The Visitor’s Guest
Also by Nathan Thompson

the arboretum towards the beginning
The Visitor’s Guest

Nathan Thompson

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For Laura
open book

can you help?

can you help?

can you help?

the ladies were fierce in their requests for flowers

magic is pessimism taken to its logical confusion


discuss

it is getting harder to conclude anything

to go to work is as relevant as

older than yesterday

and even then

excess of confidence can be misleading

’play the scale as if you actually know it

and you’ll fool 70% of people’ (except musicians)

knowing who’s an expert

is perhaps useful for future development

but too many coffees may nonetheless result

in catastrophic diagnoses

about how hearts beat faster when in love with themselves

and everything else is fear

when I left the prefab and came to find you

it was dark in the extreme

alleys of discontent  winter butterflies

fluttered like snow

reversing any sense of control

and I have been inspired to tell you this by a liar

who shudders collages with his broken thumbs

obscuring misprints at pivotal moments in the argument

such that not to go to work is as relevant as

sitting here watching smoke-shards retract into baggy clouds
and when you can say that you can say anything
that was ever concreted under the poetic patio
without the slightest risk
that locks of your hair will become romantic trophies

if I find you agree     I will let you know
that considering these points was important

until then     ‘mist envelops the whole reckless cathedral’
the thing about

the thing about is
things turn
round a way of seeing

spring colours on an afternoon
is ashes on wednesday by another darker
flowing condensed
or ears’ open promise
saved for tomorrow in a frieze of possibilities

now is     continued
flushing out memories
open winter crossed apart too long
from here as
          lower the windows and
blink perfect days hanging
magic by its own admission

not always guilt     signs and
collective misuse of understanding

shall we go to the

is it worth

before edges focus
kaleidoscope switching

to bleed is     but we’re not curious

circulation idea     swap arteries
see what happens
when you come by again veins pantomime dipping
both minds unhurt

now closing the body

tired cushioned mornings

‘I want to stick with you’

little sugar teeth
extract pockets’ resistance
grow hungry as light forms
scales balanced tipping
waiting

‘love is all in the head’

eexpressionless feelings dancing hard
splits of crows dribble the skyline
figured confusion being intense
to lick lyric dry
folk-sung under summer blankets
securely visual

somewhere is a body carrying the psychological baggage of sleepless nights

I follow you under your eyes folding tattooed skin    recycling aesthetics
until no bigger than a red letter

days spent in foreign language    wet with blood held up on docked
fingers counting institutions trashed and toxic

driving    a drunk in a memory of driving
painted on a sunday

late sees only
changing spaces

the park is playing with
your mind as

what are you reading
is it good

music turns three paces inward
weighted against a blank page

bliss is to pass up tenses
quills or feathers equally you
airbrushed

appeals to loneliness lost contours
the sea falling far away

could this be any more romantic
‘stuff happens’ more or less
as blossom downs obscuring vision with a kaleidoscope
over each eye

patterns ratcheting

paintings of relationships

   technically very beautiful
news from the hill

getting the sun always right fluctuations
it is noon-time in the tropics here it is
almost intimate half light differentiating
love from lovers in a bare room

the children sleep mountains dance
refusing any move to point up
towards moments seen through indifference

the moon on the other hand is very high imagining something
other than what it already is an obsessive
diet of cow juice chugging its dim engines
over a horizon of hurt professors

this is our twenty eight days to three six five
wandering through a hall of mirrors

as though to pass the same street a thousand times
seems the real thing you didn’t see him / her
also comparing simple
angels

there are as many fingers as there are owls in heaven

remember the world is holding the keys to your heart and making a big mess of it

THIS / DOES / NOT / WORK written on each chamber

by implication there are not enough owls in hell because the remainder are in purgatory today knitting ladders

unusual as they seem to fly so naturally you could touch the way they fly

is it ever not autobiographical ‘the key to your castle?’

I accept there could be some confusion here

back in the picture some houseflies join me in what has become known as the post-ultimate glade where we feed on meat and other flies things left behind by crunchy feathers ‘life on earth as we know it in the rain’

okay I’m flagging I’ll write this story in terms I try to relax no part of you that aches with emotional complexity the moon giant and yawning on an impressive table
but something is yet lacking  handing us back
autonomy  too intimate  vague enough
for a doctor at midnight who signs for his alter ego
all my life I've been in love with its colour on my lips
as if drunk boys stomp on secretive shoulders
then commute nervously admitting to all the taints that look good
motionless as statues of ushers selling oranges
in pictures of old thought themselves into part  past cities
without recourse to method

do you have any questions

try praying or turning to the noise under a cow when its bell rings
time almost as beautiful as she lives and carries
a stetson for the richest disease in the room
full of people I love just as one moment becomes
not quite the next  or the wing I reject as
absolutely false  an established compendium of nails
down a blackboard placed in me by nature

to recap  I begin the establishment of the castle

the bare minimum  trusting your name
that is to say others need pay no further
attention to crawl through the grass with me
water flowing underneath where the moat . . .

flesh alone has escaped reclining bones
regurgitated through the beak  ‘appeals?’ or
screaming monotone dialectics emphatic carolling

these words are too dense  I prefer the way
you snuck out of the dormitory 35 times
20 losses poking holes in your armour
the rest of the evening passes
medication reduced to architecture
crumbling beneath your feet

you called to say you were dead
your one and only the prophet’s hair
flowing from his unwritten turret

ivy where is suitable for perching
dancing even the distance after that owls are so wise

I thought to myself that this must be god