

## MY SISTER'S CURTAINS

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*Bea Opengart*

Orchids, mauve and white,  
splayed across red cotton.  
Bluebells are fat  
tongues lolling  
from their stalks.  
There are no insects  
in the garden. Instead  
the daisies, their spindly  
petals curling downward,  
like spiders set  
to scuttle the air for flies  
that trap themselves, graze  
one strand of a web as intricate  
and inexplicable as love.

What I have felt of it  
is more than I can say,  
even now, how badly  
we hurt ourselves  
when no amount or kind  
or constancy of love  
will touch us. Having asked  
what can be done, to whom  
do we look for an answer?  
I answer only for myself,  
your hopelessness  
my own loss of hope.

Someone has taken odor  
from the hyacinths, left  
the hollyhocks without leaves  
or stems. The flowers

have been simplified, perfect  
echos of themselves.  
Carnations open fully,  
a perfect bouquet: pink  
for your hand held steady,  
red for the blade  
at your wrists. White  
for the days  
beside the bed, your fingers  
closing over mine, the curtains  
all I knew of flowers.