

TAKE HEART

A Conversation in Poetry

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

Sometimes what saves a child from life's hardships is her imagination, as Mekeel McBride explains in today's poem.

No Child of Earthly Kitchens

by Mekeel McBride

I owned no raincoat and in the season of storms
was sent to school under my mother's umbrella.

It was the color of pale sherry. The ivory handle
kept about it the faint smell of perfumed wrists.

It never carried me away although I wished it
often enough that I can still see beneath me

people with their umbrellas like black morning glories
growing small on a polished street.

And I see, too, my house as tidy as the shoebox
for a hurt bird; the flat horizon

filling out as purple and plump as an eggplant.
And when the dark arc of the umbrella sets me down

and when my feet again touch stubborn ground
I am no longer a child of earthly kitchens

but find the geometry of clouds closeted in my heart
and in my hair, the strange blue perfume of storm.

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