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## Variation on the Idea of Crowds

Ed Skoog

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## Variation on the Idea of Crowds

I go into crowds, hoping for riot,  
and I know a crowd is an amalgam  
of the general crush, like prison

or an epic. I go into a crowd's  
ontogeny, mark the move to grown  
from embryo, moving face to face.

Going into crowds, I hope a tyro  
will tutor me in what is still young,  
show me new divisions among the turks

preening, subscribers to an abstract cool.  
In the crowd my eyes dart from dirt to rain,  
picking out which brawlers would start a fight,

guessing who in the crowd presides,  
lead starling in a scarf of starlings  
wrapped around a river,

asteroidal revolutionaries,  
flying tories; or which gang plans to start  
fires under the dinner tables;

which clique's old age will mostly be spent  
dusting silver nitrate under roses.  
There are groups in the crowd covered in sores.

In crowds are islands that seem oases.  
I go into crowds to learn how to move  
many as one, the latest pattern

of bones going into the body,  
occipital tori, the many tendons of the wrist,  
inside the gala of ribs the salsa of organs

red and moving like featured performers,  
riotous heart and lungs someone's mama  
felt longing under a taut belly,

or saw through the gamma broadcast  
clipped to the doctor's light, curled baby  
bones, fetal catafalque, each facet and cleft

fleshed out by the doctor's pen, actual  
fetal development unimportant:  
there is the one projected skeleton

featuring us, in the medical room,  
doctor rushing toward other patients,  
each of us trying to remain parental

to this white sketch against a black faucet,  
a claue to fawn it into morning.  
And at the base of the X-

rayed neck a solarium  
glows warm, the neckbones concatenating  
towards the face even now woven

around a sucked thumb that must taste  
like sourballs, the kid's wince transfers

to the transparency so terribly.

There must be something valuable in thumbs.  
They are crowded into so many mouths,  
cedilla for the chin, ladled by a fist.