

## On the Other Side Of An Hour

Let's say you had known then what you know now:  
on that morning you came to visit your friend at home,  
even when you knocked on his door, let's say you'd known  
when you entered his room that he would already be gone:  
let's say you held a mess of wildflowers in your arms;

you had brought the blooms to improve the atmosphere,  
to lay them along his quiet body and in so doing draw  
communion to him and the slow opening of stained petals  
spread along his forearm and stretching to his bare shoulder  
where you imagined he would have placed them himself.

Let's say instead of losing, or held at bay as you were,  
you had traced the loose map he kept guarded in his mind,  
a private reckoning that laced, like stars, *a* to *b* to *c*—let's say  
you had seen it all so clearly it was as if you understood:  
the end, the beginning, love, the cockeyed cedar tree.

AMBER MCMILLAN