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## Obit

Lasater, Michael

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**Obit**

*– in memory of Mary Ellen Miller*

Those poems. My god.  
No darlings left standing.  
Your big *yawp* –  
something to remember you by –  
as you said –  
    your turn to speak.

The first I met you I realized  
you were the crowd in the room.

You realized I was there  
to poach on your turf –  
    take everything I could.

You showed me what to steal.

You drank. I drank.  
Martinis were your go-to,  
your full octane metaphor –  
strong. clear. cold.

We had a damn good time.

I drove as we scoured four counties  
in search of the perfect rhubarb pie.

Turned out there was more than one.

We dropped in on your friends.

They drank.

Some played the piano.

Writers, artists, dreamers –  
all were as quick as you  
to peel away anything  
false and useless.

No one wasted much time.

And – who could ever believe  
that you would allow anything  
you loved be taken from you?  
I should stop now,  
taste a grain of discretion –  
but really –  
    it was compelling  
watching you transform the slow  
violence of grief into  
the clear discant of endurance  
by which strangers will know you.

You continued,  
    holding close those you loved.

You loved fiercely, relentlessly.

Still – for all of that –  
I'll never know what  
or whom you truly forgave.

That's different.  
You held that closer.

I only know what you understood.