

TAKE HEART

A Conversation in Poetry

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

This week's column features Marta Finch, the President of the Maine Poetry Society, who lives for extended periods each year on Moosehead Lake. Marta's poem is a dramatic monologue — that is, a poem spoken by a character. In this character's description of a neighbor from away who lives in his town, he reveals as much about himself as about his subject.

The Poet

By Marta Rijn Finch

Heard you were moving in last week. Welcome.
You'll like it here. The people—most of them—
are friendly. You'll meet them tomorrow at church.
There's a bean supper afterward. Real nice folk.
Hard-working. But an old crone lives down
the street with a couple cats—three, maybe four.
Keeps to herself so we hardly know she's there.
She's got a daughter no one's ever seen;
visits her son somewhere over the border.
She has no flag, but hangs the hammock out;
that tells us she's in residence. We see it
from the shore—and smoke, of course, come winter.
They say she is a poet. I don't know.
I've never seen it. Can't be any good.
She read her poems once at the library,
but no one went. Not even the local teacher.
Just the librarian. She had to be there.
And a lot of folks drove up from away.

You don't write poetry, do you?

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