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K. 17

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K. 17\*

uprising turbulence  
unfurling from the center  
of the turning flower,  
whirligig orchid, starfish,

looped in loops of steel,  
loose coils,  
haywire fountain,  
not yet spray,

compact complexity,  
more than beauty,  
pinned like a butterfly,  
tangled epiphyte

living on air,  
like improvisation  
but inescapably definite,  
like Scarlatti

ivory smooth, not quite ivory white,  
the orchid—  
and the muted iridescence  
of inset dawn-colored translucence

no photograph, this is memory

*\*on seeing Frank Stella's newest Scarlatti sculpture  
(each with a Kirkpatrick number) in his studio*