

# Mercator Projection

Glenn Shaheen

Poetry

I'm all distorted, bigger in the face  
than in the foot. I'll take  
one sorrow  
to go, please. I can't even finish the sorrows I  
have at home. *Whisper*  
coincidence to the mirror, tell  
my cat she's real purty.  
The shortest distance between two points is a  
crumpled up map. The whole  
floor is empty except me in my office,  
the middle of a workday, the middle  
of a workweek.  
I don't want to talk  
to anyone anyway.  
Rough bark flaking  
from the stump, Spanish  
moss draped  
elegantly across the branches.  
This tree is dead. It looks real purty.  
Full tire and rim bouncing errantly  
across the highway,  
smashing the side  
of my hood. Car distorted too, a lil  
misshapen.  
Why must I be there  
for everyone, friends, strangers, justify

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my existence, Arab life, love, etc?  
Just want a little life in a hole, with  
Laurie and a few cats.  
Instead, labor,  
pain, scars.  
The house shifts, it  
makes a lot of bangs in the *night*.  
I'm sure that's usual, not an indication  
of structural damage or weakness.

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