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Christopher Murray

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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.