

PAPA'S SONG

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i sat on papa's chair
when crickets oh were singing
up a catch in your throat
with a leafy texture
of grass blade velvet coarseness

my legs didn't reach the dust soaked
warped wooden porch and the night
was that just rightness
you wouldn't trade nothing
less than a fine friend for
and i listened to my papa
he played kind lordy
how he could play on his guitar
with intentness like you never
seen and mmm he could make it
sadness or laughter or the likes
of fiery homebrew smoothing down
cool and sharp

i was so young then
and so didn't know all the world
held behind her shining eyes
all wrapped in promises and tears
so all I could know then
was to get myself lost
in the heart of a kind man
playing on the edge of the porch
knowing what it would be for me
and saying nothing
just strumming out strength and hope

***ROBERT T. McLAUGHLIN, Ph.D.**, chairs Rivier College's education division, directs its seven educational leadership programs, is father to three children who, he enjoys telling them, are usually cute and adorable, and, with his wife, provides a home for four border collies, who all are cute and adorable (except, like his children, when they bite or bark). He has founded and chaired the International Society for Technology in Education's interest groups on innovative learning technologies and digital equity, serves on the national commission on technology and the future of teacher education, and is senior fellow for the Stokes Institute for Opportunity in STEM Education.