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## Parade

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*Dordt College*

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# Parade

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*Lorna Van Gilst*

Six lean-armed boys, eager as parrots,  
Chirp their plans to one another,  
Wrap fronds of palm  
    around a lopped-off pole  
        lying angled in the street  
tie on some purple flowers  
measure the flag—a monstrous  
    band of red and white

then stop a long-boned woman in the street—  
    —rare chance to practice English—

*“Come see tonight—parada—  
El Día de Independencia  
una parada—”*

“What time?” I ask—a *gringa* question.

“Six,” they say . . . *si* . . . six . . . or seven . . . or eight—

They raise their pole  
strike up a tinny band  
of beating sticks and lids of pans  
a rusty trumpet  
slide trombone . . .

Rehearsal on  
*El Día de Independencia*