

TAKE HEART

A Conversation in Poetry

*Edited & Introduced by Wesley McNair,
Maine Poet Laureate*

This week's poem, by Thomas Moore of Brooksville, consists of just one sentence with a surprise ending. The poem relates a story of Moore's grandmother, who taught him gardening and, as he puts it, "how to get through a tough time."

Her Telling

By Thomas R. Moore

When she told me
after she'd uncoiled the line
 with the steel stakes at the ends
 to set straight rows of peas
 clad in her denim cover-alls
 and tall rubber boots at seventy,
after she'd tossed garden stones
 onto the long windrow
 beyond the asparagus,
after she'd showed me
 the ants climbing the peony stalks
 to the hard buds and cupped hands
 beside the kitchen propane tanks,
and even after years of stirring
 green tomato mincemeat
 on the yellow Glenwood
 and tugging carrots
 from the hot August soil
 and snapping off ears of corn
 and letting me pick clean
 the tree of seckel pears-
 the hard tangy red fruit-
 in October,
even forty years after that Christmas day
 when she smashed the third floor door,
 the children listening below,
 to find her husband inside,
 dead by his own hand,
my grandmother was stunned
by her own telling.

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