(A poetry assignment from Irene’s 10th grade English class, which she never submitted. It was found later in her wastebasket by her father)

When the camera spotted the flower

it was over. He knew she’d be the single subject of his lens for the rest of his life.

Most artists only dream of finding their muse and yet here she was – as if

blossoming from the Earth before him, her golden halo

blooming in the mid-day sun.

She was Venus

and he would have settled

to be the shell beneath her feet.

It wasn’t her beauty that captivated him, though she was undeniably beautiful.

It was how her voice lilted like petals to the soil and

her hands left small paint stains on everything she touched.

She was Midas and he was gold;

She was Medusa and he was stone;

Her name was Helen

and she was everything.

and maybe by some magic his thoughts found their way into her head,

and maybe by some magic she saw everything in him, too.

so, when they locked eyes, the weight of their potential surfaced.

the flower stretched towards the lens and

the camera shuttered to capture this moment forever.

The flower and the camera grow together, move in together, and

rear two children through some questionable copulation.

Their odd hybrid offspring grow and thrive, surrounded by love.

But

If anything, this is a tragedy.

So when the flower dies,

In a weird way,

No one is shocked.

Now the camera batteries are low

and the storage space is full

of memories too painful to keep,

but even more painful to delete.

The software needs an update.

But somebody keeps pressing

remind me later.