

How Poets Die

by Bill Yarrow

Mark Strand

over decades
a steady diet of diction
enlarged his heart

one day it just burst

Robert Frost

a crazy idea
that he could
build a wall
without mortar took
possession of his mind

he piled stone
on stone higher
and higher until
they toppled over
crushing him beneath

Wilfred Owen

a bullet (not his own)
to the brain

Dylan Thomas

many believe he died
from alcohol poisoning

that's not so
early on his brain caught fire

and it took twenty-two years
to burn itself out

T.S. Eliot
hardening of the
sensibility

Allen Ginsberg
run over
by New Jersey

Wallace Stevens
overdose
of indemnity

William Carlos Williams
He (an obstetrician) died

when
he discovered

he could
no longer

deliver

John Berryman
jumped off
Hart Crane's
bridge

Hart Crane
born
without ears

it was only a matter of time

