

The visitor cat

The visitor cat scales the garden wall,
hangs its grey tail through the lilac
sneering at quarantine.

This kingdom has been his own
since the days of the Pharaohs.
He knows how he has been worshipped.
He sits on the wall in his ermines,
proud whiskers quivering with the relish
of dictatorship, and he knows
how the newly brave wrens, perky robins
are his slaves, their trips to the birdhouse
swift and fearful, his terrain marked
like nations, his from theirs.

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But he is not the only god
of the garden, and there are other ways
of praying. On the apex of the roof
two doves, their curved bellies
blending greys, warble the birth of spring,
a large twig in their beak. Their fragile ark
balances in the bay tree, shakes
with their making. It is they
who herald the first green shoots,
messengers of the world's second chance.