

TAKE HEART

A Conversation in Poetry

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

“For all the time poets—especially female poets—spend on domestic chores,” writes Ellen Taylor of Appleton, little of their poetry “includes those activities.” With today’s poem about spring cleaning, she helps set things right.

Spring Cleaning

by Ellen M. Taylor

Why are there no poems of the joy
of vacuum cleaning after a long

winter? Of the pleasure of pulling
the couch back, sucking up cobwebs, dead

flies, candy cane wrappers, cookie crumbs?
The sun rises earlier now, flooding

the room with daffodil light, enough
to see long unseen clumps of dog hair,

wood ash, needles from holiday greens.
The vacuum crackles over a spot

of gravelly dirt, until at last
the carpet pile is clean, floorboards gleam.

Then, the bliss when the machine is pressed off,
no sound left but the tick, tick of the clock.

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