

# Due South

Dawn O'Leary

I hang up the phone, take out the map again,  
knowing where I travel next: Blank region

at the bottom, where explorers go to die.

My creaky plane casts a shadow on the greens

of Africa, the blues of the South Atlantic,

as I cruise down lines of longitude

to the white place. How discrete my shadow now:

Suspended high above the Ice Shelf, frozen

in the air, I sit back - no need to pilot -

and listen for a crack in the engine.

The splintering of fuselage.

The breaking off of wings.

A native of Jersey City, mother of three, Dawn O'Leary is also a poet, playwright, screenwriter and novelist. She's had poetry published in many journals, including The Antioch Review, New Letters, New York Quarterly and The New England Journal of Medicine, and has won first prize twice (in 2008, 2005) in online poetry contests at PoetrySuperHighway.com. Her stage plays have been produced in New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, New Jersey and Arizona. After receiving a Nicholl Fellowship in Screenwriting from the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, for which she is most grateful, Dawn moved to California and has enjoyed a career writing for television and film. In 2004, her Nicholl-winning screenplay "Island of Brilliance," which is an adaptation of one of her stage plays, was produced as an independent feature film retitled "Admissions." The cast includes Lauren Ambrose, Amy Madigan, Christopher Lloyd and John Savage. Debuting in two film festivals, "Admissions" was distributed by the Sundance Channel and is available on DVD. Eventually Dawn started writing novels and is currently seeking publication for her first four.

