

The first giraffe to be forced to live in a shoe

Dermot Bolger
(AGED 44 & THREE QUARTERS)

I'd like a tall spacious house, wouldn't you?
With wooden doors and floors and curtains of blue,
a Turkish bath with gold taps spraying bubbly goo,
and, on the roof, a spacecraft with seating for two.

So can anybody anywhere under the sun,
tell me exactly where I went wrong?
My name is Terrence Twitchy Tightfit McHugh
the first giraffe to be forced to live in a shoe.

It is entirely my own fault I have to confess,
I jumbled up the advertisement into a mess,
and imagined it read 'Dream-homes exceeding nice',
instead of 'Dwellings suitable for exceeding small mice'.

I paid my deposit and they gave me a key,
I did not find my house, my house found me.
While scanning the street to spy which mansion was mine
I stumbled over a shoe with a Sale Agreed sign:

'Reserved for Terrence Twitchy Tightfit McHugh
the first giraffe to purchase a size-nine shoe.'
My life is not so bad since I've adjusted to it,
annoying relations never visit because they can't fit.

And all of my neighbours are exceeding nice,
twice a day I'm infested by friendly mice,
and by a hippo who visits and eats all my soap
while his son takes my shoelaces as a skipping rope.

He tells me about an elephant living with a fox
half a mile from here in a disused match box
and how every night in Africa each rhinoceros
queues up at the water hole for his fish and chips.

He's an impossible liar and a tremendous rogue,
and says he envies my space compared to his wee abode
with its seven sunken baths and vast staircase.
He says it is exhausting to own so much space.

But he never asks me home in case I eat his soap
or commandeer his washing line as a skipping rope.
He wanders off for his tea with his youngest son
who invariably leaves the laces of my house undone.

Can anybody anywhere under the sun,
tell me exactly where I went wrong?
My name is Terrence Twitchy Tightfit McHugh
the first giraffe to be forced to live in a shoe.