

The Sacred

Stephen Dunn

After the teacher asked if anyone had
a sacred place
and the students fidgeted and shrank

in their chairs, the most serious of them all
said it was his car,
being in it alone, his tape deck playing

things he'd chosen, and others knew the truth
had been spoken
and began speaking about their rooms,

their hiding places, but the car kept coming up,
the car in motion,
music filling it, and sometimes one other person

who understood the bright altar of the dashboard
and how far away
a car could take him from the need

to speak, or to answer, the key
in having a key
and putting it in, and going.