

Hope
by Melinda Burns

Hope is such a feathery thing,
fragile and easily felled
for a time

Four years ago, the great despair
that such a person could be
put in charge, that hope was
an illusion, foolish in the face
of terrible reality

So must people have felt
in wartime, how could
the world have come to this?

And then a sea-change
in a country not ours,
and then a riot, and then
a surge ahead, executive
orders slashing across the old regime

righting the ship of state,
the state of the world still
tempest-tossed, and yet

a young Black woman
moved the nation, with
her poem of hope as mighty
as a sword, a miracle
of words to bind

standing in her yellow coat
like a flame on the
once-stormed steps