

Barking to Wake God

After God made trees and creeping things,
he mixed his spit with dust, spent a whole day shaping
a woman and a man. Weary in his bones, he left them
under a banyan tree and slept.

That night a snake, jealous
of the care God took,
unhinged his jaws
and swallowed them.

When God woke he found his work gone. Weeping,
he made them again. He also made a dog,
breathed life into it, set it to guard
the images. Darkness brought the serpent;
the dog's barking woke God,
drove away the intruder. With dawn's mist
surrounding the clay figures, God blew
his spirit into them.

Today at the moment of darkness, dogs remember
their duty and howl to wake God. Older, he sleeps
more heavily now. The snake
comes unafraid
to carry the woman or man away.