

## **Firelife**

*Owen Bullock*

you're old and famished  
    and dry  
you sweat with the heat  
    the oceans try to soak  
they lap at your edge, your feet  
    your hands, your hair  
        your rocks

all of us – you're all of us

we're old and famished  
    our lungs choke  
        like trees  
            spluttering out  
                in the unmentionable

but I'm not burnt  
    legs unblackened –  
        those ghostly, ghosted limbs –

I have no firelife

    epicormic  
you come back  
    in spite of it all  
        (because of it all)  
in and out of time  
    eucalypts, acacias  
        green on black bark

Poetry: *Firelife* by Owen Bullock

but will you exhaust yourself – our worry

is nothing

your action

the unexpected possible

your action

all we have

one valley lost

the next

shoots

in leapsprouts leafgusts suncaptures

climbing

climbing Mongo

from Bateman's Bay

**Owen Bullock's** latest poetry collection is *Pancakes for Neptune* (Recent Work Press, 2023). He has published three other collections, five books of haiku, a bilingual collection of tanka, and a novella. He is Discipline Lead for Creative Writing and Literary Studies at the University of Canberra. <https://poetry-in-process.com/>  
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