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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.