

SPIRAEA

The name suggests a horrible disease,
or bodily dysfunction. Not at all:
it's just a garden shrub, though quite at ease—
Plain Jane—with other plants along a wall.

Thin branches spraying, tangled, from the root
fan out in asymmetrical design—
rough, arching canes, which seem irresolute
on principles of ornament and line.

In winter, rickety, the bushes flail
about and scratch the air, till the regime
of April covers them with buds. A veil
of inflorescence spreads; each long raceme

leaves fragrant offerings for a garden god,
and trumpets spring's implicit reign as feat,
anticipating roses, goldenrod.
Adorned, if common, all are potent, neat—

dark premises of earth, sine qua non,
assigned to flower in appointed ways,
affording both the mineral truth of stone
and immaterial essence of bouquets.