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Total Synthesis of (±)-Rubriflordilactone A
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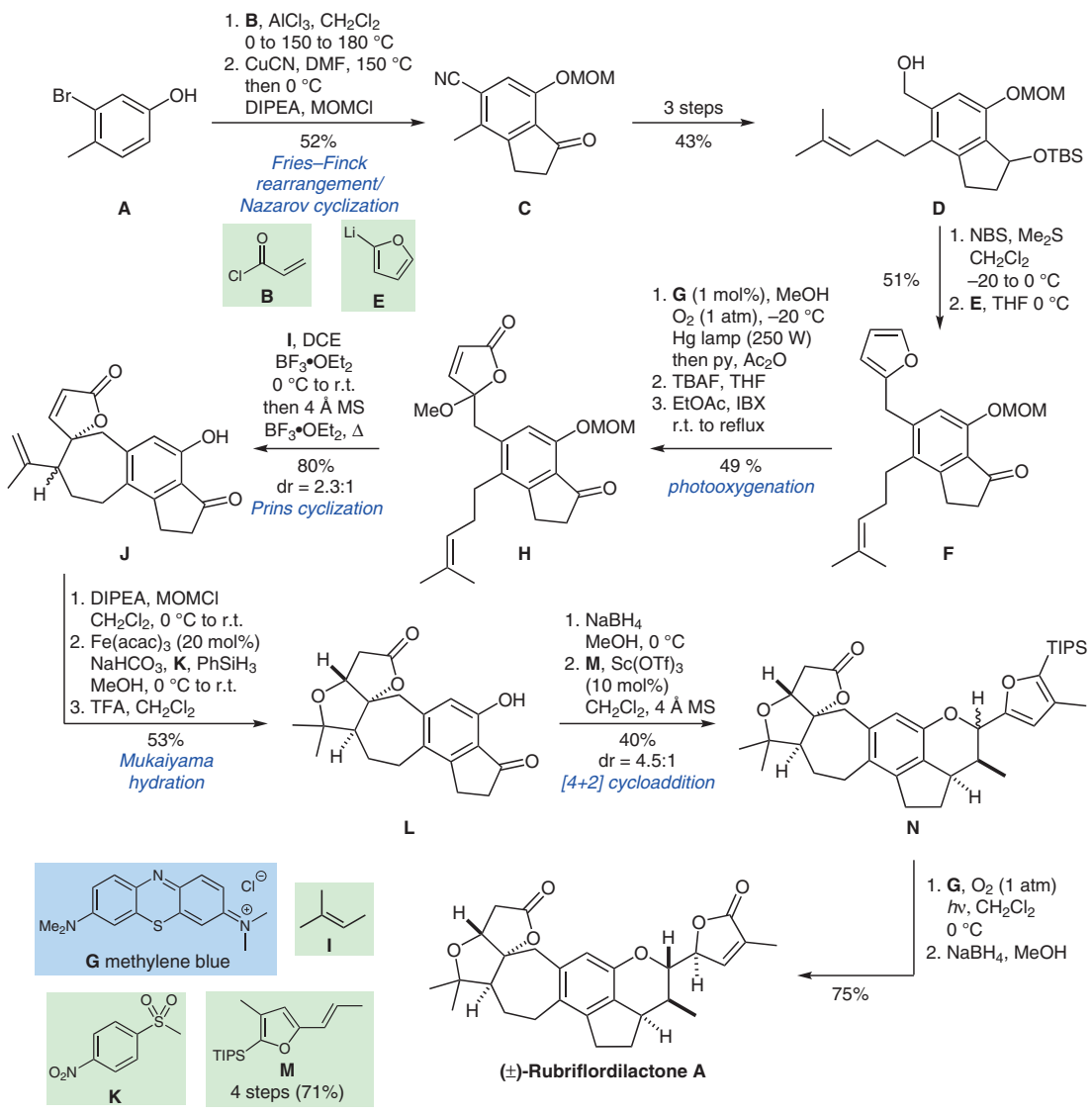

Significance: Chen and co-workers present the total synthesis of (±)-rubriflordilactone A, a highly oxygenated polycyclic triterpenoid isolated from *Schisandra* plants, which exhibits anti-HIV activity. The natural product, with its central polysubstituted arene motif, is accessed via a rare *ortho*-quinone methide type [4+2]-cycloaddition.

Comment: Commercially available phenol **A** was elaborated into key butenolide **H**. Treatment of the latter with $BF_3{\cdot}OEt_2$ initiated an intramolecular Prins cyclization, affording a seven-membered ring in **J**. Mukaiyama hydration triggered an *oxa*-Michael reaction, affording γ-lactone **L** that, after reduction, was reacted with furan **M** in a [4+2]-cycloaddition. Subsequently, photooxygenation and reduction furnished (±)-rubriflordilactone A.

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