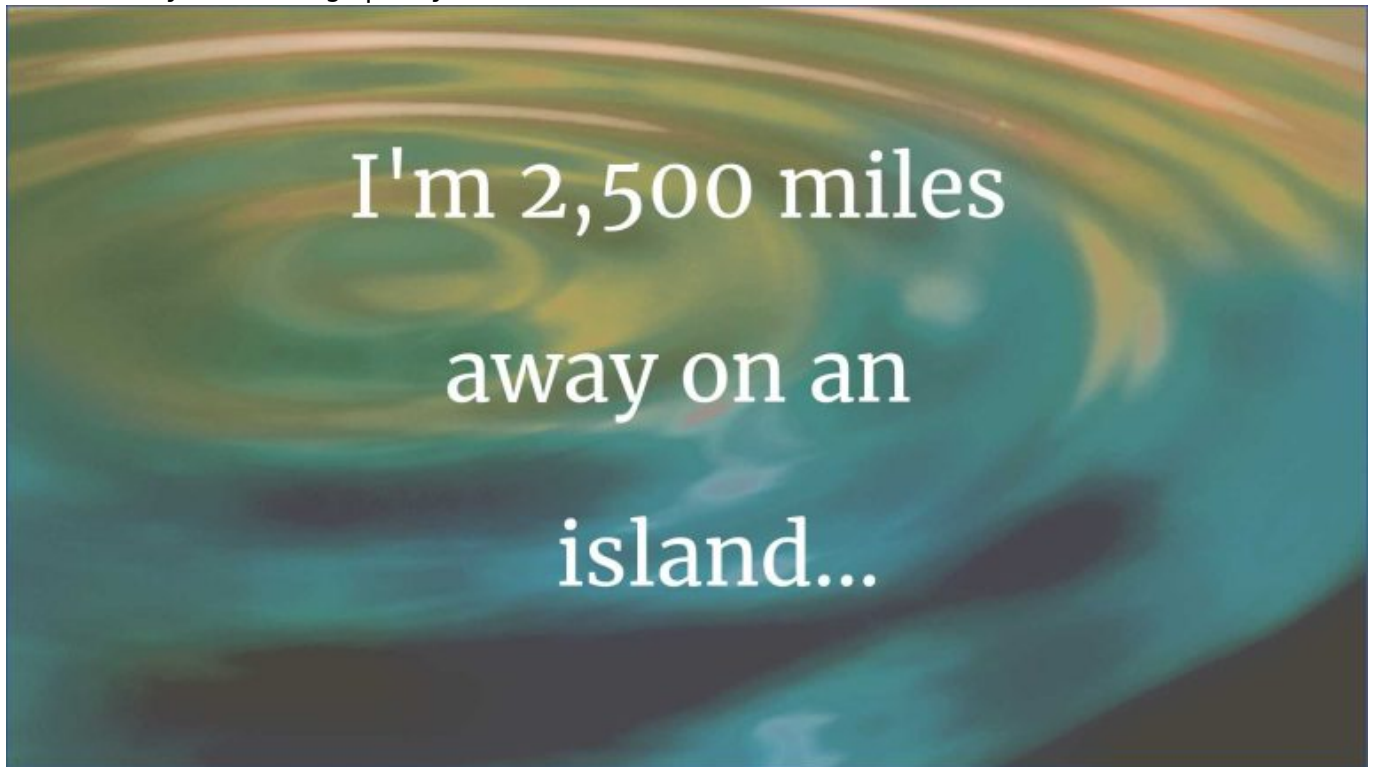


Wet skin

Category: Poems

written by Jan Haag | May 16, 2025



My mother doesn't think she's dying,
but she's in the ER for the third time
in less than three months while

I'm 2,500 miles away on an island
in the middle of the sea, my sister
sitting with our shrinking mother

as they wait for blood-test results again.
I see them on hard waiting-room seats,
my sister upright and patient,

our prickly mother restless and
ready for the soft sofa at home that
she has long preferred to her bed.

My sister and I think our mother
is dying from the outside in. She
insists that she's recuperating.

I walk by the huge pool to see a
young mother bobbing in the water,
holding her baby, wet skin to wet skin,

as gray-tinged white clouds
scuttle overhead, moving fast

toward the sea.