

William Plomer (1903-73)

3 *The Dorking Thigh*

About to marry and invest
Their lives in safety and routine
Stanley and June required a nest
And came down on the 4.15.

The agent drove them to the Posh Estate 5
And showed them several habitations.
None did. The afternoon got late
With questions, doubts, and explanations.

Then day grew dim and Stan fatigued
And disappointment raised its head, 10
But June declared herself intrigued
To know where that last turning led.

It led to a Tudor snuggerly styled
'Ye Kumfi Nooklet' on the gate.
'A gem of a home,' the salesman smiled, 15
'My pet place on the whole estate;

'It's not quite finished, but you'll see
Good taste itself.' They went inside.
'This little place is built to be
A husband's joy, a housewife's pride.' 20

They saw the white convenient sink,
The modernistic chimneypiece,
June gasped for joy, Stan gave a wink
To say, 'Well, here our quest can cease.'

The salesman purred (he'd managed well) 25
And June undid a cupboard door.
'For linen,' she beamed. And out there fell
A nameless Something on the floor.

‘Something the workmen left, I expect,’
The agent said, as it fell at his feet, 30
Nor knew that his chance of a sale was wrecked.
‘Good heavens, it must be a joint of meat!’

Ah yes, it was meat, it was meat all right,
A joint those three will never forget—
For they stood alone in the Surrey night 35
With the severed thigh of a plump brunette . . .

* * *

Early and late, early and late,
Traffic was jammed round the Posh Estate,
And the papers were full of the Dorking Thigh
And who, and when, and where, and why. 40

A trouser button was found in the mud
(Who made it? Who wore it? Who lost it? Who knows?)
But no one found a trace of blood
Or her body or face, or the spoiler of those.

He’s acting a play in the common air 45
On which no curtain can ever come down.
Though ‘Ye Kumfi Nooklet’ was shifted elsewhere
June made Stan take a flat in town.

1945

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