



Jeff Tigchelaar is a stay-at-home dad residing in Lawrence. A former newspaper reporter and editor, his poems appear in journals including Coal City Review, Flint Hills Review, Flyway, Fugue, Rhino, The Laurel Review, North American Review, and Kansas City Voices, as well as in anthologies including Verse Daily, Best New Poets 2011, and A Ritual to Read Together: Poems in Conversation with William Stafford.

His work received a fellowship from the Ohio Arts Council and the 2010 Langston Hughes Award in Poetry.

Report to William Stafford Kansas, 2011

The poets were all
but defeated

They still wrote – still followed
the golden thread, as you said –
but only for themselves, it seemed

Which is all just
an artsy way of saying
*We are now the only state in America without
an Arts Council and man it's embarrassing*

*

If you were still around maybe you'd go
find the governor and read him
something full of kindness and light
that might change his mind and his life

*

Your art has had and will have better days

I bought your book at a Borders I'm sorry to say
it had been there awhile I could tell

though you I'm sure would not have
minded the dust

I found it on a back shelf

Other books had gathered around
as if to listen

Previously Published in The Southeast Review

One Way of Looking at Thirteen Blackbirds

A black cat crossing your path is bad for luck, it's said.
But to cross the path of thirteen blackbirds –
that *has* to be a sign. There's meaning
in the way they're sitting on that line
side by shadowy side,
yellow eyes unblinking,
staring down at you
all of one mind,
just waiting
to dive.

Previously Published in Redactions

You Are Here

Light drips down
from the capitol dome. Coffee
flows up through
veins, and all is not for
nothing, governor, nothing
is for naught when it's made
for the benefit of everyone and the self
walking certain streets at
an uncertain hour

Previously Published in seveineightfive



Jeff Tigchelaar

Distinguished Kansas Poet

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Late Snack

Tonight I finally ate the edible panties
my wife brought back from a bridal shower.
They'd been in a bedside drawer
these past seven years,
beneath a bunch of other stuff: dust-
covered notepads, brittle
scraps of yellowed paper,
an old Bible, good
as new.

I'd never read the writing on the box
before tonight, but the package was full of promise:
*Contents: One undie. Piña colada
with rum. Ideal for hors d'oeuvres,
quickie lunches, Sunday brunches...* But it wasn't
without some words of warning as well,
like *Novelty item only* and
*Garment will dissolve
in water or excessive moisture.*
And this mandatory health hazard:
*Contains saccharin, it cautioned,
which has been determined to cause cancer
in laboratory animals.*

And then there was the model.
A brief glance was all it took to see
she didn't exactly make the product look
tasteful.
But tacky photos and frightening fine print
were not enough to turn me off tonight.
My appetite couldn't be curbed.
I took. I ate. It tasted
...*clean* (for such
dirty merchandise)
and by that I mean
it tasted like soap.

I'd never pictured the scene
this way – me
in bed alone (save for
a sleeping baby across my lap),
too tired, too lazy
to get up, to go
to the kitchen for a snack ...

I'd never imagined
my wife would be out of town
the night the edible panties finally went down.

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