

Fair exchange mid April—Maine

by [J. Barrie Shepherd](#) in the [April 15, 2015](#) issue

Gun metal gray the sky this morning
and along the shore at dead low tide an on-shore wind
blows spume across the wave tops.
Rain before dark, they say, and even some late snow
to dash our dawning dreams of green and blossoming.
Undaunted, a new pair of mallards—
splendid headed male and female—inaugurate
the new-thawed pool beside the dog run
of our ocean-front retirement home.
Silent, they move across, now venturing
among the reeds to break their long migrating fast,
and seek a secure nesting place to lay the future.
Blessing their ancient quest, I call to mind one week ago,
on this same daybreak dog walk, I was surprised,
almost alarmed, by one great, stately snow white egret,
with his mate, also foraging among the weeds,
as the larger of them rose, spread his quite angelic wings,
and wafted a bright unexpected blessing to my aging head,
as he moved on in search of richer waters.