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## Hope House

R. A. Christmas

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## Hope House

After the land, the basement  
comes first. All you need  
is muscle and cement,

a little plumbing, framing,  
wiring—kitchen, bath, and at most  
two bedrooms—you keep it

cheap and simple because  
probably it's the depression  
and you don't have a dime.

(It ain't a hope house  
anyway unless you live low down  
and hope for something better.)

Then the roof goes on—flat  
and a foot or so off the ground,  
with tiny windows. Some folks like

a peaked roof, but it ends up  
looking like a regular house drowned  
in dirt—so don't put on

any airs, just pour some steps  
and throw up an entry,  
like a lean-to standing there.

Utah used to be full of hope  
houses—places where you could live  
indefinitely if things didn't work out.

—R. A. Christmas