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To Be Where You Are

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Your palm walk—aligned with students
rushed, calm—their days displayed on their faces.

I can't register the faces at this school.

The fountain that changed colors twice in my first semester,
purple and red.

*The center here is empty: nothing more than a cement circle
cornered by charcoal black seats.*

The church bell ringing at every quarter of the hour, strong
as the footsteps of Jack's giant; assuring as a fairy godmother.

*Only twelve chimes here—none reassuring or strong,
but the cruel whisper as to where I am not.*

The days warm, even as the seasons changed—
St. Nick preparing for his yearly trip.

I am in Narnia during the White Witch's rule.

Captured moments on the screen,
laughter ringing fresh in my ears. Our
shenanigans replaying over and over again.

*New moments in this screen now. Three
bodies instead of four. But I guess she's a phantom.*

The meticulous view, lights glimmering from this hillside:
ocean to the left, the city to the right, world in my hands.

*Nothing but a street at the edge of this tiny campus-ed world—
leading to predictable bars and restaurants.*

Photographs of the mind slowly fade. Just
how long was the walk to the hall of the university?

*It is precisely 100 meters from one side of this campus
to the other.*

I never got thrown into the fountain; I received
no songs or presents. I left before I could see them.