

“Café Date in Another Universe”

I wonder what it would be like
to meet myself in another universe.
She'd choose a café for us to meet at,
in a big, bustling city where she lived and thrived.
She'd be punctual, while I'd be a few minutes late.
Her hair would be shorter than mine—
she wouldn't have been too afraid to cut it.
She'd order an espresso
and wouldn't like Sabrina Carpenter.
I'd ask for hot chocolate.
I'd take out my insulin pump before eating,
and that's how I'd learn she isn't diabetic.
She would have perfect lungs, too,
and as another result of not having cystic fibrosis,
she'd be 5'6" instead of 5'2" like me.
She would exude confidence,
while I'd shift my weight,
smooth my hair,
and constantly check my teeth in my phone camera.
We'd talk about our writing—
I'd learn that she's already been published,
a book or a poetry collection or both,
or maybe even a graphic novel
because she has art skills I never had.

But maybe that alternate me wouldn't like to write.
Maybe her eyes wouldn't change color
depending on what she wore.
Maybe she wouldn't have a family
who brightened her days and made her laugh
even when she was far away.
Maybe she would be a math major
who had never read Harry Potter
and didn't like cheese.
Maybe she would never have met
the curly-haired boy
who stole my heart five years ago
and never gave it back.

Instead of leaving the café with a sorrowful soul,
I would leave with a sense of gratitude.
Gratitude for the things I have,
the people in my life,
and the love I feel every day.
I'd pay for her coffee
to thank her for what she's given me,
and we'd go our separate ways.