Return to Earth: A Short Play

by Malik Berry

Curtain up.

Lights up slowly on a patch of dirt onstage, squared off in an 8’x8’ grid blocked by four blocks of wood. The sound of birds chirping plays in accompaniment. Hold for thirty seconds.

Single spotlight on the center of the dirt patch. The chirping soundtrack start to fade, slowly replaced by the sound of a large truck (author suggests a construction vehicle). The spotlight changes color to a green gel. Hold for ten seconds.

Enter Actor, dressed in an outfit that hints at an upper-class position like a financier, three-piece suit preferable.

They remove their shoes, setting them to their left, and ritualistically kneel behind the grid, facing upstage. They remove the jacket slowly, folding it neatly and setting it to their right. They continue removing the layers of their costume, folding each article neatly, and setting them aside in a corresponding pattern of left to right, until they are nude. Hold for ten seconds.

The Actor gets in downward dog position, bringing their face down to inhale the dirt, then rises their face ever so slightly before crawling into the dirt patch. They lay face first into the dirt with their head inside the green gel spotlight which has persisted for the whole process.

Hold for five seconds.

ACTOR: Why haven’t I done this from the beginning?

Spotlight fades slowly. The sound of birds chirping returns, increasing in volume as it grows darker.

Curtain down.