**WILLIAM CARLOS WILLIAMS (1883-1963)**

**“Death” (C version, 1930)**

He's dead
the dog won't have to
sleep on his potatoes
any more to keep them
from freezing

he's dead
the old bastard—
He's a bastard because

there's nothing
legitimate in him any
more
           he's dead
He's sick dead

                         he's
a godforsaken curio
without
any breath in it

He's nothing at all
              he's dead
shrunken up to the skin

            Put his head on
one chair and his
feet on another and
he'll lie there
like an acrobat—

Love's beaten. He
beat it. That's why
he's insufferable—

            because
he's here needing a
shave and making love
an inside howl
of anguish and defeat—

He's come out of the man
and he's let
the man go—
                  the liar

Dead
       his eyes
rolled up out of
the light—a mockery

                                   which
love cannot touch—

just bury it
and hide its face
for shame.

**“The Dead Baby” (1925)**

Sweep the house
under the feet of the curious
holiday seekers--
sweep under the table and the bed
the baby is dead--

The mother's eye's where she sits
by the window, unconsoled--
have purple bags under them
the father--
tall, wellspoken, pitiful
is the abler of these two--

Sweep the house clean
here is one who has gone up
(unproblematically)
to heaven, blindly
by force of the facts--
a clean sweep
is one way of expressing it--

Hurry up! any minute
they will be bringing it
from the hospital--
a white model of our lives
a curiosity
surrounded by fresh flowers.