

## Brogues

Joseph Cheyney's since you ask – classic  
handmade mahogany. A sale purchase  
from the shop with three hundred quid  
monogrammed velvet slippers in the window  
and ladies who swipe my plastic - doubtfully.

*Black polish and a soft cloth mate, it antiques  
the shine* – this from a Deptford face with pin-sharp  
pupils who's never spoken to me before, apart  
from that time on the dance floor, when he barked  
*shif yer arse*. Less than a year on and I can feel

every little stone. The ladies send them away  
to their man and they're returned three weeks later  
tissue-wrapped with a hand-written receipt. A flash  
of red sock between them and Prince of Wales check  
in the cracked mirror of my room, soles so slick

the stair-carpet may as well be ice. I step out,  
pockets empty from the cost, stride up the hill  
to the twitching curtains and long drives  
to rough them up a little, steel quarter heels  
grinding the gravel to dust.

*Martin Figura  
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for

*Shoes or No Shoes  
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