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### Where I Was During the Canada Russia Summit Series

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ANDRÉ NARBONNE

## Where I Was During the Canada Russia Summit Series

Three janitors put a television  
on a trolley and they wheeled it into  
the grade two classroom and we  
followed in a line that started straight but  
finished round like a lasso.

It was September and our eyes pinned a place we  
couldn't know onto a map inside our minds.  
Russia—land of Olga Korbut, her back forever  
arched in triumph.  
The country looked familiar as snow.

The year before, I'd stopped being British.  
I'd come to understand my place in the world  
as an absence, the way a boy learns he  
will never marry his first love  
before he finds a replacement.

I learned it as a despite:  
Despite the Union Jacks waving in the  
Dominion Day parade and despite the  
common sense opinion that people who  
drank tea were more civilized than Americans,  
Canada was not actually in England.

I still didn't know where I was, but it  
looked like the place on the screen more  
than anywhere else—a place where  
black and white TV was perfectly suited  
to projecting shades of white.

I was still in love with Olga,  
but when Henderson scored and the room  
erupted in joy, for the first  
time that week,  
I was no longer in Russia.