

## **Habitation**

Margaret Atwood

Marriage is not  
a house or even a tent

it is before that, and colder:

the edge of the forest, the edge  
of the desert

    the unpainted stairs  
at the back where we squat  
outside, eating popcorn

the edge of the receding glacier

where painfully and with wonder  
at having survived even  
this far

we are learning to make fire

*from Selected Poems 1965 – 1975 (Houghton Mifflin, 1996)*