

## On an island of strangers

<https://www.taxresearch.org.uk/Blog/2025/05/13/on-an-island-of-strangers/>

Published: January 12, 2026, 8:22 pm

---

This poem, by Michael Rosen, was shared in the comments by Robin Gardner this morning.

I cannot find it on the web.

I hope Michael will forgive me for sharing it this morning, when it is so relevant:

---

I lay in bed  
hardly able to breathe  
but there were people to sedate me,  
pump air into me  
calm me down when I thrashed around  
hold my hand and reassure me  
tick me over to help my lungs  
shave me, wash me, feed me  
check my medication  
perform the tracheostomy  
people on this island of strangers,  
from China, Jamaica, Brazil, Ireland  
India, USA, Nigeria and Greece.

I sat on the edge of my bed  
and four people came with  
a frame and supported me  
or took me to a gym  
where they taught me how  
to walk between parallel bars  
or kick a balloon  
sat me in a wheel chair  
taught me how to use the exercise bike  
how to walk with a stick  
how to walk without a stick  
people on this island of strangers,  
from China, Jamaica, Brazil, Ireland  
India, USA, Nigeria and Greece.

If ever you're in need as I was  
may you have an island of strangers  
like I had.