Where I'm From By George Ella Lyon

I am from clothespins,
from Clorox and carbon-tetrachloride.
I am from the dirt under the back porch.
(Black, glistening
it tasted 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 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.