

Small Town, no. 11

After all these years we meet  
and talk about  
all the unimportant things  
we've done, all the  
important things we'll  
never do.  
I see three snapshots  
of her daughter  
say she's pretty  
even though she's plain and  
crosseyed, tell her of my  
last degree.  
She's heavier and blonde now  
doesn't dress the way she should,  
she was voted the likeliest  
but she didn't.

The Bargain

She all the time rationalizing,  
nagging about how if  
they couldn't afford to  
it was one thing  
but not being tied  
down, no children yet  
nor family to think of  
and rent being free  
and their food too,  
others had,  
it really couldn't be  
much to pay for  
bliss and all  
that went along with it.  
He, knowing her  
womanly calculations  
plainly wrong, but  
her eyes pleading so  
and the day very hot,  
went along with her and  
ate the bitter apple.

-- Lyn Lifshin

Albany, New York