

2023

## Flowers for the Living

Nora Pluth

*Western Michigan University, nora.e.pluth@wmich.edu*

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.wmich.edu/laureate>



Part of the Poetry Commons

### Recommended Citation

Pluth, Nora (2023) "Flowers for the Living," *The Laureate*: Vol. 21, Article 110.

Available at: <https://scholarworks.wmich.edu/laureate/vol21/iss1/110>

This Poetry is brought to you for free and open access by the Lee Honors College at ScholarWorks at WMU. It has been accepted for inclusion in The Laureate by an authorized editor of ScholarWorks at WMU. For more information, please contact [wmu-scholarworks@wmich.edu](mailto:wmu-scholarworks@wmich.edu).

NORA PLUTH

# Flowers for the Living

Fresh white flowers  
Cut clean from the back garden  
Lilies, orchids, roses

I was six when my grandma died  
My tears a crude imitation of my brother's  
Not understanding but praying  
    Or looking at her somehow more perfect face  
Even in death a beauty.

We desire to bloom from death  
Bring flowers to funerals.  
Wait for spring during winter  
Bouquets to salvage a floundering romance

We are orchids and roses, lilies and irises to those we never knew  
Flowers for the dead  
In memoriam of the people we can't remember

Always an afterthought  
Always a reaction  
Always a memory

But I bring flowers for the living  
Flowers in anticipation  
Flowers for the future

Instead of blooming from the ruins of death  
We bloom into precious life  
Hopeful life

I bring flowers for the living not in fear of death  
But in the vibrancy of creation  
And the gesture of friendship

I react to life the way others react to death  
With sadness and shock  
And with joy, with gratitude  
Flowers not in spite of death  
But because of life

Nora E  
Pluth