

Downward Facing God

by Neil McCarthy

I thought it'd have been one of those classes I could have
easily blended in with,
just turned up, tactically positioned myself at the back
so as to watch and learn.

Argus was on to me from the moment I unrolled my mat.
He knew damn well I was in the wrong room,
but he turned blind eyes.

Aphrodite was smack bang in the middle, glorious as cake.

I copped a glance from Shiva up the front, changing from
Lotus to Adho Mukha Svanasana.
I asked if there was name for this that was easier to pronounce.
He told me to breathe, to relax, to live, to love,
to respect, to forgive.

But there was Mars, holding his stretch as if no weight
had ever burdened his shoulders.
We looked on, all biting different tongues that would surely
have translated as
"Haven't you had enough, you maniacal bastard?"
Mars planted his feet flat on the mat,
pulled his arms back until his legs were straight
and his body resembled that of an upside down victory sign.
We all followed suit, keeping our heads down,
saying nothing.

