

Coffee, with Deer

How would you do it? I asked
And you frowned and looked skyward
The shadow of a leaf contouring your face.
I poured coffee, hot from a thermos flask
While you thought.
In the field beyond the woods I glimpsed a deer.
I made a note to mention it to you.

Not a rope, you said, too grim. Not a blade or gun.
No jump or crash, no poison, cliff or roof
Nothing violent.
Water, maybe. A lake or ocean. Far out at sea
Where it's peaceful.
I nodded, approving (is that how you read it?)
Then, cold, we finished our drinks and walked on.

It was a conversation I chose,
To show we could talk about anything.
An intimacy which made me happy.
For you, I learned,
Three days after you went missing,
It was a plan.
A decision made, waiting only for that detail.

How did I miss your black despair?
Did I cause this? Am I at fault?
I was your friend, I should have known.
You chose your end, but somewhere,
In some future life and time, maybe
A new beginning.