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Rhododendron

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Rhododendron

PATRICIA CLARK

Along the road, we stop
For rhododendrons, hidden
In the midst of ferns.
Beads of rain collect
On Mother's hair where she
Stands holding a blanket
While Father digs. I can't
Believe we're out in the rain
Without our coats, and I wish
The ranger would come
And arrest Mother. This
Is her idea. Now as
Father gathers it into his arms,
Trailing the roots, Mother
Follows, flushed with crime.
Conspiratorial with pleasure,
They don't need me here,
For he places it tenderly
On the car's floor and hums
All the way home, Tacoma,
Seeing her face out of the corner
Of his eye. She's planning
Where to put the rhododendron,
Banking the roots with dirt,
Already tending to her red
Booty from the woods.