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## Herd Mentality

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# Herd Mentality

by Hannah Craig

At various hours, humans become cattle. It's true;  
imagine two hundred head packed tight  
between stoplights on Washington Ave  
and you'll start to have a clue. Or

at the copy machine, heavy hips of the secretary—  
eyes moist, mouth pursed in cud. The low bassoon  
of a drunk neighbor mooing out *Louie, Louie*  
just past three a.m. Team jerseys, a herd

of motion and focus—to devour, to stay whole.  
Most of us have an inner lip that chews and chews.  
That considers, through all hours, and seven  
unstoppable stomachs, if this life is enough.

If there might be something better than the worry  
over bills and foreign wars. The wife who barely  
speaks. The kids who need to eat. In the next paddock  
there might be a bull or some other predestined leader.

There might be a horn or hoof companion. Laughter  
hung like fists of clover. Despite these possibilities,  
there are still concerns. How hard is it to find work  
that cows can do? What kind of herd is that, crossing

in front of the plaza? The cow-life is hard; a shoulder, a calf.  
Someone is gored. Another falls to its knees and the herd,  
trembling, surges forward. Where, where is the down-hole  
for downers? *Animals*, someone says. Someone else agrees.



*Photo (detail) by Joel Kendall*

