

Game Night

In the moment, we pass the time with riddles.

Every three answers: shadow.

Holes: sponge. Universal: tree.

Seasonal: fire.

Days later, we forget

until we see another family

hunched over the same riddles

quizzically. Shadows, they say,

horse shoes and seasons.

The answer is always "blanket,"

the youngest one says

as he counts backwards to himself

from 500.

Untitled
for E. and C.

She is learning about legends, tells a story about a boy who stands next to an active volcano and gets covered in ash and becomes a volcano himself. Transitive property of volcano, he says, as he describes that lava is really magma that comes from a crack in the earth. Unique stories. Names. Building layers on me until I erupt.

She is a difficult sort,
her body so small and slippery.
Runs warm, always shedding her sweater.
Bare arms open to the snow. She cries
when she is dropped in the powder,
cushion catches her with a "swoosh".
It's hard to take her seriously as she screams,
the moment so buoyant, thin, surface.

How can I know if you are really hurt?

You will never, ever know, she screams,
thrashing and deeper and quicksand.

On the radio, they talk of explosions.
Music, she says, once we have surfaced.
We are both relieved and sad and covered in dust.

It is true, they have amended me, altered the logical path each word/phrase/event/report now takes. Are volcanoes born as mountains, or do they evolve into mounds, hills, mountains as each eruption compounds upon itself? Layers of ash, rock, sediment. On TV, we see a picture of a bulge on the side of the volcano. Retrospective. Taken by a tourist on a hike: they didn't see it at the time. They didn't know it was about to snow fire.