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## Begin again the same

Christine Stocke

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# Begin Again the Same

If only we had all been born on the same Saturday afternoon in August. And, if only, each of us weighed the same precise seven pounds two point four ounces. The same strawberry blond hair. The same number of wrinkled toes. The same mole in the same fold of skin on our same chubby sweet meat left thighs. If we had all grown up with the same parents in the same house, walked to the same school and earned the same grades, then I think it might all have worked.

Lined up and assigned numbers one through seventeen million, or whatever. One being the best person and seventeen million, of course, the worst. Sure, there were a lot of minor calculations. Johnny woke up on the wrong side of the bed 1.27 times more on average per year than Sally and 7.98 times more than Ashley. Sam said hi to strangers more than Jake and Michael and Bill but not more than Cole. Kari remembered her mother's birthday and sent a card more than Kathryn and Elizabeth but never more than Emma. And on it would always go.

And then I stop and think that perhaps it was an event like that same birth. And, once experienced, by the same people but in the same moment, all slates were wiped clean, and the ranking process can be begin again, or, rather, just begin—must begin, again the same.

## About Christine Stocke

Christine Stocke is a graduate of the master's program in English at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. She currently lives and works in Holland. Other works by Christine can be found in *Word*, *Rio Grande Review*, *Menu 971*, *2012 Best New Poets*, *Wisconsin People & Ideas*, and the *2013 WI Poets' Calendar*.

