



There's a Fire on the Mountain

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My friends and I
have a game we
like to play.

"There's a fire on the mountain.
Run, run! Kukh'umlilo kwezontaba.
Baleka, baleka!"



Then one day there was a real fire on the mountain. It was a terrible fire that burned and burned.



Big, old buildings burned, books
burned, trees and grasses
burned. Helicopters tipped
water onto the fire and brave
firefighters
blasted their hoses.



And people did run. They grabbed their books
and bags and ran away from the smoke and
the flames.



After three long days, the
last flames were out.

The firefighters could finally rest.



The slopes of the mountain were black. When we
walked on the mountain, all we could see were
rocks and burnt bushes.

We were very sad.





Until one day ... tiny bits of red
popped up through the black.

“Look, look. What is that?”





The little bits of
red grew
and grew
until they became
beautiful fire lilies, tall
and elegant with
drooping red
bells for flowers.

Then came the big, red flowers bursting through the green like volcanoes. They looked like thick red tubes with yellow-topped spikes and big, red petals.

Dots of green grew up all over the mountainside, turning the black into green grasses and restios.



Then there were asparagus ferns unfolding in wet patches after the rain.



And the tall
watsonia
in orange
and pink.

Soon the mountainside was
covered with plants we hadn't
seen for years.



The mountain is full of new life!





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