

Beneath us is consuming fire.

The infected earth abruptly shakes and coughs.  
Split roads smoke.

Frantic residents grab documents, pictures, pets, and run.  
Their tire marks on sun-faded asphalt  
are soon swallowed by crawling lava.

Ravenous photographers ignore officials  
to angle for the perfect shot  
of molten rock geysers,  
orange-silhouetted palm trees,  
and sweat-bathed refugees.

A rainforest melts to ash.

Downstream, a torrent of scarlet stone  
explodes against the boiling cold ocean.

Relics vanish under new land—  
hard, grey, pinched, bubbled,  
expectant.

# Volcano

Christina E. Petrides

