

Going Thru A Box Of Old Papers, Letters

pulling a box that smells like mold out in the kitchen on a day when the house won't get warm pulling postcards lyn are you eating you know you shouldn't worry about marks penny postcards from florida years of birthday cards with yr loving grand nanny's hand getting shakey hard to read i was rosalynd diane lipman these cards came to 38 main street 3 cent stamps to middlebury i was fat worried about boyfriends hated to wear glasses felt my belly twist at postcards like yr final biology mark exam is my mother's letters in pencil blur the "f's" all curly are you sure you're getting sleep enough and darling what does being a "goon" mean the letters stick together here's a dance program with no one's name on it a box that smells of lavender from bainbridge s.w.a.k. on the back of and yr loving gramp the ink running torn letter from dorothy about boys who put their hands there stamps a list of foreign students a note on dorm memo "10:30 someone with an accent left no name will call later" flowers from fatimi hair in a piece of tissue poems printed in 3rd grade on yellow paper about umbrellas and apple leaves poems that rhyme more predictable more clear than things i'm trying to touch now

Ritalin Rita Lyn

Ritalin she says
i've never heard of that
and no wonder being
blonde and healthy
ordinary as Ritz crackers
Ritalin and you know what
you get when you open the
box not like with
strangely packed
crackers from Switzerland
who knows how long
they've been around
if they're crumbled
being the Ritz cracker
madonna why would or should
she know about
Ritalin. she said

i thought it was a typo
hubby and i read and reread
out of 250 people i picked
your poems and i've
read them so often
i thought the poem had
something to do with women
not wanting the toilet
seat lid up
i thought it was about
your mother wanting
to call you
Rita Lyn

How To Tell

darkened rose canes
falling down rhododendron
cut what winter killed
when live buds are starting

after the yellow
forsythia bells,
slice the rose bushes

when black birds are
then prune cherries and
grapevines leaf

lettuce and spinach
peas radishes and cabbage
go in when there are
jonquils

Indians knew when
the oak leaves
are about the
size of a
mouse's ear,
plant the corn

-- Lyn Lifshin

Niskayuna NY

WR: 25, 31, 34, 37, 42, 44, 47ss,
50, 53, 55, 56, 59cb, 62, 65/66ss,
72, 73, 74, 77, 78ss, 80