

## **Earth**

**Charles K. Carter**

The creature walks barefoot on this earth,  
feeling a connection to the dirt,  
stepping softly, leaving paw prints that fade away with the rain.  
The creature takes just what it needs from the earth and nothing more.  
When her time comes,  
she lies down and dies, leaving her body exposed,  
unafraid to be devoured by the vultures  
because she knows that her spirit will then fly.

Man walks with feet covered in waterproof boots,  
forging a barrier between himself and the earth,  
afraid to get dirty.  
He stamps through the jungle,  
flora and fauna falling at his feet,  
bringing down whole ecosystems as he exists.  
He has made his harsh mark on this world.  
He takes more than what he needs, devours all that he can  
because if he is distracted by excess:  
fast cars, iPhones, the finest of fashion,  
he will not have to face his own wrongdoings.  
When man's time comes,  
he is buried in the earth,  
hiding his Spirit-House,  
preventing his spirit from flying free.

Charles K. Carter is a queer poet and educator from Iowa who enjoys live music, yoga, hiking, and film. He has an MA in creative writing with a concentration on poetry from Southern New

Hampshire University and is completing an MFA in writing from Lindenwood University. His works have been published or are forthcoming in *Anti-Heroic Chic* and *Dodging the Rain*.