

First Place, Poetry, Ages 14-18

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“Sailing”

The last time I heard “Brielle”
I was in the small sailing town of Oxford, Maryland,
a mere tourist riding though
the winding back streets.

Every house had a garden
with roses whose red and pink velveteen blooms
flourished on thorn-ridden vines.

That night I dreamt of sailboats
and women in white,
and expensive picnic lunches
aboard private vessels.

I dreamt of robin’s egg blue cottages
and screen porches
with white lattice-work trellises outside
where vines grew in perfectly uniform lines.

I dreamt of fuchsia crepe myrtles
and blue birds
that fill the sweet forest air with their song.

I wish I was sailing away,
miles from shore,
where wrapped in an old shawl
belonging to my grandmother,
I would catch a loose love letter,
kiss it,
and set it free again.