

# TAKE HEART

## A Conversation in Poetry

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

Annie Finch of Falmouth is noted for her symbols, poetic images that radiate special meanings. In today's haunting poem about a woman who walks the windy coast of Maine alone in late fall, she introduces the symbol of a shell, challenging us to interpret it.

### Shell

*by Annie Finch*

and then I felt a yearning  
to stare out at the sea—  
or simply at the stretching sand—  
the waters restlessly

beating with their own chaos in,  
as fall's late wind blew cold  
and spoke in whispers at my ear  
that I was growing old—

days were growing shorter,  
I was growing too,  
and soon there would be nothing more  
than words that I might rue.

And then I went and folded in  
upon myself, and found  
in my dark folds a small white shell,  
and put it on the ground.

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