

## **Sara Kirke, Spirit of Avalon**

They came to Avalon by the King's proclamation,  
with papers and promises,  
believing possession was enough.

But this land demanded much more than that.

Avalon was not easily tamed,  
and neither was I.

Endurance.

I stayed when others would not.

I outlived my husband.

England waited across the sea,  
but I chose Avalon.

I chose this shore.

I chose the cold.

I chose the fog.

I chose the fight this land demanded.

For forty years,

I held this settlement together.

Boats sailed from this harbour under my watch.

Fishing stages lined these shores.

The fishery endured because I would not let it fail.

Fishermen unused to a woman's command

soon learned whose harbour kept them working.

Through hunger, winter, and war,  
others learned this land could not be ruled from paper alone.  
This place survived  
because someone stayed to fight for it.  
And somewhere along the way,  
I came to understand,  
it was not only I who chose Avalon.  
Avalon had chosen me.  
The Baltimores came with titles,  
lords of lands both here and far away.  
One winter broke them.  
One season of wind and darkness  
sent them running south to the warmer shores of America.  
To Maryland.  
They left Avalon behind.  
But I remained.  
And in time,  
I became it.  
War came.  
The Dutch attacked  
and plundered and destroyed the Colony  
And still, we rebuilt.  
They call me the first,  
the first and most successful woman entrepreneur in English North America.

A fine and fancy title

for what I truly did.

Survival never sounded so pleasant.

I died here, where my heart lived.

And perhaps that is why

I never truly left.

You walk these grounds in Ferryland now.

And still, I keep watch here.

This place is called Avalon,

named for the legendary isle of healing,

of sacred power,

of the divine feminine.

Though I will tell you,

there was little divine about the struggle

to keep this fishing plantation alive for thirty years.

And perhaps,

it was my destiny.

For it was a woman who stayed.

I am Sara Kirke.

And Avalon still stands,

because once,

so did I.