

*Classy verse from Global Village*

## **Ted Hughes**

### **The Howling of Wolves**

Is without world.

What are they dragging up and out on their long leashes of sound

That dissolve in the mid-air silence?

Then crying of a baby, in this forest of starving silences,

Brings the wolves running.

Tuning of a violin, in this forest delicate as an owl's ear,

Brings the wolves running—brings the steel traps clashing and slavering,

The steel furred to keep it from cracking in the cold,

The eyes that never learn how it has come about

That they must live like this,

That they must live

Innocence crept into minerals.

The wind sweeps through and the hunched wolf shivers.

It howls you cannot say whether out of agony or joy.

The earth is under its tongue,

A dead weight of darkness, trying to see through its eyes.

The wolf is living for the earth.

But the wolf is small, it comprehends little.

It goes to and fro, trailing its haunches and whimpering horribly.

It must feed its fur.

The night snows stars and the earth creaks.