

"No man is an island, entire of itself; every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main." John Donne

Distance

Michalene Hague

Pink azaleas bloom, forsythia bobble in a breeze,
dandelions huddle in uncut grass, a cardinal calls,
a few scarfed people scurry past—
The season is clearing her throat.

Through the windows—the distant neighbors'
treetops glow with cheery red buds beseeching spring.
A few fat snowflakes glide through pale sunbeams,
disappear on deck-boards like deleted messages.

April hums her muddled tune, stirring
Donne's words inside my house-bound head,
and me to voice 'sixties soulful version,
to sing solace like a lullaby. But I realize—

Through the windows—I am an island,
an island in an archipelago of alone,
beaches thundering with waves of work,
home holding off the surf of predators,
confronting foes by backing away,
contacting friends through crowded air,
signaling like semaphores in a gale,
signing concern, comfort, camaraderie....

Outside, I stroll the backyard breathing its new green,
wave afar to a neighbor, throw sticks into the woods,
speak to a squirrel, a robin, and the lone turkey
pecking its way through the next-door field.