**CHATKA**

Nestling in leafy lane, your dream retreat,

child-free space, magical in my early days.

Fulsome garden, apple trees, mountain high,

now much smaller, in my adult gaze.

Chalet bedrooms caught in triangular roof,

built-in cupboards, mothball pungent.

Every ornament knew its rightful place,

only later revealing glued-up cracks.

Spiders cling to your empty corners,

tragic remnants of a closet life

Uncle’s secret in the garden shed.

Unused christening gown under the bed.