You’ve made your bed,  
Now lie in it – the cloud  
Mother cried. Her voice  
A lick of fresh air  
Or a push off a cliff.  
The blackberry bush is darker than a bruise and  
Still not sweet enough to eat-  
At least, not yet.

Untitled  
*By Jessica McDermott*
Father as Island

By Jessica McDermott

Old mask, familiar father, still an island
far and away from his kids. Not an island
that can withstand a hurricane or losing another job –
but one that wears weathered gloves to mend
barbed wire fences and feeds rib-worn horses
that aren't his own.

An island that doesn't visit
or say I Love You
or even remember the city you live in now,
but one that somehow sends a card on your
birthday like it's always been there,
waiting for you to come ashore.

Jessica McDermott's work has appeared in The Apeiron Review, Manifest West, and Green Panda Press, among others. She received her MFA in creative nonfiction writing from the University of Idaho. She and her twin brother co-run the online poetry press Line Rider.