

TAKE HEART

A Conversation in Poetry

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

Once a seasonal resident of Bristol, Sarah Jane Wolf-Wade has lived in that town year-round for fourteen years — long enough to develop the perspective she offers in today’s poem.

They All Come Back

by Sarah Jane Woolf-Wade

The girl who shone in Broadway shows
was born here in the village on Fourth of July
and a Rockette who danced in the chorus line
came back to raise babies ten miles away.

The clamdigger brothers, working two tides a day,
sculpted like statues, left town in their prime.
The doctor brother returned to build homes,
the recovering teacher now fishes the sea.

The stenos, hairdressers, building inspectors
now all snuggle into the arms of the village.
People who married, those who traveled abroad
nestle into the homesteads built by their fathers.

Some born in the town migrate south in the winter,
reappear with songbirds early in spring.
The city-based clerk breathes deep of Maine air
as she crosses the Kittery bridge heading North.

Up on the hill among all the gravestones
lie the man shot dead in a place far from home
and a faraway baby who lived only a day.
Aunt Emma says, as she picks up a stitch,

“Our folks, they all come back in the end.”

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