

## **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.