

# TAKE HEART

## A Conversation in Poetry

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

Lewis Turco, who lives in Dresden Mills, is author of numerous poetry collections and *The Book of Forms: A Handbook of Poetics*, called “the poets’ Bible” since 1968. In today’s intriguing poem he offers the description of a house -- or is it something more than a house?

### The Habitation

*by Lewis Turco*

There is no way out.  
Now the windows have begun  
to cloud over: cobwebs, dust.  
The stairs and floors are unstable—  
the hours nibble the foundations.

In the bedrooms, sheets  
have begun to yellow, spreads  
to fray. Coverlets have worn  
to the colors of late autumn,  
thin as a draft sifting at the sill.

On the kitchen floor  
crumbs and rinds lie recalling  
the old feasts. In the larder  
preserves rust among speckled jars;  
the bins yawn; shadow sates the cupboards.

The fire has been damped  
at the hearth: its bed of ash  
sinks in pit-holes over brick.  
The ceiling snows on the carpet—  
Rejoice! Rejoice! The house is failing!

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