

Ritalin

With his head against
the back seat window,
gazing out at the trees
and signs going by,
he reminded me of why
I stopped smoking dope in high school
when it made me wish
my friends would just dematerialize,
leaving me to the donuts
and album of the Grateful Dead live.

When we arrived at day care
he slipped mildly
from my hands
into his teacher's,
the one who'd called him a terror
and said we had to do something
or he couldn't stay,
and now he no longer
shoved anyone
or tipped anything
or rampaged through naptime,

so yes it fixed him
and saved him
and made everyone
including his mother and me
less furious with him,
the self-esteem implications of which
allowed me to accept
the stupor it curtained over him,
not at all the real him,

and I won't say
we shouldn't have given it to him,
because he had trouble, was trouble,
too much for one kid
in the collective, cooperative
day care world,
and then he wasn't,
he just wasn't.