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### Flourish

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DORA MALECH

## *Flourish*

Clematis, sweet pea, sweet alyssum,  
sweet asylum,

adornment's adamant  
heaven scent

to bed an arbor's  
ardor,

trellis's  
yes this

reaching toward  
its own reward,

sweet re-aching might redeem  
what seems

a frail unfurling to refuge  
instead, re-fugue

played in contrapuntal context  
shows some pragmatist's *thanks*

thriving  
not only as noun and verb, but *stem*, climbing

aster and hydrangea, honeysuckle,  
wisteria, twine and tendril

reaching skyward  
toward

as if to pick  
a warden's lock,

as if jazz hands, spirit fingers,  
fireworks, as our shared shards glitter

on this floodlit stage left empty and the river rising like ovation  
out of whose rush and rake and raze and refuse grows again

these petals, pleats, sequins,  
pirouettes, curtsies, and klieg-eyed bowers, sure-fired lines

run to sun's stunning  
statement piece, peals on which an hour slips under

the higher wire  
and over

the big top we make  
of what's at stake,

tensile  
tendrils

corkscrewing up to pour more sunlight,  
celebrate

the act  
we make of the temporary fact of us.