

Moo at the Moon

We lift our eyes from grazing. We
people should not be in the alfalfa,
which might bloat and kill us.
We people have four stomachs—one
to fill with fodder, one that turns,
one wherein our bravery reposes,
one to hold our souls. We people
bawl for others to join us. We believe
in our right to follow, even though
we are eating alfalfa, tasty but dangerous,
in this field on a high plateau above a killing
drop. We have herded ourselves, stumbled
up the path. We didn't need to climb,
but no one turned off in a different direction.
Up here we can moo at the moon, we can
jump and kick, we can set our sights
on the great leap over. There is no freedom
like ours. Freedom for so many,
more and more ascending.
Now we rail about crowding, blame
the weak for being underfoot, whimper
that we are not getting enough
practice. The moon is a high target.
We have become a mass, a mess,
packed tighter and tighter, pushing
ourselves toward the edge, where at last
we will again be one and one and one,
individuals all along, a thin wisp of cirrus
between each self and its purposes.

—Susan Elizabeth Howe