

A Sofa in the Eighties

I was born in Bourne and Hollingsworth,
conceived by credit, (an interest-free birth),
and taken home to Wimbledon
by Fiona and John
for their bijou maisonette.
Only a two-seater would fit.

They raced up the property
ladder to prosperous Surrey;
a grand town house, three floors,
built for young executives with more
money than sense. It didn't sit well.
Dreams of modern living turned to marital hell.

Fiona fought for custody of the furniture
in the settlement, and we settled for
lodgings in Leatherhead, until she grew weary,
and fostered me out to her brother in Hackney.
My springs sang to the risky rhythms of a gay bachelor,
but I had no aspirations to the role of death gondola.

My plush velour was thinning and my arms were looking tired.
He bought a futon from Ikea. I thought I'd be retired
to a home for old sofas with others like me.
Then I moved down to the Medway Towns with Anna's family,
where the children played trains on me and spilt Ribena,
and tortured my back against a radiator.

Their cats clawed my cushions.
I was going out of fashion.
They upgraded to a sofa bed,
so they could put up Uncle Fred.
And now the end is near. I fear the final curtain
draped over to cover each scar and stain.

My final journey is in a Ford Transit hearse.
With no eulogy, no funeral verse,
I am shouldered ceremoniously
to be laid to rest in Streatham with Aunt Jenny.
Comforted with Plumbs Stretch Covers, free from strife,
I end my days with Auntie: a cushioned life.

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