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RETURN OF THE LINGUIST (For Jack Mapanje)

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RETURN OF THE LINGUIST (For Jack Mapanje)

Abstract

Poem

The day's news ceases amongst the
satellites. And high enough to curve cut
the earth Argos is falling across

the Southern skies, dragging her keel
across some coral harbour where, fitfully,
the gracious guns of goodwill ride at anchor.

David Kerr

RETURN OF THE LINGUIST

(For Jack Mapanje)

'Malawi's only semanticist' your letter self-scoffed.
Jokes aside, this place, with lost seams of gossip
and taboo-coated rhetoric lodged deep in fissures,
needs your skills - wild pick-axing or delicate
chiselling for fossilized signs.

It needs
the deftest rinsing in gallons of sweat to sieve
a single gem of meaning.