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## The Land of Snakes

Joyanta Dangar

reen snakes entwining green gourd creepers  
Are known for their notorious needle nib,  
And lotus cobras in a lotus pond for their poison.

On many a night came a snake with hunger and  
Sucked her moonlit nipples like a baby...  
So goes the rumour still today in that village.

Monsoon snakes, bundled like a woollen ball,  
Dropping from the rain clouds and unfolding like the  
Peel of a brass gong announcing the closure of a school.

Or the speckled snake pretending dead among  
A herd of sleek starlings meditating its post-mortem...  
Nature's finest tragicomedy ever seen.

Gone...gone are all such snakes these days...  
Scorched, haunted, hunted and burnt...  
Perhaps all the snakes have entered into our hearts.