

## **House of Ash**

**My house burnt down.**

**I couldn't do a thing about it. I just sat there  
looking out the window while it burned.**

**It started in the bedroom. The smell of smoke  
had been around for months, years maybe,  
but it didn't set alarm bells ringing.**

**Smoke clung to the curtains. The smouldering  
mattress scorched the sheets. A sooty film  
grimed the windows and the walls.**

**My skin paled with the slow drift of ash.  
It brittled my hair. The taste of cinders  
parched my mouth. Words began to blaze.**

**They flared up wantonly, igniting spotfires.  
As fast as I put one out,  
sparks flickered in another room.**

**Perhaps it was a fault in the wiring, or  
the too-bright light through a magnifying lens, or  
the piles of crumpled poems on the floor – good kindling.**

**The sun was a crimson disc and the moon promised no rain.**

**Tears couldn't stifle the flames.  
They only drove them underground  
where they devoured the foundations.**

**I kept looking out the window.  
No firemen came with bright red engines and vanquishing hoses.  
No water bombs dropped from above.**

**The house continues its long slow smoulder  
until everything I touch crumbles  
the heart hollowed right out of it.**

**Now I live in a house of ash  
alert to the slightest wind.**