

At the Y

by [Mary M. Brown](#) in the [August 31, 2016](#) issue

Iris, at 92, is more bird  
than flower, more wings  
flapping than bloom  
unfolding. She is not still

life, not slow motion,  
but mid-flight and atwitter,  
elbows and knees  
in awkward poses, fragile  
neck gawked in the lovely  
way of a small crane  
or a young duck.

Only her lavender  
pants suggest a plant,  
a blossom of early spring—oh,  
and the way she looks  
toward the sun, stretches  
as our instructor tells her to,  
her back a tender stalk.