

Aristocrats

Robert L. Jones

Two black snakes
Made it down the hill
Through the high grass
Among the wild apple trees

To the edge of the road
Before the neighbor's dog
Spotted them.

They rose
Like angry sovereigns,

The female
All neck,

A hissing throat
Of black pearls,
Ruby eyes ablaze
with contempt and hate.

The male was
Like hell's fury,

A pride made impotent
By Eden's curse,
And like she,

He would fight to the death,
But has no hands
To clutch

And stop the enemy's insolent mouth.

So they hiss
Like whips
The name of injustice.