



72 Orchids

Lilly Hinckley

I will never need 72 orchids
but that's what I have
on the mantel in the living room
on the dining room table
on the bookshelves
on the window sills.
long and knobby, like skeleton fingers
reaching up
all of them waiting to die
by some forgetful hand
gifts from well-wishers
(\$16.99 at Target)
who believe
that temporary beauty
will make the disease die faster.
if they stayed long enough, they would know
72 orchids
cannot fight a war