

# TAKE HEART

## A Conversation in Poetry

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

The late Elizabeth Coatsworth was a member of a Maine literary family that included her late husband, Henry Beston, and also includes her daughter, Kate Barnes, a former state poet laureate who lives in Appleton. In this week's poem, Coatsworth describes the tentative beginning of a Maine spring.

### Night Wind in Spring

*by Elizabeth Coatsworth*

Two yellow dandelion shields do not make spring,  
nor do the wild duck swimming by the shore,  
so self-possessed, so white of side and breast,  
nor, I suppose, the change in the land-birds' calls,  
softened and sweetened to a courting note,  
nor the new colors twigs are taking on,  
not even the sun which rises early now  
and lingers almost until dinner time.  
We, too, are valid instruments; we, too, can say  
if this be spring or only waning winter.  
Tonight the wind is loud about our chimney.  
There is no new moon in the sky, nothing but stars:  
the Dipper upright on its shining handle,  
Sirius bright above a neighbor's house,  
and this wind roaming, not enough to scrape  
a branch along the roof, or try the shutters  
for one to bang. No, just enough to cry  
and cry and cry against the stalwart chimney,  
as though it were a wanderer who had come  
down half the world to find one only door  
and that door locked and nothing answering.

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