around the rose.

From one mountain to the next I led sheep and goat to see the sun set down the valley's throat.

This part of the country gagged, all scrub brush and scree.

Standing on a crag, I said what I pleased: Bad teeth on the face of the landscape: Do not, I said, do wrong by me.

This country apologised in fire; nothing was redeeming, not even the moon.

Even the moon looked to have pity on the fire; I ran from the moon that circled my desire.

In front of a judge, in front of a jail: I want this fire to put itself out, to lyrically extinguish itself quickly as it's spread.

Because darkness, I said, is just about the only thing worth mentioning in this part of the country.

The land is a bluff overlooking the valley; the land is a bluff I called.

With a match, within a month, I'll be back sneaking into mountains to light pilots.

# *The Doctor's Child and the Doctor*

—The symptoms I presented with were a test.

—I doubted his efficacy as he doubted mine.

—More than once I rolled my eyes towards the back of my skull.

—I reminded him that I had things to do.

—I wanted no more placebos or expired vials.

—More than once he rolled his eyes towards Heaven.

—I reminded him of his own illness.

—By refusing to get better, he offered me no comfort.

—A doctor's child, I told him, is often the most neglected.

—I, however, took some nonetheless.

