

Okra

In the afternoon heat
I pass a fruit stand by the side of the road,
and I name the jars on every
shelf. Fig jars, stewed tomatoes,
and jars and jars of pickled okra,
all waiting to be taken
down, to be gripped by their heads,
cradled, like new-borns.
And with a twist of the hand
the smell of vinegar seeps
through mama's kitchen, and lingers
in the hallway, the preservation spent
in air-tight mourning.
I can't remember anything.

Asa Miles