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In Your Bathing Suit

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Christopher Murray

In Your Bathing Suit

The car is speeding toward us.
The car is growing larger.
We stand with our backs to the hedge,
which is tall—I keep ducking
when the blackbird flies out. The neighbor folds

his chair, returning from a swim.
You'll never know I read your diary.
You'll never know I know
you slept with your sister on the couch
on Christmas morning.

Nonetheless you're disappearing
over the winding road
in the back of a yellow car.
You left your shoes

in the road. I pluck a hard leaf
from the hedge. It would hurt to be dropped
from a great height into the hedge.
To leap off a ranch-style house...

Do you still play
the piano on the porch where we ate shrimp
while your grandmother slept? She was still
gripping the silver tray. Did you see

her feet? I took some of her
medication. I shivered on the green tile
and ruined the leather waste basket.
You patted my head
with a towel while I whispered
and dreamed of a smoky field.

What did we find in the dunes?
A punctured ball? A Portuguese
man-of-war? You ran
to the house. I followed,
tearing the screen door, spilling my drink,
but you'd gone on the tandem bike

alone. I threw your keys
into a wave. I cut a strap
off your father's sandal. He asked me
what I was doing crouched in his closet.
Smelling his shirts? He carried me
through the empty house
into your room. He whispered to me
and searched in the shade for my tan-line.