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Catamaran 452

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CHRISTINA MILES

Catamaran 452

We used to eat fried chicken,
salty and wet, on the black trampoline
of my dad's catamaran,
number 452. Food appeared when wind
hid, and the boat fidgeted rhythmically.

I perched on one hull and splashed my sister
on the other. Our brother sat behind,
hooked to a halyard—too little to balance.

Dad watched the sails for a hint
of a gust, and Mom eyed the paddles,
a birthday gift, tied near the rudders.

Hours later, after we'd lost at least
one pair of sunglasses and, perhaps, a pager,
Dad steered the boat
to shore, and we each hopped
off to guide it on the trailer. I pulled

sand dollars and seashells from the ocean's
grainy floor, while others tied ropes, dismantled
sails, and dragged the boat from the water.

From the back seat, I watched
our Saturday, lashed to the back
of the family van, bump down

the highway. Then it sat in the yard, white
like chicken meat, the skin peeled off.