

It was the Day of the Dead, and the city was decorated with orange clusters of candles and marigolds. I took a walk down the Alameda to the Zocalo, and tried to find a restaurant my guidebook described as “inexplicably” decorated with pictures of mountains. I imagined an arrangement of several yellowing framed photographs, but when I found the address, it was closed.

It was after midnight, and I decided to return to my hotel, a modest colonial-style accommodation on Avenida Bolívar. When I closed the door behind me, I heard two lovers in the room above. One was sighing gracefully in a distinct rhythm. I took down my ponytail, began to undress, and then looked at a painting hung between the beds. I marveled at the sounds as I stared at the painting, a snow-capped mountain with a lake and a field of pink flowers. I mused at how the mountain exists with beautiful indifference. The residue of the evening mingled with the lovers above me, and I moved closer to the painting, closer to its peak.

Several months later, I decided to go back to Mexico City to take the painting, and replace it with another mountain—the one that I grew up with.