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Roads Twist in 12 Parts

By Alder Mitchell

1. There are 70 miles
Just about
Between Eureka, CA
And Gasquet Mountain
369,600 feet
4,435,200 severed thumbs
Between land and tower
2 hours
With the winding roads
The roads wind
Like a cat
Laying on its back
2. Every time
I go to Gasquet Mountain
My insides drag
Like they are
Gripping the asphalt behind me
We don't like the mountain
They say
It is made of lies
And pain
I reply

I must go
Neither of us
Know why
3. My Grandfather
Hides a MAGA hat
Under his bed
My Grandmother
Is more sneaky about
Her racism
She is not sneaky
About her homophobia
4. I have a brother
Named Harvey
My grandmother
Calls him
Granddaughter
He does not go to Gasquet
Anymore
5. I am out
As bisexual
To my grandmother and grandfather
6. A female praying mantis
Will kill the male
Once mating is done
7. Opposites attract
Is a rumor
8. Gasquet
Is a closer walking distance

To another state
Then it is to
A place I feel safe
9. Summer temperature highs
In Gasquet
Are 101° Fahrenheit
That's not why I'm sweating
10. I have my own room
On Gasquet Mountain
It has a door lock
And a window
That latches
I don't feel lucky
Stuck
I feel guilty
I was supposed
To be the good one
My grandmother will yell at my Dad
Say it's his fault
He shouldn't have
Raised us like people
But like pets
Like dogs
That he should have
Stomped out the gay
That she saw this coming
That his sister did better
That his sister is better

That I'm the problem

That I'm a freak

Freak

Dipshit

Brat

Faggot

12. Water

Foams across jagged rock

The sea crashes

Against a crooked smile

I watch the ocean roar

And feel an ache

Of déjà vu