Tripping Daylight
Selected previous publications by Peter Dent

Settlement (Leafe Press, 2001)
Unrestricted Moment (Stride, 2002)
Adversaria (Stride, 2004)
Handmade Equations (Shearsman Books, 2005)
Overgrown Umbrellas (with Rupert Loydell) (Lost Property, 2008)
Ghost Prophecy (Kaleidikon, 2011)
Dasein and Scarecrow (Offline Press, 2011)
Price-Fixing (Kaleidikon, 2011)
With Number Plates Disguised (High Tide Editions, 2011)
Limit Situations (Smallminded Books, 2011)
Contents

Tripping Daylight 9

Arithmetic & Colour 51

Theatre 69
'The intensity of a brought-about recollection leaves one worn down; it consumes cells of the being if not the body. Truth goes on to eat through the weakened fabric.'

—Elizabeth Bowen, *A World of Love*

'Half of every experience is lack of experience.'

—Fanny Howe, *O’Clock*
1.

Tripping Daylight
1
It’s not as though I’m taken in by questioning who in his right mind would … it’s answers that fail to ring a bell aggrieved when listening to the hubbub that surrounds I’ll tend to lag behind ‘off minor’ maybe excusing myself with a regular bag of tricks take nothing but trust for granted however you measure that time between the faded calendar and what lately passes for well-being more mood than ever heads for a vacuum if only the dodgy miracle would quit its act for make-believe but more efficient a certain frenzy’s out and addressing itself to even the faintest accusation a dream? or a silent movie bodily it shakes the screen

2
Not that this morning’s light is too intense I have a scheme that interests itself in ‘desirable structure’ in evocations of a promising site illusion is proving less than useful no security no substance I know of can help the sequence forward the plot if it really is a plot excites more fear than hope I’m presently unprepared to entertain such a climb up scaffolding and ladders quick to a count of ten rather I skip preliminaries? and make the next stage work? best practice indicates it’s only the higher connections matter applaud the performance or approval can’t be guaranteed! cold forecasts weathering light I shall scale the great unseen
She could do her own life inside two paragraphs but only on a good day — a yellow brimstone on a mounting-block would do just as well if you think about it? last year was only a kind of half-way house as she knocked the ash off another cigarette I knew it was simply a case of character building with the blocks supposedly on order somehow I had to reach the top and not exaggerate the brogue some prone to listen out for ‘conflict’ rather than call for help next year I’ll be handling facts with massive caution not letting unwanted appointments hold me back concealed entrances and a life unknown continue to stake a claim how sulkily she asks for more

With which he tried to avoid the outcome out of the frying pan and not without noticing the sense of incredulity which greeted his work a disadvantage to some he found it easy to borrow someone else’s temperament death was having a word just the other day about blasphemy he had companions enough to spare the blushes and keep the peace whose war has become a sullen occupation after dark lets bloodshed draw long queries from the fire he stared and stared and swore on all that was just he’d make connection on which attractive note mists rose and caused both entrances to disappear the last of the day and something from the sky with a face he knew
Fair trade not merely when you count the cost
or swap contempt home’s never far she says
if keeping a tight ship knows the half sunlight
as we know it taking just eight minutes to get to
the point with lessons placed on hold it’s dread
now figuring in every canvas but the last in
which that need for contact takes a certain turn
I tell a lie she says and tells another a portrait
fittingly dressed in red tomorrow repaired she
feels like starting another one with its burning
questions recollected in places devoid of light
she’s glorying in the change of heart as if there
isn’t another threat! whilst moments choose to
gather pace sail on and never once make land

If this is what diplomacy means or in a month
of Sundays seems to imply forget whatever is
in a hurry to follow I’m taking the chance of
a spell of weather to put my several policies in
order and not for the first time vigilance is
due a spectacle to conjure with distances of a
more ethereal kind are done away with I’m
taking a gamble on ghosts till now untouchable
coming to play my landscapes are abstract
enough their faces all acrylic seem impressed
it’s the way the senses take the obvious course
that inspires my appetite I’m no longer playing
hard to get or styling truth more death-in-life
is scarcely an option when daylight’s through
Some definition that some are privy to and I’m definitely not it concerns me keeps my writing awake at night but I can’t get past the first instruction now scratching the surface engaging with maybe seven alternative deals? I’d put no finer point on it we’re as sound as truth in part believe me it’s better to re-enact the past than to live it up for real with life strung out with history when trusting masks can result in telling it straight last night was one too many picking up pieces read on for a comprehensive quote I excuse the daily oracle most things like budget removals or rites of passage rewarding a perfect pitch can make the usual rate per se

True to the end of time and surely not before against strang malladies my policies look well assured? quit reading those earlier paragraphs or concentrate like fury nothing’s ever as it’s meant to quibble over fiction? it’s a bridge too fly for any syntax right in the mind to go on note the quantum leaps implied lights off then judgement gift-wrapped for a much more promising scene joke joke! it’s entirely at my own expense when out of pocket’s not what it was or will be reminders are red like crazy obscuring whatever’s best deception is better? last legs then down to horoscope or headline judging what papers say may we safely burn
Discreet occasions and pettie griefes I’ll defend to the last she said no more and took a delight in obfuscation a blur of abstracts making it oftentimes quite a bit like old times never more willing through parks and playgrounds of the rich where history projected its all-star cast in heroic loss could she make a mountain out of less? something preposterous there in the way she’d censor art when her own too garishly exposed her sins three graces turn up trumps if terribly scarred by time foreign again to the eye but trembling easy to the hand she takes another lesson in sophistry to heart and pleads for all she’s worth crime ordering a nasty fix

A perfect sentence that and nothing in-between I could see from one side of his work to another light prevailing there it’s period black and white and camouflage but hadn’t I seen it all before? some delicate situation turning to sheer abuse for kicks his companions knew exactly how to read his mood and take an exit double-folded often unspoken the predicted words were liable to make an altogether other appearance in days to come his instinct was to cancel all those voices raised by nature and disengage the self why not why not see quandaries off the graph? a respectable line you could say even one off-balance would do the trick and freefall … parenthesis or bust
What I am returned to is the sense of balance in an uninhabited sky interior and unreachable the equivalents as last lights redden and thin you find that you’re trapped between tall conifers and a text if never absent in a thought’s unmaking truly devout and everything to do with keeping an eye on futures spies I volunteered to watch through words find a half-light blinks on familiar paths yet more nights stripped of stars but they just won’t measure up the perfect answer’s out there breaking dreams are we still unoccupied by history I imagine I’m back with you and it’s falling steadily as leaves? the questions that we sealed in a hollow tree they’re signed for good

Contrast like with like and you’re getting close since when has a forgotten statement left such a stark reminder? she looked if not suspicious then sort of uneasy shooting half-glance after half-glance while visiting a tired authority with familiar ease to abandon story-time retune the senses with ‘what is’ and dread a second guess collective amnesia when she thought of it was part of the contract love in a foreign light or getting lost required no practice delicate as the postcard’s wintry scene all words escaping to a clean horizon a dulcet air and a breeding ground for days nothing remotely of substance tried her song unconsecrated and kept on ice
If ever a text looked odd it was this! the very last such debate as followed never took kindly to the risk though being followed each day by crime connoisseurs proved infinitely worse not that biography was involved but whatever the motive was there was ‘precision fit’ or so they said each pilgrimage escalated now to a loss of life just eccentricity or the new élite? I was feeling nothing but rectitude and the rule of law as if such stories mattered! in dark by now notorious churches clashes ensued vivid enough I’m sure for anyone’s taste but more or less in tune with the latest virtual theory so withdraw from intent let justice gracefully tip the wink!

An introductory offer or a timely intervention? he’d queried and carried on packing his bags a bit grotesque but clearly to the point those acts of madness had to go never mind the tower she’d ruined in advance it wasn’t just for now but a world to come to be aghast at thoughts still ready to recreate the shimmer of mystery uppermost though in mind was candlelight the swirl of dresses a dance to mistranslated fire or perhaps a portrait dressed to kill? the girl made nothing of the facts if he’d understood intensity! how soon he would leave her empty-handed Lammas and its gilded windows serving all like a homemade angel letting down its hair
Without a shadow it’s an unwarranted illusion but never in all these years of mine more real who’d verify the equinox anyway? when I still believe in heresy a wavelength with the most gorgeous smile it’s targeted by oh I don’t know whom for scrutiny maybe they’ll let me in on the scam I just keep up the input attending to business the only way I know wide-eyed and dutifully in and out of trance but it’s a shuffle of clouds and rain reminds me hanging around is out of date the bus tonight’s impatient for news not history with illumination a checkpoint to crash through everything for some’s already happened initiation: can’t come quick enough

Approaching a memory someone’s left for dead I feel too much feel too far north of the place it’s happening unnaturally cold and wanting to come inside don’t think I can ever redraw the circle pour in words to suit looking back on the act it’s still unanchored a light exhausted if calm enough to be with your story it has to be said not mine I’m learning to pass on final questions putting the future into reverse love’s never in neutral? well I’ve sometimes said so not forgetting whoever’s the ghost that writes it up now likely the last resort for some try those with a magic lantern or a traveller with a one-off gift for accident commune with eyes
'Winter’ was about to go to pieces in her mind immanence on the other hand was getting itself established though one of the two was surely a front for something out of sight yes I am it’s true the camera! I can’t stand half-way houses at the best of times delete or save is usually my motto reinforcements not required when the cold sets in she’s all for kicking her way through frosted leaves the minute she sees them no place like it but I can’t get over the way she strings a project out I’m swinging back and forth like no tomorrow doing my best for form with ‘compounds strange’ it’s better the day accepts some angles will catch a light

I want you to know how something and nothing stands with the world as realised in part you can make a weave of fact excluding philosophy or trade ideas with the storms and multi-coloured calms that afflict ‘localities inside’ it’s false and frequently hand-to-hand public pronouncements as you hear them are liable to die of strangeness still rhythm can override so I’m told it’s not a problem spareness in the word can bring most crises into line the beautiful often choosing to terrify for myself I happen to need a change of accent never the sound of bells to debate the merits of pleasure? like the arias of nightingales we’re not to be put on hold . . . dream held
Broken in a flash by shadowy flight it’s a tale of alignments in a single word as yet there’s nothing spoken will vision answer to the mind? if quick to travel circles I’m useless monitoring lines geared up to travel out rock hard believe me is the birthplace in the world I work out of a wish to guard at least till the call comes in my name is intrigue not one of the crowd though hints of a bright soliloquy flake away … materially isn’t it oh all the same hard ground and ivy a complex acid scaling the wall you can make a case for devotion acts that belong to no-one are shaping up for good all wings a flutter tucking light I should bury under life

Putting the glimmer back where no-one’s angel cares to look a soft spot under the greybeard’s hill or a bleak unread Collected no matter what it costs you can bet the future’s in someone’s reliable hands? more sanguine and a couple of decades older than the next I’m sure the counter-culture’s spoken for? curated goodness name plates tarnishing the big white wall I’ve seen the camera tracking the way we came considering several forgotten lies but that’s less fielding for the par than nights out on the town I’ve had my fill as she regretted prematurely good and bad at getting the corners coloured in it’s only a matter of fact candles burning both ends fast