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by stephen hastings-king

Last night as a duration spent hovering in electronic media-space watching the attempted coup as a war of sentences: X is happening; X is growing; X is in control: X is attempted; X is failing; X has always failed. The sentences roiled the plankton of mutually exclusive information, giving them appearances of organization first one way then another, swinging Ankara close to Istanbul and away again, pulling armed fighting together to encompass everything then scattering it to remote places. Explosions multiplied and dissolved into a confusion of the sound of bombs with sonic boom. People turned out into the streets now in Taksim from ground level, now as heard through a window on a somewhere corner, now in photographs of an elsewhere, now in photographs of many elsewheres.

I watched a live feed of a bridge over the Bosphorus for hours, traffic on one side not on the other, traffic on neither side, traffic trying to get through: people moving toward a military blockade; people moving away from it again, a center and its peripheries like C-Span back in the day of broadcasting otherwise unused camera feeds, what you can learn of a political convention from watching empty escalators linking levels of an entryway from overhead, what you can learn is about a vanishing point which is the center swallowed by its peripheries and the peripheries swallowed by their center and how from that point there's nowhere to go except maybe in the morning someone will have figured out something and then to sleep.

