the burning question

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remember to smell the
salty spicey sweet
air —
AI overview tells me:
The harsh isolated nutrient poor Australian environment
is to blame
but the country I know is
supple, fertile
life giving
and unforgiving to those who mistreat it

Do you smell that?
Or are your pores, your holes
clogged, shovelled
pounded by the city
packed with soot
even your blackheads are contained
by the structures made
to protect you
and your children!
from savagery
that allow you to shelter, protect, survive, be comfortable.
to colonise/be colonised/be coloniser.

Are you uncomfortable?
If yes: interrogate your psyche, I'll wait.
If no: stay comfortable, the empire thanks you.

But I ask:
show me life that doesn't bleed
sky spills pink at dawn
glittered on split bark seeping
bright toffee, life force
Mother
possum left her blood on my balcony
twice.

But that thing you built for us?
— the colony —
doesn't bleed

calcified sacred veins
choke the morning chorus
I'm losing her!

the colony growls
but is not a beast that bleeds

Hoard memory like paper
and burn it for warmth
some seeds only bloom after

burning.