Virus Vigil

Poetry by Jim Blackburn
Art by Isabelle Scurry Chapman

KESTREL 3

On Galveston Island after Ike
Watching a kestrel preparing to strike.

The little falcon once a sparrow hawk
Sits on a wire beside the road,
Head swiveling around, seeing all, missing nothing
Observing which way the fickle wind blows.

Watching the pompous politicians strutting
Into hearings to decry the horror,
That was hurricane Ike bustin' us up
Creating a furor when it came ashore.

How could "just" a category 2 storm
Totally upend modern settlements,
Closing down Galveston, destroying Bolivar,
Covering the road with sediments?

The politicians wring their collective hands,
Assuring that all is being done,
To put the remnants back together again,
Promising a whole that will never be one.

We need to realize that when one builds
In the path of an incoming disaster,
They need to take responsibility
And not go screaming to the local broadcaster.

Our ethos is allowing what others want to do
But they have no right to ask us to

Bail them out when the big ones come
And they find themselves needing to run.

The kestrel flies and hovers above
Wings beating furiously to hold sway
Seemingly floating on the October air,
Then, falling upon its clueless prey.

But our coastal residents are not prey
They're mature beings who want their way,
So, build where you want, but please don't call
For help and a bail-out, now hear that ya'll.