­November 28th, 2013

By Jill Tyburski

Silently, i sit in the corner staring at

pink petals that behave like eyelids when the sun’s

light strikes the orchid’s cells, arranged like bricks,

a wall protecting its beating heart.

orchids don’t have hearts

i realize with mascara jogging down my skin as pale as Grandma’s white sheets,

even though she’s wearing clouds or wings it’s not angelic,

it’s not beautiful.

it’s thanksgiving, they tell me the food is getting cold because the microwave’s

defibrillation of store bought mashed potatoes,

cranberries, turkey only lasts for 100 beeps of Grandma’s heart monitor

so my aunt hands me

plastic silverware and i envy my fork –

no decomposition, no fear of soil or worms;

plastic prongs free from the sickening smell of clean

hospital waiting rooms in the cancer ward.

i’m not hungry or thankful so

i silently return to staring at the pink petals – delicate,

feminine like aphrodite or ovaries and

it occurs to me that this flower placed out of love on the windowsill will outlive the woman that it was for.