# MARIO CHARD Round

State departments of transportation use military artillery to control the avalanche threat above mountain highways. Occasionally artillery ordnance does not explode upon impact, a potential risk to hikers after the snow melts.

-United States Forest Service

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All night the sound of water in a ditch. No dreams to speak of.

Not the cannon shells across the canyon or their routine

sound. Snow pulled from the mountain like a sleeve

torn from a shoulder. We inoculate our son. In the needle,

the same virus we hope his body will defeat.

In my father's dream it is the ditch that wakes him,

> All night the sound of water in a ditch. No dreams to speak of

voices coming from the lawn. Outside, men stand with their arms uncrossed,

> not the cannon shells across the canyon or their routine

men who ask him for his boots. When he slips them from his feet

> sound. Snow pulled from the mountain

he sees water spilling from the tops, water running from the porch

torn from a shoulder. We inoculate our son. In the needle

and gutter, water where the ditch had been, the mountains all made low.

the same virus we hope his body will defeat

I woke, waited barefoot by my window

In my father's dream it is the ditch

until the cannon shook my roof again, sent the smallest avalanche

coming from the lawn. Outside

it had not meant to barreling from my shingles.

his boots. When he slips them from his feet

In the dream I saw men standing where the ditch had been,

water spilling from the tops, running

then only half their bodies stranded in the snow.

> where the ditch had been, the mountains all made low

When they said it was a boy hiked farther than the others on the mountain,

> Woke, waited barefoot by my window

stumbled on the live round in the grass and pine needles where the shell

> shook my roof again the smallest avalanche

struck in winter, I dreamed I also picked the metal from the brush

had not meant to barreling.

to see it better, knew its risk by weight alone,

> In the dream I saw men standing

ran the shell back quickly to my father.

then only half their bodies stranded in the snow

When they said it was a boy hiked farther than the others on the mountain,

stumbled on the live round in the grass and pine needles where the shell

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