

# TAKE HEART

## A Conversation in Poetry

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

This week's favorite entry from a past column comes from Amy Chapman of Greenwood, who writes that Patricia Ranzoni's poem about an abandoned farmhouse brings her old neighbors back to life. "As long as they are preserved in her words," Amy says. "their sheer white curtains and their everyday lives are still present there."

### The Old Gross Place

*by Patricia Ranzoni*

Across the road the  
    old dairy is an apparition.  
Not haunted so much as  
    that it is, itself, a ghost.  
When I go for mail, Hazel  
    is not in the kitchen.  
Mary is not upstairs, Tom  
    not in his chair  
by the window. White sheers  
    are an absence I prom-  
ise to remember.  
    One could watch forever  
and never see them again.  
    Search clean through  
those waving old panes  
    front to back, not a soul  
not even a stick of their furniture  
    to rest wavy eyes  
on. Why a neighbor  
    can look clear through  
that thinning house  
    all the way to heaven.

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