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Reclaiming Spaces

Kylie Walsh
Dominican University of California

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Reclaiming Spaces

By Kylie Walsh

This is where we left each other exactly one week before
I discovered all the lies we had been telling ourselves.
And this is where I recited another love poem
thinking I knew what it meant.

This is where he held me in front of an entire ocean,
tired commuters, and a restless city.
And this is where I learned that California was formed
the same way I was, through slow violence.
I had yet to learn that he only had enough room
in his heart for one of us.

This is where I fell asleep in the backseat,
him playing with my hair.
And this is where I discovered I had inherited
my mother's fear of the wind,
of gentle sway.

This is where he got me back onto solid ground.
And this is where I kept climbing,
an attempt to prove myself wrong.

This is where he told me he wouldn't
save me from the water should I slip.
And this is where I let the water take me,
salty kisses in places even he couldn't reach.

This is where he promised to take me
but we fell apart before we could fall in together.
And this is where I learned that nothing, especially rollercoasters,
was built with my survival in mind.
Look at these bruises and tell me I do not love myself.

This is where I confessed it all, slurring the secrets,
squeezed into what little empty space remained,
even if I didn't realize it at the time,
that was the point of no return.