

V

No stone will keep him. Just let the rose
bloom each year with memory.
It's always Orpheus. He changes form
in this and this. We shouldn't worry

about other names. Once and for all,
it's Orpheus when there's song. He comes and goes.
Isn't it enough that he sometimes survives
by a day or two the roses in the bowl?

But he has to disappear so you'll understand!
Though he himself fears this vanishing.
For while his word's surpassing all things here,

he's already there, where you can't follow.
The trellis of the lyre doesn't trap his hands.
And he submits just when he oversteps the bounds.

BETTY HUFFMAN

Why Can't We Die the Way We Were Born?
after the death of Harry Hoopes, Hazel Hoopes, Mary Ferguson

A few hours of unexpected pain
At least leaving no memory,
And no possible sense of anticipation.

For too many of us
Death is slow
And approaches with such taunts.

Whatever follows may be memory-free,
But anticipation
Seems too high a price to pay for life.