

The Story of Seating

In the 14th and 15th centuries
furniture was so scarce
even noblemen
with many homes
carried their stools
and tables from house
to house and visitors
often brought
their own beds.

Much was made
to fold and collapse
and hard edges reigned
even for kings and queens.

Wooden chests were used for seating,
eating and writing; always packed
and ready to move. Chairs
were rare, reserved
for those in high
command.

When the Romans were in power
the wealthy reclined on couches
while their servants brought
them food and other delights.
Such hefty pieces of upholstery
were signs of prestige
and fell into decline
when the Empire
lost its footing.

Later, couches surfaced in parlors
where women fainted upon them
after gasping a gulp of air
when they loosened their corsets
around eighteen inch waists
or their emotions demanded more air
than their lungs could hold.

Now in America
we are intimate
with the embrace
of chairs and sofas.
And we take our places
without ever thinking of who
doesn't deserve
a chair.

