

TAKE HEART

A Conversation in Poetry

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

Maine's Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, who wrote affirmative poems about historical events such as Paul Revere's ride, also wrote dark lyrics derived from personal experience. In this example, he links a first snowfall to despair.

Snow-Flakes

by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

Out of the bosom of the Air,
 Out of the cloud-folds of her garments shaken,
Over the woodlands brown and bare,
 Over the harvest-fields forsaken,
 Silent, and soft, and slow
 Descends the snow.

Even as our cloudy fancies take
 Suddenly shape in some divine expression,
Even as the troubled heart doth make
 In the white countenance confession,
 The troubled sky reveals
 The grief it feels.

This is the poem of the air,
 Slowly in silent syllables recorded;
This is the secret of despair,
 Long in its cloudy bosom hoarded,
 Now whispered and revealed
 To wood and field.

Take Heart: A Conversation in Poetry is produced in collaboration with the Maine Writers & Publishers Alliance. This poem is in the public domain. Questions about submitting to *Take Heart* may be directed to Gibson Fay-LeBlanc, Special Consultant to the Maine Poet Laureate, at mainepoetlaureate@gmail.com or 207-228-8263. *Take Heart: Poems from Maine, an anthology collecting the first two years of this column, is now available from Down East Books.*