

# TAKE HEART

## A Conversation in Poetry

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

Not many poets would confess to the personal themes they've avoided in their work, or even quite know what they are. Yet in this brave poem which concludes his new collection, *Death of a Ventriloquist*, Gibson Fay-LeBlanc of Portland both reveals those themes to us and challenges himself with them.

### The Nots

*by Gibson Fay-LeBlanc*

*A writer is accountable also for what  
he chooses not to write. —Edmond Jabés*

I haven't described the flight path of my shouts  
at two toddlers in a car. I've said little

of my father, a dash. I've not been head  
in hands, unable to stop my baby's wails.

That wasn't me, slack-jawed before a screen,  
vacant as neon, forgetting my own name.

Not once have I forgotten my son  
on his birthday or how to touch my wife.

That was someone else who tightened  
your heart with a skate key. Confessed not

being the cherry atop a Manhattan,  
nor a tiny umbrella crinkling over a daiquiri.

No tantrums on or off the page.  
I told none of the stories I wished to.

They turned out to be tangles of nerve fibers  
unjoined, two roads without a bridge between.

I've not spread my arms wide as they would  
and said, *Do with me what you will.*

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