**Orchids -**Literature Notes

**Please note that the information given on this poem is not meant to replace any material given in the classroom setting. It is a very BASIC giude to enable a literal understanding of the poem. Metaphorical interpretations should be sought in the classroom.**

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| **The physical structure of this poem has been altered from the original layout in the text.**  I leave this house 3.box pieces of the five week life I've gathered.  I'll send them on to fill spaces in my future life.  One thing is left a spray of orchid someone gave 4.from bouquet one who makes a ritual of flower-giving sent.  The orchids have no fragrance but purple petals draw you to look at the 2.purple heart.  I watered them once when 1.the blossoms were full blown like polished poems. I was sure they'd wilt and I would toss them out with the five week litter.  They were stubborn. I starved them. They would not die.  This morning the bud at the stalk's tip5.unfurled.  I think I'll pluck the 6.full-blown blooms press them between 7.pages of memory.  Perhaps in their thin dried transparency  I'll discover their 8.peculiar poetry.  Simmonds-McDonald, H. 'Orchids' in A World of Prose. Edited by Mark McWatt and Hazel Simmonds McDonald. Pearson Education Ltd, 2005. | **This is the OPINION of one individual, which might not coincide with the views of others.**  LITERAL MEANING The persona is moving from a house that she has lived in for five weeks. She has sent her belongings to her future home, but one item remains in her old space, an orchid. The persona clarifies that she was gifted the orchid, but implies that it holds no value because the gifting of orchids is habitual for the person who gave her. She describes the flower as odourless, but attractive to see. She watered the orchid once, expecting it to die, but it survived. It not only survived, but bloomed. The persona contemplates plucking the bloom and pressing it between the pages of a book. The purpose of this is to allow her to appreciate the flower.  Picture  LITERARY DEVICES 1. SIMILE The orchid's full blown blossoms are being compared to a polished poem. The word polished in this comparison implies perfection, shiny and pleasant to read. |

2. PUN  
The purple heart literally   refers to the splash of color in the center of the orchid's bloom, but it could also refer to the bravery of the flower. This is so because a purple heart, in the army, is a medal that a soldier receives for bravery on the battle field.  
  
IMPORTANT WORDS/ PHRASES  
3. 'box pieces'  
This phrase implies that the persona's life is literally in boxes, all her belongings are stored and ready to be moved.  
4. 'from a bouquet one who makes a ritual of flower-giving sent.'  
This phrase implies that the persona places no value in the orchid because it's giver gifted it without any sentiment attached.  
5. 'unfurled'  
This word literally means to open. Therefore, despite the persona's attempts at killing the orchid, through starvation, it not only survived, but flourished.  
6. 'full-blown blooms'  
These full-blown blooms represent the flower at its peak, where it is most full of life, as well as where it is most usually appreciated.  
7. 'pages of memory'  
This refers to the practice of placing a flower between the pages of a book, thereby drying, or killing the flower. The purpose of this act is to keep the flower for nostalgic reasons.  
8. 'peculiar poetry'  
This phrase highlights the persona's desire to discover the value in the flower. It is very IRONIC, however, that she would choose to kill it in order to achieve this goal. Usually people place value in a living flower that can give pleasure through its beauty.  
  
MOOD/ ATMOSPHERE  
The [mood](http://www.bulbsoup.com/ln-comprehension.html) of the poem is pensive, or thoughtful. The persona is thinking about the lack of value that she places in the orchid.  
  
TONE  
The [tone](http://www.bulbsoup.com/ln-comprehension.html) of the poem is one of almost bored musing.  
  
THEMATIC CATEGORY  
Death, nature, survival, desire/ dreams.