

Smells that paint  
pictures in the  
**Where I'm From**  
George Ella Lyon mind

I am from clothespins,  
from Clorox and carbon-tetrachlo-  
ride.

I am from the dirt under the back  
porch.

(Black, glistening  
it tastes like beets.)

I am from the forsythia bush,  
the Dutch elm  
whose long gone limbs I remember  
as if they were my own.

I am from fudge and eyeglasses,  
from Imogene and Alafair.

I'm from the know-it-alls  
and the pass-it-ons,  
from perk up and pipe down.

I'm from He restoreth my soul  
with a cottonball lamb  
and ten verses I can say myself

I'm from Artemus and Billie's  
Branch,  
fried corn and strong coffee.

From the finger my grandfather lost  
to the auger  
the eye my father shut to keep his  
sight.

Under my bed was a dress box  
spilling old pictures,  
a sift of lost faces  
to drift beneath my dreams.

I am from those moments –  
snapped before I budded –  
leaf-fall from the family tree.

A tune that wipes away the years

Items from  
around the  
house

Items from in the  
neighborhood

Names of

Names of  
foods &  
dishes  
that recall  
family  
gatherings

Items from the

Names of places  
you keep  
childhood

Saying

home

Memories