

the fat lady reached for the bag of cheesies
munching noisily and staring blankly
she watches ants and pretty girls
she has hated both for so long
it doesn't feel like anything
yet a tiredness coils
serpentlike around
her flaccid
fleshy
neck

M a r t h a H a n c o c k

Montreux Jazz Festival

dancing wailing clapping screaming
bopping jiving foot stomping jazz & blues
everyone up on their seats
or in the aisles swaying & sweating
taking it in
& needing more more more

it never seems to stop
& long after the final 30 musician jam
has left the stage to roadies
& cleaning crew I'm still way up in the blueblack stratosphere
soul stretched to the bursting point
gliding between stars
slowly ever so slowly floating
back to earth my body crying
in a daze exhausted
needing a place to crash

J o e B l a d e s

where does gentleness go?

*you get things done
seize & create
opportunities*

*ride the rails to
a better place —
chase falling stars
and catch them*

fierce, fearsome

*not always — remember?
chart your progress
map reactions*

*when did people
become contacts?*

*only old friends come with gentleness
tentatively proffered, a wary concession
to a memory large as life
& so changed*

*outside it is cold blue
air to freeze your lungs
so breathe shallow*

*random snowflakes fall
soft & subtle*

K a t h y M a c

air moving wet

walking fog shrouded
Scottish Highland glens
mauve heather lightly misted
as my wool touque & sweater

walking where not even Roman roads have been
sheep heavy with weather scatter
across hillsides bleating
their grey lumps like rocks
among the gorse & rusted fern

clouds card themselves
on the crags & I pick tufts
of wool off lichen rock

J o e B l a d e s

M a r k P i e s a n e n