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FOR LOVE OF COMMON WORDS: POEMS (PAPERBACK)

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The scariest sentence in the English language is brief, threatening, and hopeful. It is deceptive, simple, and as common as water: anything is possible. This second collection by Steve Scafidì is haunted by the possible and the bells of the verb to be that ring-a-ding-ding calling us / to the holy dark of this first / warm night of Spring. When anything is possible, Scafidì finds, horror is as likely as delight. In poems both meditative and defiant he mourns the eventual loss of all that we love and finds consolation, wherever possible, in the rhythm of common words and the sacred guesswork of the imagination. Here is the dangerous world we all have in common. Here is a brief and hopeful book. Steve Scafidì is the author of the poetry collection Sparks from a Nine-Pound Hammer, winner of the Larry Levis Reading Prize. His poem The Egg Suckers received the 2005 James Boatwright Prize from Shenandoah literary magazine. He is a cabinetmaker and lives with his family in Summit Point, West Virginia. Steve Scafidì's poem The Egg Suckers made me laugh, fidget, and ponder my own path through this omnivorous world. It reminds us that things are constantly happening beneath our very feet, that a secret history is being forged that we'll never read about in the newspapers. Like Theodore Roethke, Scafidì describes a nature that is at least as nasty as it is nice and then lets us know that-oops!-we're on the menu, too. Re-reading The Egg Suckers, I laughed again. And then I made breakfast. -David Kirby.

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