Maxine Kumin was born in Philadelphia and received her BA and MA from Radcliffe. In 1957, she met the poet Anne Sexton, with whom she became friends and exchanged poems until Sexton’s suicide in 1974. Kumin’s poetry, unlike Sexton’s, is traditional in its form and temperate in tone. She employs regular rhymes and common verse forms, such as iambic lines and quatrain stanzas, while discussing the themes of family and the inner life of women as they negotiate various roles in society. In her poem “Nurture,” Kumin combines the theme of maternity with descriptions of animal life and the natural world, which are also dominant themes in her poetry.