

AMERICAN LIFE IN POETRY

A FREE COLUMN FOR NEWSPAPERS BY TED KOOSER, POET LAUREATE OF THE UNITED STATES, 2004-2006
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American Life in Poetry: Column 726

BY TED KOOSER, U.S. POET LAUREATE, 2004-2006

John Stanizzi is a poet living in Connecticut, whose work we've published before. His most recent collection of poems is *Chants*, from Cervena Barva Press. Our column has published a number of poems about facing the loss of family members, and others about the rush of time. This poem addresses both subjects.

Ascension

First day of February,
and in the far corner of the yard
the Adirondack chair,
blown over by the wind at Christmas,
is still on its back,
the snow too deep for me
to traipse out and right it,
the ice too sheer
to risk slamming these old bones
to the ground.
In a hospital bed in her room
where her bed used to be,
and her husband,
my Aunt Millie keeps reaching up
for the far corner of the room,
whispering *That is so interesting.*
I will go now.
In April
I will walk out
across the warming grass,
and right the chair
as if there had never been anything
to stop me in the first place,
listening for the buzz of hummingbirds
which reminds me of how fast
things are capable of moving.

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