

Alone with Geese Swimming

By Peter Albertson

Email: albertson.p@gmail.com

From my sliding door to a tiny deck
I see the lawn, still green in early December,
Quilted now by a layer of powdered snow.
The oaks edging the lake are bare.
Spring's twigs shudder as a breeze
Annoys giant stay-green spruces,
Urges down their chocolate cones,
Trembles the tamarack's dead needles
To rest, gold on the whitened lawn.

Beyond, unaffected by the breeze,
Are acres of dark glass under gray clouds.
I am no longer alone on my lake.
Two perfect Vs of ripple approach the shore,
A single white-throated Canada goose at each V's apex,
A dozen or so behind each leader.
They are not overhead as are other flocks,
Sunbird retirees, moving south for the winter,
Honking, screaming, raucous in *their* Vs.
I count my geese moving shoreward, all 27 of them.

The sun barely emerges from a cloud,
Then promptly sets, setting sky and lake to flame,
And still they make their Vs toward shore.

Why don't they go south? It will not be friendly here.
My lake will host ice fisherman with lean-tos and liquor,
Grumbling skimobiles will rush across the ice.
My geese will not be able glide on our glass lake.
I had no idea they stayed so late.

I am new here, captured by lake view and loneliness.
I never knew geese before.
I spend much time watching the lake, alone,
Second sad late-day martini in hand.
I like to think that only we are here,
That they are my best friends,
That I need no other.

They flap from the red water,
Waddle up an incline onto the snow.
They walk on the white grass,
None straggling, straight toward me.
If they make it I will welcome them.