Still waiting

I was five and you eighteen,
Michael,
Sitting among the buttercups

watching swifts
dip for caddis fly
above a brook
where a miller's thumb
slipped through my fingers.

You taught me how to play
French Cricket
in the lea of Pyon Hill ;
how to wack the ball and run,

and like a brimstone butterfly
I perched
on your shoulders
in my yellow cotton frock.

You were eighteen. I
was rising six
skipping at your heels
below swifts that queued
between two pylons
for their flight back to Africa.
And I believed

that you would always be
eighteen, Michael,
among the buttercups, waiting
at the glittering water's edge.

Miriam Obrey

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