DROUGHT TIME: BUILDING BUSH FENCES

(Apologies to John Kinsella for the palimpsest upon his poem ‘The Frozen Sea’)

Having to cut fence-posts to size was as big a task as I’d want. Later we’d peel away light-coloured sapwood, telling ourselves that darkness is heart-wood, dense as ice; excepting the jam-trees’ scent of raspberries. Seemed that with the frosts, I had thought ice to be a clear sign the logs’d split true; misted transparency of early morning assured from memory’s break of season. There was none; other than odd cool days. And I’d come to fear I could still cut each week’s quota. The thought that some day I’d fail plagued me. Contract near an end, but what next? Winter with no water?