

Keeping a Roof Over Your Head · *Richard Blessing*

for Lisa

On your roof, steep and glassy as an otter's slide,
I lie down. The wind is full of water, and I lie down,
taking the shape of rain, trying to get through to you.

You haven't needed me for a year and a month.

Now,
this winter, patching things up, I grow heavy. Shingles
crack under me like April ice. Patching these, I split others.

Above what old neighbors think, I crawl undignified and shivering,
the only skater on this mossy pond. And the light comes a long way,
smelling of North, pale as Silvers running the straits
beyond Port Angeles.

I sweep away the waste of maple seeds.
Roofing tar and flashing, I fix what I can reach.

There are no guarantees, you told me once. Still, today,
keeping a roof over your head, I am happy. Listen, this work
is guaranteed, love against weather, though all around
the winter rain keeps falling its own cold way.