

We're back

by [Paul Willis](#) in the [May 13, 2015](#) issue

After the fire, houses in the chaparral  
start up again like new shoots of poison oak.  
The resilience of nature? The power  
of habit? The shallows of the human mind?

We keep building on the flood plain,  
kicking steps up the avalanche chute,  
camping out on the crumbling  
lip of the volcano.

Those hollow figures at Pompeii,  
crouched in the admission of error,  
became the casts for Rodin's *Thinker*.  
Think about it.

In Korea, there are a hundred different men  
who claim to be returned messiahs  
(not counting their messiah wives)—  
and thousands who erect their faith upon this sand.

And here in the U.S. of A., cutting sagebrush  
in my yard, the dry winds parting my lips,  
I feel right at home with the rest,  
making do, claiming ground.