

Book of Letters

Taken from submissions to Letters To The Earth

www.letterstotheearth.com

[#LettersToTheEarth](#)

[@CultureDeclares](#)

Letters To The Earth is part of the movement Culture Declares Emergency, supporting the call of Extinction Rebellion that Governments should declare a climate and ecological emergency. Within one month over 1000 Letters were submitted in response to the current climate and ecological emergency by the public, including submissions from writers such as Yoko Ono, Nick Drake, Rebecca Solnit and Kate Tempest. They were read by the public and performers including Andrew Scott, Alison Steadman, Sudha Buchar and Alex Lawther, at more than 50 venues, arts and community spaces on April 12th 2019 and online.

A LETTER TO THE EARTH

A PERFORMANCE TEXT TAKEN FROM THE HUNDREDS OF SUBMITTED LETTERS TO THE EARTH. EST 20 MINS.

TO BE SPOKEN / READ BY 3 OR MORE VOICES; ALLOCATED AS YOU WISH.

VOICE

Dear mortals -

I know you are busy with your colourful lives;

You grow quickly bored,

And detest moralizing.

I have no wish to waste the little time that remains

On arguments and heated debates.

I wish I could entertain you

With some magnificent propositions and glorious jokes;

But the best I can do is this:

I haven't happened yet; but I will.

I am the future, but before I appear,

Please -

Close the scrolls of information,

Let the laptop

Sleep,

Sit still

And shut your eyes.

Listen -

Things are going to change -

VOICE

So. Here goes. The first thing I want to say is: this is not a love story.

This is not about you and me, about individuals, about relationships, however they end. This is about something bigger. This is about catastrophe. About the end of life as we know it. You'll want it not to be, you'll try to tell yourself all kinds of other stories – But it is. I don't know how much clearer I can make it.

VOICE

Don't open your eyes, not yet! -
I'm not trying to frighten you.
Think of me not as a wish or a nightmare
But as a story you have to tell yourselves -

VOICE

Here's a story. It's called the Holocene. It's a good one, this one. And it sounds lovely doesn't it? Hol-o-cene -all those open vowels. All that possibility.

Clear warm water laps on a shore. You are a cell, many cells, multiplying. You are swimming. - for a long time, for years... you are growing legs. You are walking – look! - out of the water, onto the sand. You lie on the sand. You feel your skin drying in the sun. You stay there awhile and rest. It is good.

VOICE

They are wanting to tell us something, the future people.

The people of whom we are the ancestors

VOICE

Here's a story. The Paleolithic, The Neolithic, one-of-the-lithics anyway.

You hunt together –You return to the same hunting grounds year after year. You shit and piss and fuck on the earth and the earth likes it. One year you plant some seeds. You tether some animals. You fence them in.

You build a house. You brew some beer.

There is a place between you and the forest. An edge. There are wolves. Wild men, Old Gods, gods you have no use for any more..

VOICE

Powered by bronze,
steel, the horse collar, crop rotation.
Sailing ships and steam engines
pickaxes, dynamite, production-lines...

VOICE

Did you know what you were doing? Maybe not. I never had the chance to tell you, not directly, not before. So I'm trying, now.

You tore my world apart. This is not a metaphor. Fractured it, broke it to pieces. This is not a metaphor. Scorched the earth, blighted the land, poisoned the rivers, burned it all to the ground, left it charred and useless. You set our house on fire and left me with nothing but the crap you left behind.

None of this is a metaphor. You did this. You really did.

VOICE

If I'm angry

then I have every fucking reason to be.

VOICE

Here's a story – you know this one, don't you?

Your land is sickening. The crops fail. The children grow hungry and listless and then quiet. It is this quietness that does it. That really scares the shit out of you.

One morning, you wake early, and you know what you must do. You set off, away from the village, because you have to, because you must.

VOICE

Last year the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change released a report saying there's only twelve years left to keep global warming to a maximum of one point five degrees centigrade. If global warming rises past that, even by half a degree, the risk of droughts, floods, extreme heat and poverty for millions of people will rise out of our control. But then, on top of that, natural geochemical mechanisms which limit carbon dioxide impact, like ocean absorption, forest growth, glaciers, even clouds, will stop working and when they stop the carbon dioxide levels will go up exponentially. The change will become irreversible. There will be nothing anybody can do.

ALL VOICES

ATTENTION ATTENTION ATTENTION

ATTENTION!

VOICE

So we may have given the impression
Quite unintentionally
Given the distinct impression
That the planet was not finite
That the resources of this planet were somehow
Infinite /

VOICE

I'm sorry /

VOICE

We have twelve years /

VOICE

And yes we may from the vantage of now, we could be said to have given
Insufficient
Attention /

VOICE

I'm sorry /

VOICE

Twelve years. You brought me into a world, and gave me a childhood, and
told me all my life that that could be me. I always believed that - maybe not
with fucking theatre but with maths or film or faith or something - eventually,
that would be me /

VOICE

I'm sorry /

VOICE

But it won't be.

My world, my whole generation's world, doesn't extend that far. We don't have
that amount of time.

VOICE

I'm sorry.
I'm sorry for what we've done to you.

I am sorry that we didn't listen to the warnings.

VOICE

I'm sorry that when I first heard about what was happening, I looked away.

VOICE

I'm sorry that instead I just said 'Yeah' and I watched the TV again.

VOICE

Sorry that time slipped through our fingers.

VOICE

Sorry that the ice is no more.

VOICE

Sorry that the water is rising

VOICE

Sorry for using the very Earth as a personal credit card with no limit.

VOICE

I am sorry we have misused you, messed you up and physically abused you.

VOICE

I'm sorry that I shouted, I was worried and scared, exhausted and overwhelmed.

BEAT.

VOICE

Sorry that we have left all this for you to clean up, when we made the mess.

VOICE

None of you fucking did anything. And you knew.

VOICE

OK, in our defence

By way of

Justification

perhaps we found ourselves so gripped by the narrative of

GLOBALLY ACCELERATED GROWTH

And in our defence there was always one last patch of snow to ski on,
One last pristine beach.

VOICE

I am worried. Very worried actually.

Why is it so embarrassing to allow ourselves
to feel anything?

I may be only 12 years old, but I care, and you should too.

BEAT.

VOICE

You look back, and it is evening – how did it get to be evening? So fast? The
lights of the village are dim, and then gone. And now it is getting dark, you are
not sure of the path you took – you have no phone, no GPS, this is the days
before such things, You lie down in the hollow of a tree – your heart, your
heart.

There are lights. But they are not the lights of the village.

VOICE

I fear that
The future is flooded and burned
Because our being could not
Be reconciled with
The Being of
Beetles, purple figs and
Fragrant roses.

VOICE

I could make excuses, say it wasn't all my fault. I could blame others. I could
counter that I had no real choice. I could argue I only did the same as
everyone else.

VOICE

I am worried for the recent approval of fracking in the UK again, despite it
being banned for 7 years.

I'm worried for the building of the third runway at Heathrow, despite scientific

study after scientific study.

VOICE

I'm worried for the billions of gallons of water needed to cultivate cows, the land that's cut down to graze them, the plants chopped down to feed them, the methane that's produced from them.

VOICE

In one, and one only, single minute, forty football fields of trees are lost. Forty football fields, a minute. In one of my school lessons- one hour long- 2,400 football fields of trees have been cut down. Then, by the end of my school day, (the school day is six hours long) we lose 14,400 football fields of trees.

VOICE

Dear Parliamentarians

I am worried you are failing us, and I think you should be worried too.

BEAT.

VOICE

There's this moment
when you find out

you realise, that your mother could die
and you know, you know you'll do anything

anything

to make it right

BEAT.

VOICE

How can we stop
The sudden heat? The melting and the floods?
The yearly losses of birds, the lack of cuckoo song,
The hunger of displacement.
In my head I made a list of everything we'd lose,

VOICE

Cornflower, dock, radish, oak, summer,
Earwigs, bees, crows, potatoes, cabbages.

VOICE

Deer tracks in the bracken, blackthorn on flesh. Brambles fattening. The
ashes of my father in the wind.

VOICE

The landfills, the oil spills, the melting poles, the cities, the neon lights, the
drums, the dances, the wars and weapons. The fireworks, the weddings, the
world cup, the choirs.

VOICE

If I'm angry

then I have every fucking reason to be.
And that anger is beautiful: a great bright
thrust of energy, action, hope, confidence,
knowledge,
love.

VOICE

What did you do with your despair?

How did you carry its magnitude in your heart?

Did you feel it hanging in the air and walking alongside you, the ghosts of
extinct creatures following you around reminding you of all that is at stake?

Did you feel the suffering as you dressed yourself in the forced labour of
people and animals, their exhaustion stitched into the seams and hems of
your clothes?

VOICE

We see you, they say, standing on the shore with five hundred years of
industry and environmental wreckage and slavery and torture at your back,

gasping under its weight, with only the vast black sea in front of you.

We see you holding the crumbling world in one hand and the germinating seed of life in the other.

A BEAT

VOICE

Look at this ring of firelight.

We need to make more fires and circles for the soul

Across the beaches and the hills.

Light and conversations, to bring changes.

Everything is connected, and everything has consequences.

Everything is infinitely precious.

The clay, the silt, the sand, the worm casts crumbled in my hands. All day I carried the smell of fresh earth on my fingers.

Everything is infinitely precious

Simply because it is.

A BEAT.

VOICE

I would give up anything for you

Everything - my comforts, my toys,

Even my life,

I could, I thought.

VOICE

Dear Earth

I want to tell you how amazing you are, beautiful and funny.

I want time to stand still for a little while. ...

While we look one another in the eye, my eyes, your sky.

VOICE

It is my hope that love will prevail.

VOICE

Breathe deep and slow. No clenched fists, an open heart, My feet stand firm,
my roots.

Now, into the wilderness....Into the city... with all our beauty, all our grief, all
our shame, all our pain.

Now, it's time we walk as one.

VOICE

For a rebellion against extinction, we pray.

VOICE

For 2030, for 2050, for 2070, we pray.

VOICE

For my children's children, we pray.

VOICE

That they breathe air of the correct chemical composition
That they might wake to the surprise of snow.

VOICE

Tell us the story of summoning your brothers and sisters to revolt for a life of
connection and dignity?

BEAT.

VOICE

I did not mean to wreck our home.
I just forgot how to dwell with you.

Even when you told me what would happen, I forgot.
Even when you tell me what is happening, I forget.

Even when you show me what has happened, I forget.

Please remind me.
Please remind me.

VOICE

They are wanting to tell us something, the future people
The people of whom we are the ancestors
They are wanting to tell us that what we do now matters

VOICE

This might be the day and the pivotal year when you rewrite what is possible.

VOICE

But always remember;
I am here, waiting.
We are in this together, Face to face and eye to eye.
I am not written in stone
But in time -
I hold you in my hands As I am held in yours.
We are made for each other.

Now - open your eyes
And tell me what you see.

END.

THIS IS AN EMERGENCY

Letters to the Earth by Megan Murray Pepper

One. You are the lifelong Island: the lucid stillness of summer morning, deer tracks in the bracken, blackthorn on flesh. Tides, their waxing thrust of neap and spring; sea- wrack; salted timber smoking in the dusk. Crab guts laid open on innocent rocks. Brambles fattening. The ashes of my father in the wind.

Two. You are – to teenage eyes – the Brontë-inflected drama of the Peaks and Pennines, their brown carpets flung out under sombre skies.

Three. Scots pine, rowan, blaeberry. You are snow on juniper branches; the rhizomatic roots of aspen trees. You are pine marten scat; you are the ghosts of lynxes yet unborn on British uplands. Allt Ruadh. Under the skins of language,
knowledge of the land.

Four. You are a great mossed mass of wet forest and ponga ferns beginning to steam in gathering sunlight. The curved flank of a bay, a tender lick of spit between the rippling grey waters in the rain. Another island: its sloping biscuit shingle, its flush of greens and of yellow gorse, and fat, glossy, purplish pigeons shocking from the branches. In the rearing sounds:
sleep-shifting-deepening blue, and the dark tannic gurgle of the burn.

Five. You are the river water slipping cold about my body this bright spring afternoon. Its electric tingle.

Six. The hardest thing is to look beyond ourselves. To perceive the complex webs of interdependence in which we are entangled, and over which we must not have dominion, and then to accept and to celebrate them. Nurture them. For their own sake as much as for our own (nor are we separate).

Seven: The easiest thing: to plant a million trees that we ourselves will never see come to full fruition.

Eight: The poet Gerard Manley Hopkins, secret eco-conscience of the Victorian age:

‘What would the world be, once bereft / Of wet and of wildness? Let them be left, / O let them be left, wildness and wet; / Long live the weeds and the wilderness yet.’ Let us keep faith with him, and with the wilderness.

19th March, 2019

Dear Earth,

Hope you get better soon. You don't look too well. Your temperature is rising. Rapidly. Your ever-greens are drooping, your air is filled with chemicals, making it unbreathable. Sorry- we can't find a cure. Not yet. We have loads of time-besides; you'll get better soon anyway. Won't you?

We'll wait. It will be fine by tomorrow.

Tomorrow never came.

19th March, 2050

Dear Future Generations,

Sorry. We didn't get there in time. We were too late. Except we had time. We had time to change. Instead, we put it off, waiting for the miracle that never came to come and always reassuring ourselves with the phrase: we will do it tomorrow. Tomorrow never came. And I'm sorry to tell you that because of us and the destruction we caused, there won't be many tomorrows left.

Sorry.

Sorry that in this mess of a world we left you, time is dwindling. I would say enjoy the time that remains-except that vast views are now block buildings, open air is clogged with chemicals, rushing rivers are furious floods and trees...Trees are gone.

Sorry that instead of seeing trees as graceful homes for now extinct species, we view them as nothing but paper; money. Great big money-making machines. A whole forest; trees originally laden with branches of bountiful blossoms become drenched in shimmering gold coins in our greedy, human eyes. So we chop them down, using ugly, looming machines to rip them apart at the rate of 40 football pitches a minute, tearing down branches, digging desperately for any trace of riches whatsoever. And that's why, in the last 100 years, 50% of all trees are gone. Because of us. Because, to us, to a human, a forest of trees is simply a wad of money in our back pocket.

And what did we do with that money? I'll tell you. We built cars; polluting the air mile by mile. We built factories, towering over masked faces, coughing and spluttering- emitting vast clouds of thick, dark pollution-

chemicals filling the once clear air, coming over us like a suffocating blanket, draping itself over any clear sky. It's warm. Too warm. Too hot-melting the ice caps.

Sorry. Sorry that the ice is no more. Sorry that the water is rising; lapping at our ankles now but it will surge. It will flood. It will take lives. Your lives. Sorry.

Sorry for draining the beauty of life from your eyes. Sorry for using the

very Earth as a personal credit card with no limit. Sorry that your view from your grey, block apartment consists of a polluted sky, concrete pavements and monstrous diggers, churning up any remaining blades of grass. Sorry that time slipped through our fingers.

Sorry that tomorrow never came.

A student at Cams Hill School

I'm sorry.
All this time I've been fighting for my own life.
For that I'm sorry.
See, I've been so caught up being persistent,
Focusing on my needs and not the environment's complications.
That I forgot to breathe and focus on our existence.
The life that has been wasted from our obsessions of the media
Or our own well-being,
The fact is. That's pretty irrelevant.
The world is a gift and should be treated with respect.
And that's what we lack of.
My generation can fix this,
But we can't do it alone.
To think someone would have the audacity to decline an offer that could
save their generation including others.
Well, that's not the democracy we need to live in.
We need to take action instead of focusing on the newest buzz feed ratings.
We need to take action for these restless animals
Moving from one place to another,
Fighting for their survival just to align to our standards.
We can make a change.
It's a fact that because of us the ice no longer stands tall observing the vast
species of animals whose land we have took for granted.
Did you know that 2/3 of the great barrier reef has been damaged.
Or, maybe you heard about about by 2020 the Arctic will be nothing but sea.
I know what you're thinking, if I put a plastic bottle in the recycling then I'm
Done,
I'm finished, no need to try to save the planet anymore.
Wrong. You need carry on these easy tasks
Like turning off lights or recycle to charity.
I think it's time we stopped and looked at the damage we are causing
Because maybe you could be the one to save the world.

A student at Woodroffe School, Dorset

The time is now. Not in the next 5, 10, 30 years. Now. Time has been wasted doing nothing – people have known we need to change for years.

Nothing has.

That's why we are standing up and making our voices heard. We are doing our homework, but the government is not. So, don't tell us to stay at school, because we are clearly educated enough to recognize that something needs to be done. This is an emergency. Stop fracking up our future, because you are not the ones who will have to live in it. There is no planet B! Brexit won't matter when our planet is dead. If we carry on as we are, that will be in 12 years.

With youth strikes taking place globally, the government are being forced to listen.

Today's government aren't behaving responsibly. If they were, something would have been done many decades ago. What makes me angry, is that nobody seems to care. I've seen better cabinets at IKEA.

People in Africa are losing their homes to the rising sea level and dying of dehydration due to the dangerously high temperatures causing their lakes to evaporate.

However, it is not just in Europe and Africa. All over the world the rate of carbon emissions being released into the atmosphere is damaging our health and heating up our planet at a rate we cannot control.

The reality is harsh, but it's ours to sort out. If the temperature increases by 1.5c, there is no going back. We have the opportunity to make a change.

It's for our future, and the future of our children, grandchildren and great grandchildren, and for the future of our entire race.

A Letter from the Earth by a student, aged 16

You need me more than you need to breathe
I am your first necessity
The more you take the less you give
Still I am your first necessity

The poison of plastic is killing my children
Slowly but surely in agony they drop
Still you claim you love your children
But do nothing to make the massacre stop

I suffocate in my own heat
I choke on the fumes of greed
You drill into my very soul
To please your endless needs

I'm alive but barely, it's hard to breath
My heartbeat is silent, slow, weak
I'm crying, I'm weeping but you won't listen
I can't wake you if you wish to remain asleep

Eco-amnesia by Justin Roughley

I did not mean to kill the last of the eagles.
I just forgot to feel my wings soaring high above the cliffs and crags.

I did not mean to kill the last of the salmon.
I just forgot the thrill of leaping through the surging foam.

I did not mean to kill the last of the buffalo.
I just forgot to feel the fear of galloping with the herd.

I did not mean to kill the last of the spiders.
I just forgot to feel the geometry and sway of weaving a silken web.

I did not mean to kill the last of the foxgloves.
I just forgot how it feels to glisten with mirror orbs of morning dew.

I did not mean to kill the last of the honey bees.
I just forgot the sound of the thrum at the heart of the hive.
I did not mean to kill the last of the oak trees.
I just forgot how it feels to stand for a hundred years.

I did not mean to wreck our home.
I just forgot how to dwell with you.

Even when you told me what would happen, I forgot.

Even when you tell me what is happening, I forget.

Even when you show me what has happened, I forget.

Please remind me.
Please remind me.

FRACTURE- Anna Hope.

Here's a story. It's called the Holocene. It's a good one, this one. And it sounds lovely doesn't it? Hol-o-cene -all those open vowels. All that possibility. It is. It's as lovely as can be.

This is how it goes: clear warm water laps on a shore. You are a cell, many cells, multiplying. You are swimming. You don't know where the water begins and you end. You swim like this for a long time, for years, thousands, millions of years. You never grow tired of swimming. You are growing legs. You are walking – look! You are walking out of the water, onto the sand. You lie on the sand. The sky is blue. You feel the contours of yourself. Your skin drying in the sun. You stay there awhile and rest. It is good.

It is the year of fracture. Of starting to understand.

It is spring.

I write in a wooden cabin at the bottom of the garden with a view over the pond. The dragonflies come there. There is flag iris and gunnera. There are newts.

I have a daughter. She plays in the garden, she loves the sandpit. She is two years old.

I am writing a book – researching for a story - and one bright morning I type in a phrase.

How long till societal collapse....

And then I read. About locked in tipping points, the non-linear, graphs that are jagged, sawtoothed. Unpredictable. Terrifying.

I look out, at my daughter, to where she plays in the sand.

Here's a story. The Paleolithic, The Neolithic, one-of-the-lithics anyway.

You hunt together –crustaceans, sometimes meat. You gather berries. You return to the same hunting grounds year after year. A small group – no more than one hundred – one hundred and fifty. You hang out a lot. You talk with the spirits who are close as your loved ones. You have few things – who needs things when you're on the move? You get good at packing – a few bags, a few hides, some stories, some knowledge, These are not heavy. You shit and piss and fuck on the earth and the earth likes it. One year you plant some seeds. You tether some animals. You fence them in. There's a nice

view here. You decide to stay.

You build a house. It's a nice house with a good view. You build large containers to store grain. You brew some beer. You farm wheat and flax.

There is a place between you and the forest. An edge. Some days, sitting in your house, looking at the view, you look at the edge and the forest beyond. There are wolves beyond the hedge, and people who steal children. Wild men. Old gods. Gods you have no use for any more.

I try and talk about it, this new story, which has fractured my own - my sense of what a story should be - to friends, to family. I try all spring, as the world greens and blooms. And people listen and nod and agree and glaze a little but mostly say yes, yes I know it's terrible. But it might not happen. It might not.

The spring becomes summer and the summer is hot. We drive to the coast and eat on the beach and swim and agree it is amazing, this weather - to be able to plan things! To be able to say – let's meet on the beach next Friday too! Our children love the warmth. They run around with nothing on. We grow used to it. We look at each other and smile, we grow brown and happy in the sun.

But the sun does not cease. The garden grows brown too. The gunnera grows crispy and dies. The pond dries up. Where do the newts go? They have disappeared.

We agree it would be good to have a bit of rain. The rain does not come.

Here's a story – you know this one, don't you? The hero's journey. You've lived it many many times before.

Your land is sickening. You are sickening. You don't know why. The crops fail. Your marriage starts to fail. The children grow hungry and listless and then quiet. It is this quietness that does it. That really scares the shit out of you. And you feel it in you, too, this sickness. Is it inside or out?

One morning, you wake early, and you look down at your husband in your bed, and he is sleeping, and your children are sleeping, and you know what you must do. You set off, away from the village, because you have to, because you must. As you leave the bounds of the village you cross over, into the wilderness. Beyond the bounds. Can you feel your adrenaline start to spike?

The year turns, becomes autumn. Each morning, it seems, there is more bad news: 12 years to change course, the insect apocalypse - they have gone, apparently, while no one was looking. Disappeared. No one knows where. It is November and dark at four o'clock. The year is contracting. There is fear in the house. I read paper after paper. Papers which tell us that we may only have ten years left. That we should start to prepare. To adapt. To imagine starving to death, really quite soon.

I have a friend who is staying with me, she is recovering from an operation, and she and I stand in the kitchen in the dim mornings and talk in hushed voices as though afraid of being overheard.

What would we do? If it came to it? She is a nurse and she mentions cyanide. When she talks of cyanide I keep seeing that bit in *Downfall* – you know the one, that film of the last days of Hitler? – they are all in the bunker and they know it is the end and Goebbels' wife is putting the cyanide pills in her children's mouths while they are sleeping and then cracking their jaws to release the poison. Crack crack crack. The look on her face. All of them in their little bunks.

I think – are we really talking about this? Standing here, either side of the butchers block, two middle-aged middle-class women – talking about the possible end?

You look back, and it is evening – how did it get to be evening? So fast? The lights of the village are dim, and then gone. And now it is getting dark, you are not sure of the path you took – you have no phone, no GPS, this is the days before such things, and anyway, there is no reception here - there is no more path. It is dark, now you are afraid. But you keep going, because you are young, and strong, and you want the sickness out. You want it gone. From you and your family and from you and from the land. But even though you are young and strong you are tired. You lie down in the hollow of a tree – your heart, your heart.

There are lights. But they are not the lights of the village.

And you are afraid. You are very afraid.

I go to see a man – he is a herbalist and lives in one of those Sussex villages that nestle in the Downs, he has a cabin in his garden too and a woodburner and books on his shelves about wild things – and he takes my pulse and looks at my tongue and tells me to cut down on coffee and take these herbs. I tell him I am afraid. Afraid of the future. Afraid the insects have gone. Afraid for my daughter, for all of us, for all the green growing things. I tell him I am

living in fracture. In the place between stories. He nods and smiles and agrees it's terrible and yes yes yes there used to be moths a plenty, batting against the windows, crowding the candles at night. He takes my blood pressure and frowns. But you know, he says, taking off the cuff, we'll be all right. In Blighty. We'll be all right.

Here's a story.

A straight line from A to B.

Patriarchy

Progress.

Empire.

Manifest destiny.

The linear!

The linear!

The linear!

Things can only get better!

A straight line from A to B.

We are at B.

Oh my god what have I done?

I look at places online. Wales. Connemara. Places with water. With rivers, with a well.

I say to my husband. We have to buy land. Sell up. Go to Ireland. Buy some acres. Learn to farm. Bore holes. All of that.

My husband shakes his head, he does not seem afraid. He says *we have always lived in uncertain times.*

There will be time yet, he says.

But she might starve, I say to him. Our daughter. Do you think we will watch her starve?

He shrugs. I don't know.

I had therapy once, when I was trying to have a child. I tried to have a child for years and years. Sometimes I would feel aberrant, outside of nature. Sometimes I would wonder if this is how the earth felt, old and sad and sick

with grief, struggling to bring forth life.
Anyway, this therapist, she was a Jungian- was into the Mother – capital M.
And I said to her. I love my mother. She's amazing. She's an earth mother.
She baked and she cooked and she made and she held us.
And she looked at me, this therapist, and nodded in that way they have.
Mothers have many sides, she said. They are not just benign.
Mothers can turn. Be jagged, saw toothed, unpredictable. Furious.
Uncontainable. Unreliable. Mothers can turn.

I have begun to pray. I find myself praying. By trees. On earth.

*And you are still there, alone in the wood. Shivering. There are noises.
Perhaps there are animals. Perhaps it is the dead. Perhaps it is the dead who
walk around you so noisily. It seems they do not have your best interests at
heart. They are angry. You have done something, or not done something. You
are drenched in guilt and in the sweat of fear and you want to atone. You say
you are sorry, but it is not enough.*

*And then, sitting there in your tree, at the shivering edge of your fear,
something happens – some force, forces you to stop, stop shivering, to hold
yourself, and listen.*

*This is where you meet yourself –, this is where the stories take flight – when
the owl swoops and the deer darts –and you open your mouth and the dark
green sap enters your blood and you are made whole.*

I lie in my bed with my daughter beside me. I like to sleep beside her, these
nights. To feel her animal warmth. She should sleep in her own bed, but it is
nice like this, burrowed down together, as though we are in a den. And she is
a cub. Outside – beyond the windows, the owls call to each other, over the
dark fields, hunting in the night.

I am awake.

What happens at the end of stories? What happens at the end?

The Future Speaks

Dear mortals -

I know you are busy with your colourful lives;

You grow quickly bored,

And detest moralizing.

I have no wish to waste the little time that remains

On arguments and heated debates.

I wish I could entertain you

With some magnificent propositions and glorious jokes;

But the best I can do is this:

I haven't happened yet; but I will.

I am the future, but before I appear,

Please -

Close the scrolls of information,

Let the laptop

Sleep,

Sit still

And shut your eyes.

Listen -

Things are going to change -

Don't open your eyes, not yet! -

I'm not trying to frighten you.

Think of me not as a wish or a nightmare

But as a story you have to tell yourselves -

Not with an ending

In which everyone lives happily ever after,

Or a B-movie apocalypse,

But maybe starting with the line

"To be continued..."

And see what happens next.

Remember this;

I am not written in stone

But in time -

So please don't shrug and say

What can we do,

It's too late, etc, etc, etc...

Dear mortals,

You are such strange creatures
With your greed and your kindness,
And your hearts like broken toys;
You carry fear with you everywhere
Like a tiny god
In its box of shadows.
You love shopping and festivals
And good food.
You love to dance
In the enchantment of time
Like angels in a forest of mirrors.
Your lives are held
In the beautiful devices
Familiar in your hands,
Touch screen to touch screen
Connected but alone.
Perhaps you lie to yourselves
Because you're afraid of the dark.
But always remember;
I am here, waiting.
We are in this together,
Face to face and eye to eye.
I hold you in my hands
As I am held in yours.
We are made for each other.
Now - open your eyes
And tell me what you see.

Nick Drake

Only Clouds, by Cass, aged 15

Innocent daffodils, delicate and free
Butterflies laughing silently
A wish on a leaf that fell from the tree
But wishes can danger the sky and the sea.
The wish for money, the need for more,
We abuse our home 'till it's bleeding and raw.
Soon it's a carcass, a locked and sealed door,
There'll be no going back, and what's it all for?
For the rich greedy faces who run our broken world
To be perched on a throne, silver and pearled.
A single voice is hard to get heard
Which is why we need more than a just a second and third.
Look after our planet, don't say you don't care,
If you don't do it for you, do it for the polar bears.

From Deborah: How do I love you? Let me count the ways...

...the faintest glimmer of pre-dawn, and the last lemon-azure western light...
bees hovering in my garden... ladybird larvae like tiny blue crocodiles... beans
unfurling in spring sunshine and rain... the scents of roses... waves and cliffs...
clouds and mist... mountains... beech forests and olive groves... flocks of birds
and fish...

I can't count all the ways I love you, Earth. Just know that I do. Just know this:

I do everything I can to cherish and protect you, to tell people how much you
deserve to be loved. Whatever terrible things we do to you, you keep
providing for all your dependents. We humans don't yet understand how
dependent we are on you. We don't yet understand. We say we do, but we
don't.

Utopia by Tim Burroughs

open eyes
warm heart
soft touch
slow kiss
safe house
fresh grass
clean air
clear sea
positive yes
strong no
clean air
clear sea
rhinos with horns
orang-utans in trees
tigers in sanctuary
buzzing bees
even heartbeat
steady gaze
deep breaths
no disease
seas falling
ice forming
cyclones stalling
forests spreading
mind expanding
consciousness growing
compassion enlarging
people evolving
smile widening
eyes shining
heart warming
soul expanding
one all one
all one all
one all one
one

A letter from Alison

Dear earth,

I passed you halfway up the Strand the other day. I would have stopped but didn't want to distract you, swept every which way as you were, in the slipstreams of taxis and buses. The yellow of your wings is lovely this year.

News please. I can't believe you've been evicted again. You must be so fed up.

I passed you on the motorway, in a cluster of grape hyacinths. Your blue is particularly lovely this year. I couldn't stop, though would have liked to push away that plastic bag and bottle of piss. Just to give you a bit more air.

I heard you lost a fair bit last year, soil, song birds, some insects. Sorry about that.

Dear earth, I've tried to get in touch a couple of times but I can't find you on social media. I feel I'm missing something. Let me know what's happening,

Grief is trending, and I just wonder if it's you, your patience frayed, the eco-cleansing a bit too much to take?

Can you imagine if all we are left with is us?

I'm not sure how it would work. I suppose a lot of tech - stuff to do the things you do, and maybe some avatars to cheer us up.

Anyway, for now,

love

Alison

A letter

Dear Mother,

This is the 74th year of my present incarnation upon your verdant bosom. I have loved you since I grabbed my first fist full of grass learning to crawl, and have lovingly sought to reduce injury caused you over the years once reports of ozone holes, superfund sites, and oil spills flowed into my awareness. I know you're resilient and will outlast the insults you suffer because of your children's greed and hubris, yet, my human family daily demonstrates it's ignorance and short sightedness is without guardrails and will continue to be our ruin.

It now appears generations to come will live in whatever deforested, sun burned world they're born into, not the four seasoned, bird calling, fresh stream world I've worked to maintain for them. These days we talk of innovating to adapt, as we no longer find ourselves able, or willing, to curb our gluttony for air travel, plastics, technology, fossil fuels, meats, bigger in hopes of better.

Yet, as more and more of your children wake up to the ways we've sickened you, thus ourselves, and are depriving our offspring and their progeny of the earth environment we once knew, I become increasingly hopeful we can halt further devastation, preserving at least what we have at this moment. Numerous organizations encircle you working to stem climate disruption. And older citizens endeavor to continue Earth Day energy because it was a change agent for so many of us with reduce-recycle-renew results, but it's not enough.

Mom, we're calling out to everyone to effort towards sustainability, to restore your coral reefs, re-grow palm fruit forests, revive over-fished species, end pesticide use. There's so much to do, but we must give the clean-up of this mess our best effort... after all, this is our human home, and you're our beautiful Mother.

FOR THE BIRDS by Allis Hamilton

Where would we
be without
birds The
air would press
hard like a
vice There
would be you
would find no
dawn For
how would it
wake with no
song With
no light
no gracious
singers
to call
us back to
ourselves We
would be lost
in the silent
dark

A letter from Kerala

Dear Earth,

I'm still so in love with you. I'm still stunned into silence by the rolling hills, the endlessness of the ocean and the ever changing sky. The birds that come and go, the insects busy about their business, running the show. The trees, solid; lives spread out so much longer than our own. They've seen it all, they've seen us come and they'll probably see us go.

We didn't deserve you and all your careful intricacies. Humanity, the spanner in the works. I'll do anything to fix this, but there's only so far reusable coffee cups and vegan sausage rolls can get you. I am small, I need bigger people, with bigger power to invest their energy in something worthy for once. The most worthy cause, the greatest of goods.

I am lucky, I see all the good, I see how much there is worth fighting for. I can't imagine how anyone can sit on piles of money, casually ignoring the rising oceans, muddled seasons and marching children. I don't know how anything can be considered more important than protecting you. Without you, we are nothing. But Earth, if we can't save ourselves, if it takes too long, if the paperwork is too arduous and the debates inconclusive; please look after yourself. I hope in our absence you heal; I hope the animals thrive and the water is clean and the forests grow wild. But let's not let it get to that point. Earth, I'm still so in love with you, and I can't be the only one.

A Letter to the Earth, by Justine Railton

I got up this morning and took my mug of tea to the open window. I could hear the sound of
blackbirds and blue tits on the grassy bank and in the hawthorn trees that edged the field
behind my garden. I stood and felt the warm sun on my skin and watched as they flew, blue,
black, brown, grey, yellow, red, with straw and moss in their beaks for lining their nests.
There was a little nest, exposed by the winter, in the climbing hydrangea on my
neighbour's fence – the separation that was required between our spaces. It was perfect,
nestled against the creosoted panels - once proud trees - and the gardener's wire that holds the sprawling plant upright. I imagined the mother there with her babies, safe and secure behind a wall of lush green vegetation. Shielded from the prying eyes of next door's ginger tomcat.

The sun went behind a scudding spring cloud and I watched as a pair of rooks walked
along the top of the wall below the bird feeder, surveying the scene, pretending to each other that they hadn't found a tasty worm or juicy seed. My eye travelled down towards the newly planted pond, a swish and a splash and the smooth newt had disappeared back below the surface of the green tinged water. The plants are beginning to grow up around it – the ragged robin and clary sage, the water plantain and flowering rush in their first spurt of spring. I opened the door and stepped outside into my wildlife haven and stood beside the pond. I am still as the green black pool.

My mind was empty of the day, empty of children and mortgages, cars and cleaning, housework, ironing, shopping, meetings and things to be done, brought and consumed. A collared dove, soft grey and heavy landed on a hawthorn bough and it bowed under the bird's weight. A second joined it and I closed my eyes to listen to the soft cooing they made to one another as they walked up and down the branches, their heads bobbing as they searched for insects. I am a quiet intruder in their busy lives.

My patio and flower beds, the concrete and paving stones, houses, high rises, office blocks and motorways, reservoirs and dams seem to me, to us, to take precedence as we order and build nature out of existence. The ancient forests of Britain, Amazonia, Romania, Borneo, Ghana, The Eastern United States, Mexico and Australia have been razed to the ground. I have destroyed half of

all the trees on Earth. I have killed my brothers and sisters for decking and picture frames, warmth and convenience.

I opened my eyes and looked up to the vast blue expanse of sky, swirled with wispy clouds and heard the high pitched pewee pewee of a red kite high above, circling. Two more appeared and then suddenly there were eight or ten red kites, their tails dipping and turning as they swooped in great arcs, riding thermals, thriving and free. I drained my mug of tea, now gone cold and headed back inside, my heart filled, my mind clear as I sat down at my desk to write a letter to the Earth.

A Love Poem to a Sea Anemone by Tarisha Finnegan Clarke

You came into my awareness
As I danced as if in trance.
Like the colour of my long white hair,
You swayed on the seabed
Lightly, gently.
The poignancy of your existence
Moved the boulder in my heart,
And I sank to my knees.

For in that moment I saw
That you are part of my life.
You breathe out oxygen that I breathe in.
How could I have thought
You were some exotic, far off object,
To be looked at & talked about.
When all the time you gave me breath.
Breath so life can live.

'Forgive me for the ways I looked upon you,
With a singleness of vision, Without dimensionality,
As definable in my ideas'*

My head bows as I fall into the deepest of gratitude,
The Soulfulness of my heart opens,
And a howl stirs in my guts 'I love you and I WILL protect you'.

Letter to my fragile friend, the earth, by Carolyn Hayman

You do so much for us, my friend
You feed us, clothe us, warm us, and delight us every day.
But I remember the hard times that you've been through.
Ten thousand years ago, you had the chills – your temperature went up and down like a yoyo
I was in shock when I first saw your fever chart.
And then, not so long after, you began to shrink
The sea rushed up along the North Sea coast, 200 metres a year was lost
And our bridge to Denmark disappeared.
Somehow we humans survived – at what cost we don't know. We were still few.
Now it would be very different.
You've been stable for a long time. But we are making you ill again. Your temperature is rising.
We've forgotten how much we need you. We think money matters more, that money can protect us.
How wrong we are!
There are no doctors for the fever that lies ahead. But we can stop it.
Will we? I don't know.

Stories of you and I by Sally Jane Hole

1.

My fingertips pushed through the mossy earth, into the damp soil, wriggling deeper.

The texture of the roots between my fingers, some thick and almost rubbery, others

delicate and fine, webs, rhizomes.

The clay, the silt, the sand, the worm casts crumbled in my hands.

All day I carried the smell of fresh earth on my fingers.

Oh how much I wanted to push down right into you, my love, to be consumed by you.

To feel my self sink into your depths, my dear, to take shelter in your underworld.

The majesty of the mountains revealed themselves as I ascended.

Tremendous expanses of daunting beauty.

Above, vultures circled.

Up here, where the air is thin, on the rocky outcrops, awe belongs to you alone, my love.

The insects, the wildflowers, the so many ladybirds, the highland meadows thronged with life.

My heart ached.

Oh to curl up here, my dear, and listen to the wildlife creeping out after dark.

To contemplate the stars as the temperature plummets and my nose drips with the biting cold.

I sat by the fire.

Pine cones glowed orange, the needles hissed and spat, sap oozed from a green wood

branch and the wood from the ash tree burned slow and hot.

In the flickering light of the dancing flame, silence and conversation, all welcome by the crackling fire.

The fluidity, the creativity, the passion, it was all there, my love.

The fire radiated through me and I could taste the sweat and smoke on my lips.

Oh to be so enthralled by you, my dear.

To be pulled so close my cheeks burned red.

The skin on the back of my neck tingled with the ice cold water of the river.
I looked down at my legs, glistening and distorted, my feet wrapped over a smooth

pebble, holding fast against the rushing water.

The little fish, the tadpoles, the river-weed tangled up with my feet, my skin flushed pink.

I went numb, for a bit, my love.

The sound of the flowing water lulled me, I spoke quietly to myself.

I bent down, submerged my face, the water lapping against my lips.

Oh how it is to feel your energy in the water, my dear.

To feel it in my scalp, shivering down my body.

Now, I thank you, my love, for walking this walk with me.

You have been the finest companion.

You have walked me through such happiness and joy, such sadness and confusion.

With you it has all been welcome. It has all been all right.

And now, I question, what sort of companion was I?

For all that I celebrated you and revelled in your wonder, I see now that I did not honour

you, nor hold you in true reverence.

I was here, you were there, and so I walked with you sometimes, and then went

elsewhere.

I admired you from afar.

And from that comfortable distance, I could not feel how I too was caught up in

exploiting you, diminishing you.

I made you an object, myself a subject.

We stood apart.

You, and I.

And now, I wonder, who has suffered most, from this story of you, and I?

Because you, my love, were never 'nature'.

And I...

I was never anything else.

Now, in the silence, I stretch my fingers wide and rest my hands on my belly.

I breathe deep and slow.
No clenched fists, an open heart, tender, no fear in fragility.
My feet stand firm, my roots.
My skin burns.
Here, this is the unbearably perfect.

Now, one.
These scars are ours.
Now, into the wilderness, into the hostile world that has fought, so long, to
silence our
truth.
Into the city.
Now, with all our beauty, all our grief, all our shame, all our pain.
For all that we hold dear, for all that we love, for all that we are.
Now, it's time we walk as one.

A letter from Martine and Jacopo

Dear Earth,

Last night, we were walking home when suddenly something appeared from the darkness of the trees in front of our house. It was a badger, that started running very fast straight towards us.

He stopped just 2 or 3 metres away and stared at us for a few seconds. Then he turned back and ran away from where he came from, again at full speed (true story).

Dear Earth, we believe you sent us the badger as a messenger. Badgers are quite rare to see and they show up just in case of extreme necessity.

Badgers stand for healing skills, persistence and determination to defend what they love.

Badgers are usually calm, but this little guy really looked in a rush.

Dear Earth, your message is clear:

We need to heal you and ourselves, using our skills, our persistence and our determination, and hurry!

Please thank your messenger, we left out a carrot for him.

Martine & Jacopo

A letter to the Earth

Dear Dr. Now,

I'm writing to you with great concern regarding our common Patient, E. Since her hospitalization, her condition has weakened continuously despite all our efforts. Our treatment still focuses on sedative medication and painkillers, combined with therapy sessions three times per week. Twice, during the last year, her insurance approved of an extended stay in the rehabilitation centre for abuse victims, but it seems that they have not contributed to her recovery.

The patient is complying to all our advices with patience, but our methods are not successful. I find myself wondering, if our initial diagnosis, F.2015 – Change, was given to optimistically, or completely false all together. Without wanting to point fingers, I am looking at all the information we were given by the lab and I'm not convinced they're correct.

What worries me deeply, is that she shows signs of a grave personality disorder, which I cannot explain. Her cognitive functions, for example her understanding of periods of time, like the change of seasons, or her memory of certain words (especially adverbs like 'by degrees', 'carefully', 'little by little') seem to deteriorate. Furthermore, she, who we got to know as a calm and friendly character, now shows raging emotional outbursts. During the last month for example she repeatedly flooded her toilet where she hides when she starts crying, by leaving on the water tap. When our nurses finally succeeded in opening the door, she kept sobbing inconsolably for hours, until the Antidepressants eventually got the situation under control. On the contrary side, she started to express her anger by burning plants in our hospital garden and running around manically to produce storms, as she has declared to her therapist. Also, our efforts to alleviate her panic attacks, by providing her with constant light and communication possibilities, were in vain. During an episode of desperation, she has even killed her fish (we allowed her to keep a personal aquarium in the room, hoping the sight of her so beloved animals would support her therapy progress).

I must confess, I suspect strongly, that our treatment of E. is completely wrong. Not only aren't we able to stop the decline of her energy and

physiological balance, we also seem to fuel a fever that is increasing steadily. Having said all that, I am positive that her condition is not palliative just yet. But I really need to know what to do. I'm willing to do the whole assessment procedure over again, reverse all our decisions and treat her accordingly. As I am obviously not able to do this on my own, I ask you for your cooperation, your expertise, your help. I will not give up on our patient.

I will not give up on her.

Sincerely,
Dr. Human,
Head of ClimateEmergency

A letter to the earth (if it can read?) by Jessica Sian

I am in a city. I am sat outside but I've brought the inside with me so that I can write to you. I'm not sure you can read. I'm not sure that writing matters but it's something I can do so I do it. It is the first outside day of the year but I am inside the city and so the inside is everywhere, cordoning off space, making it into shapes that once weren't there but that we or I, maybe, more accurately, am unable to remember. The cafe and the bus place me in a rectangle between themselves and, now out of sight, I forget the green beyond and how much roomier the space I'm in was just moments before the bus pulled up. I stretch my arm out to relieve a shoulder tightening as I type and am forced to punch through the cafe window.

I like how I look today. I feel allowed. I run my mind down my body and defend everything I'm wearing: Jumper: charity shop; t-shirt: M&S 100% ethical cotton. I blink at the thought that the label might not tell the truth or the truth might not mean what I want it to mean, what I need it to mean, to defend myself. But it's a small wobble before I put my faith firmly back in M&S where it belongs. Jeans: ... well ok, high street... high street chain yes, but I wear them regularly, most days, for some years now, so I'm making the most of them. Making the most of what they cost. I make a silent promise to buy better jeans next time. There will be a next time won't there? Socks: threadbare and origins forgotten; pants: microfibre... What is that? Where will that go to die? Perhaps my pants will outlive me? Still, it's nice to think of some kind of legacy.

I think about a book I read recently where a girl climbs through a dumpster doing the food shop for the week. I didn't like that bit. The pretty girl's pretty mouth dripping at the corner with the juice of a once-was tomato. I remember I am supposed to be grateful about my neat plastic wrapped tomatoes, red and ripe, losing their flavour in the fridge.

There are two black bin bags at the foot of a door that must lead to a flat above the cafe. Perhaps my rectangle is a dumpster but roomier than hers, with its sides stretched so far apart I'm able to forget the space between them is a trash can. There's a veg box being delivered to the house today. Not a

box, a bag. The vegetables come from the farm in a recyclable brown paper bag. That's what the website says. So there's no need to be angry. What could be more calming than a brown paper bag. I think when I get home I'll sit down and breathe in and out into it slowly until I forget about the dumpster and where microfiber goes to die.

I'll watch a documentary. That's what I'll do. I'll go back inside and watch a documentary about cow shit; or palm oil; or turtles breathing through straws; or the temperature rising. I'll make a list of promises to do better and then when I've inked all the paper in the house I'll go to a bar and talk out new excuses to break those promises. Those little life changes. And the people I gather round me will shrug and nod and agree with me because we live in a city made up of little rectangles, because we can't remember the space that used to be, because our pants will outlive us, because we say your name in such a way you've become just an idea really. And really, really it's someone else's fault, someone more powerful's problem, someone else has to fix it. I'm just rummaging around in the dumpster and you, you can't even read.

BEYOND POLITICS

An Apology by Steve Waters

We're sorry.
We are deeply sorry.
We apologise unreservedly, without reservation.

So we may have given the impression
Quite unintentionally
Given the distinct impression
That the planet was not finite
That the resources of this planet were somehow
Infinite

(Going over our previous communications we now realise this *idea*, shall we
say *hope*
may have been implicit)

The thing is our models, well, they seem to have somehow
Deceived us.
And by implication
You.
Who in a way might be seen to be

Us.

And yes we may from the vantage of now, we could be said to have given
Insufficient
Attention

ATTENTION ATTENTION ATTENTION

And for this, now, we would like
And we are unanimous in this wish
We would like to offer

ATTENTION

OK, in our defence

By way of

Justification

The prospects for the

FOURTH INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION

The prospects for

POST-CAPITALISM

The prospects for

FULLY AUTOMATED LUXURY COMMUNISM

Looked, and on a one of the good days still look

Exciting

And perhaps we found ourselves so gripped by the narrative of

GLOBALLY ACCELERATED GROWTH

Or the

INTEGRATION OF THE SOUTHERN ECONOMIES

Or the advent of

NANO-TECHNOLOGY

(I mean you you have to realise some of us were born in a period when we
could use the words

'the future'

say them:

'the future'

Entirely without irony or dread)

Somehow our models seem not to factor in, well,

They tended to be predicated on

What's the phrase

Ceteris Parabus

ALL THINGS BEING EQUAL

ALL OTHER THINGS BEING EQUAL

THE STABLE BACKGROUND

A - BACKGROUND

And in retrospect our models might have benefited from a greater degree of

RISK ASSESSMENT

That is to say they might have been
FUTURE PROOFED

And in our defence there was always one last patch of snow to ski on
One last pristine beach detected almost by chance by say, a drone
One day where all the signals of a season remained intact
One species still caught by means of a camera
Trap

But the model seemed always somehow to suggest
That nature was the obstacle not the objective
That some of us have moved from abject rural poverty
To vertical urban living in one generation
Which is hardly to be belittled

We are the people that have turned money into a heartbeat!
Swathed the world in the embrace of electro-magnetic waves!
Delivered on-demand television and live-stream pornography!
All of these gifts, all of them stem from the model!

And no one, at least no one sane or of sound mind or that we knew of
Ever
Ever
Notice ANY shortcomings in the model
And seriously, we know all the intelligent, all the smart people, literally
All of them

And anyway who might have imagined, really, that the drone of winged
insects
The presence of frankly irritating and peripheral forms of life
Might now prove so

Critical

ATTENTION ATTENTION ATTENTION

And for this oversight, for oversight is what it surely is
We now wish to express our
Deep sadness

With the proviso that for the time being at least

By which we mean today, possibly tomorrow, maybe the day after that

There is no model other than the model.

A Prayer

*This is a prayer to no gods or all gods or anyone listening or anyone out there
A prayer for no one ie everyone*

Even to pray requires some sort of hope in a listener

Oh well here goes:

For everything at the edge of its range, we pray
For island populations in their last days, we pray
For the bird with its beak in a ring-pull, we pray
For the geology of gameboys and smartphones, we pray
For the idea of seasons, we pray
For weather than can be forecast, we pray
For a harvest for the world, we pray
For the low-lying villagers, we pray
For the yet to be born and the unborn and the newborn, we pray.

For a crying against the dying of the light, we pray
For a rebellion against extinction, we pray
For 2030, for 2050, for 2070 we pray
For my children's children we pray

That they breathe air of the correct chemical composition
That they swim in shockingly cold seas
That they might wake to the surprise of snow

That Donald Trump might slip into a long yet painless coma
That Bolsonaro might vanish in a Lear jet somewhere over the rainforest
That Tony Abbott might choke on some coral
That Putin might fall into a Siberian sink-hole without bottom
We pray

That the background rate trumps the Ftse Index
That Brexit will become a bump in the road

That we will boast bullishly about our minimal Carbon Budgets
That cars will baffle children in museums of folly
That roads will become flower-rich meadows
Super-highways for the auroch
That border controls give way to planetary boundaries

We pray
This prayer as large as life itself
Knowing there is no intercessor
No Deus Ex Machina waiting in the wings
With his latest geoengineering gizmo

Oh Earth
Poor abused Earth

Hear our prayer

A Letter from Peter Owen-Jones, Vicar of Firle.

You gave me milk when I arrived, sweet and warm. And slowly colours came, they had no names not then and the sounds no source. I had no hands, no feet. I was just breath slowly folding into skin and there was no soil, no rain not a leaf or a shell.

At four years old you gave me fields and stars waiting, they are still waiting. Then streams and banks thick with grass began to appear, a path lined with daffodils, wet sand and gulls calling from within the light coming off the sea baptising everything. You hid so many jewels, blue eggs in lined nests, sparkling feathers, pink and yellow shells, small silver fishes. And at night silent and moving closer now wolves and pulling waters.

You didn't show me the dawn and the dusk until i was able to be still, until I was able to open these doors by myself. To know them as beginnings and endings. We were always part of each other. I am salts and water as is every leaf, every lion, every hill. And i am every river, every flower, every wave, every stone and they are me, the hunted and the hunter.

Now i can see you shining, glistening moving through space, around the star holding your precious cargo of whales, goldcrests, petals. Yes your cargo of dreams, of love distilling every bitter seed. Brushed with clouds.

It is my hope that love will prevail that we will prevail through loving, through knowing every seed and star is love. That in time i will hold you as you hold me. That we will know the end of isolation and the beckoning of the reality of interdependence. That this is balance which is wisdom, look at the route the

river takes. The branches leaning into the light.

I give you thanks. For the dew, for the sound of leaves, for the way water moves light, for birdsong, for the deserts, for hunger. For the cup of desire. I have yet to learn that looking after myself begins with loving you, that we are husband and wife, that i sleep in your arms and drink your milk.

And now growing older you show me the symmetry of leaves, how death takes hold and how deep your scent is sweet in spring.

anything

a poem for mother earth Ann Lowe

there's this moment
when you find out

you realise, that your mother could die
and you know, you know you'll do anything

anything

to make it right

she's sick
and her body, that gave life and joy and promise and futures
it has given too much

her body has no more to give

appointments, lifestyle changes, treatments and medications
operations

you do what it takes.

but soon,
there's a moment

the moment when you find out

you learn

you accept
you *know*

that none of it will work

the choices are gone

everything. slows.

and all you can do is sit

and love her
until she isn't here anymore.

The Hospital

Claire Rousell, South Africa 2018

We are building a hospital, a place of refuge, a sanctum

We have been skilling ourselves for all that this time demands of us

We have been sending smoke signals to the future people asking them for
advice on how to be good Ancestors

We are building the walls from something our grandmothers said, from
something our parents forgot, from something we picked up from a story
about hunter gatherers in a National Geographic magazine

The roof is a piece of my grandfather's house that I kept in a little tin on my
windowsill

This place must be safe and dry

It must withstand the storm

We made the blankets from moss and grass collected from the rocks by the
river that we remembered to love

Our mother is coming soon and we must be sure we have the medicines she
will need Tinctures for courage and a poultice soaked in drawing ointment for
the new world order

We have been training ourselves as midwives, constructing the curriculum
from the plants that come to us in our dreams, tracts from an old textbook on
natural childbirth and a battered copy of Indaba my Children

She is near now Heavy with birth and blood and body

None of us know what she will birth

But we have been dreaming of this time

A squalling storm, a raging owl, a flaming frangipani, eight eagles

We have been making plans

A pantry of forest and topsoil

A larder of carbon

Stockpiling mycelium and relations rather than guns and baked beans

Growing food forests in our high-rise apartments

Accruing libraries under our fingernails

Storing in the pages of our skin the recipes for compost, for happy bees, for
the cycles of sycamore trees

Vested in our bones, the way our grandmother made soap from the sheep fat
she scraped from our plates after dinner

We are calling our great grandmothers via the hornbill and hoepoe to remind
us of the rituals for the afterbirth, for cleansing the bodies of our dead with oils
and seeds, for how to make the sublime tears of wonder

We are singing the songs that remind our grandfathers to remind us how to
restore the river and the primordial forest

She enters the apocalypse apothecary holding her belly, covered in blood and
mud

She is supported on either side by the hackers and conscientious objectors,
who heralded the breaking of her waters. They have been training for this day

Janus, keeper of transitions, endings and beginnings, awaits at the door, with
a perlemoen shell and a smouldering bushel of mphepho

As she enters everything crashes behind her, the buildings crumble as the
seas take back everything they momentarily offered up. Blood runs down the
streets. The drought and the mud slide collide

A tide of black oil laps at the door.

A letter from Shirley

Dear Earth,

Till the end of my days I devote myself to preserving life within your boundaries. What I have loved, I hope to save for the future. I have been to Kenya and seen giraffes whacking each other with their necks. I have driven in a herd of elephants with lions and cheetahs nearby. In England I have grown corn on my driveway and delighted in squirrels, pigeons, foxes and hedge hogs. I have eaten well and slept in a warm comfortable bed. I do not take these privileges for granted.

I promise to spend most of my money with companies who show they care about you and try to help others do the same. I want to use less and less of the stuff that is harmful to you in my garden, in my home and when I travel. I want to care less about things and more about people.

If these are the last few generations that live in this beauty; I want to add to human happiness every day. I want to campaign to reduce poverty so that people can be liberated to think more about their impact on future generations and, in fact, their impact on other parts of the world right now.

I want to help. I am encouraging people to visualise a successful future even amongst the collapse of nature around us. I want people to write positively about a green future; what we can imagine we could actually do. There are many alternatives to way the world is run now; and some could really work. I long to see the human race work together to make some of them happen and

to build on what we know can help.

A letter from Matthew Todd

What is it they say - 'Sorry is the hardest word?'

Well, I'm sorry.

I am.

I'm sorry for what we've done to you.

I am sorry that we didn't listen to the warnings.

I'm sorry that I put my trust in the media that is more obsessed with fashion and football, and reality TV, with where the Dow Jones is, with game shows, with baking, with putting a positive spin on 71 degree heat in February with a 'Wow, what a great opportunity for ice cream sellers'. I'm sorry for all of it.

I'm sorry that when I first heard about what was happening, I looked away. No, I listened away if you want to be factually correct. I remember it still. It was the radio. I heard someone say on the radio news, on a Monday morning, that 'Scientists are concerned that the world is heating up due to a build-up of so called greenhouse gasses emitted by the burning of fossil fuels that may warm the Earth to potentially dangerous levels'... and I thought 'That's scary!' and then they added 'But there is disagreement from other scientists who say 'There's no need to worry, it won't happen for hundreds of years and will most likely benefit the planet and make the UK

as warm as the Costa Del Sol'.

And I breathed out. I'm sorry I was so uneducated about this world to know that where there is money there is spin, there is lies, there is false balance and I didn't investigate and find out that those scientists were being paid by oil companies to confuse us all, something they did well.

I'm sorry that I just ticked it off my list of things I needed to be concerned about, like which clothes to wear this summer and where to go on holiday and I went and read a magazine instead. Maybe it was ten tips on how to be happy. I was always looking for tips on how to be happy. I'm looking for them again now.

I'm sorry that I had a friend who said I'm really worried about this and you need to understand this better and you need this book, and I didn't, and I just thought no, I want a thriller about a girl who disappears. I don't want to read that, and I relied on newspapers and journalists. I mean, can you imagine, something so stupid as relying on newspapers and journalists. And I should know, I am one. I'm sorry I didn't pick up a book.

I'm sorry than when I was at dinner parties, so many dinner parties, so many events, so many cocktail parties where the subject would come and people said to me 'It's not true I don't believe it' or 'It's green crap' or 'it's about taxes' or 'it's been created to scare us' I didn't challenge them.

I didn't educate myself enough to say 'But NASA say it is happening, it is man-made and so do 97% of all scientists from every major scientific instruction in the world' and when they said 'Yes but it's a natural cycle' I wasn't educated enough to say 'For fuck's sake, who do you think taught you that the climate changes naturally? SCIENTISTS – THE SAME SCIENTISTS WHO ARE TELLING YOU THAT WHAT IS HAPPENING NOW IS NOT NATURAL AND YOU NEED TO WAKE THE HELL UP!' I didn't say that because I didn't believe, didn't read, didn't know and I was too scared to challenge someone and now I'm really scared.

I'm sorry I didn't challenge your father when he would shut

conversations down by saying 'Ah well India and China are building dozens of coal power stations, there's no point us doing anything' I'm sorry I didn't say 'Ok we'll just accept the kids are going to burn them. THAT'S NOT AN ANSWER! YOUR SUPPOSED TO MAKE THE PROTECTION OF YOUR KIDS THE NUMBER ONE PRIORITY, WE'LL DO WHATEVER WE HAVE TO! THAT ANSWER IS NOT GOOD ENOUGH!

I'm sorry that instead I just said 'Yeah' and I watched the TV again.

A letter from a 26 year old

Dear Government,

I am worried. Very worried actually. Worried for the future, for my generation, and for the generations after me.

I'm worried for the inconceivable amount of damage we are doing and continue to do to our planet. I'm worried about the pitiful attempts to slow climate change, for the continued notion to burn fossils fuels, despite knowing for the last 50 years that fossil fuel consumption accelerates global warming.

I am worried for the recent approval of fracking in the UK again, despite it being banned for 7 years - destroying the progress we'd made towards a cleaner, greener future.

I'm worried for the building of the third runway at Heathrow, despite scientific study after scientific study that shows evidence of aviation travel's colossal production of carbon dioxide, nitrous oxides, water vapour and particulates. All. Greenhouse. Gases.

I'm worried for the building of 1,000,000 new houses in the UK by 2020, yet not a single one of these is sanctioned to have solar panels. What a wasted

opportunity.

I'm worried for the increased rates of depression, anxiety and suicide in young people, perhaps an indication of their worries that their future is not so bright. I'm worried for the public's poor education on eating meat and its impact on climate change - the billions of gallons of water needed to cultivate cows, the land that's cut down to graze them, the plants chopped down to feed them, the methane that's produced from them. I'm worried for the public's poor education on climate change generally, why some people don't believe it, for the failings of our education system that this shows.

Why is the impact of human consumption and greed not reported on daily in our mainstream media and broadcasting? Education leads the path to change, yet only now are we starting to panic, 50 years in the knowledge but now only 12 years away from disastrous changes to our eco system. An eco system that's been living in harmony for billions of years, but which we are destroying in only hundreds.

I am worried that we, as a species live too much in hindsight, that we rely too much on the hope of a technological break through to save us. I am worried that we are spending time designing robots to do the jobs of bees, but not spending time trying to save them.

Why are the vast majority of people not worried?

And what are you, as the government and leaders of our country going to do about it?

Change happens slowly, painfully slowly in this instance, but we are truly running out of time. We need big decisions, quickly. Make the laws and we will abide by them. Highlight daily this struggle we are facing, bring it to people's attention incessantly. Only then will the global behavioural changes needed start to happen. We have the technology to go green now, why aren't we? Why aren't we harvesting the green power that nature has given us through wind, solar and tidal? Why do we continue to acidify our oceans, cut down our forests at the rate of one football field per second? Why do we continue to destroy habitats, poison eco systems, pour plastic into our seas?

I am worried you are failing us, and I think you should be worried too.

Yours,

A 26 year old

From students at the Woodroffe School, Dorset

To our dear Government,

Breaking news: 2017, the warmest year on record.

Breaking news: 2018, the warmest year on record.

Breaking news: 2019, predicted to be the warmest year on record.

Amid the headlines about Trump and Brexit, climate change is barely touched upon. This is a pressing issue which will affect us all, it won't pander to ignorance. Climate change means that species are dying out, icecaps are melting, causing sea-levels to rise, swallowing ecosystems and civilizations in one gulp.

"That's devastating," you say. Why has no action been taken? The earth is heating up. 1.5°F since 1980 might not sound like a lot now, but what happens in 30 years, when that figure has doubled. What happens in 60 years, when it triples? What will you say then?

This is our letter to you. Can't you see our view? The earth has twelve years. TWELVE. YEARS. Why are we doing GCSE's? "To help us make a future for ourselves?" you say. What's the point, when we won't even have a world to

live in?

You can't ignore facts. This is not a time for people to slack off, to brush it under the rug, chastising people who give the earth a voice. Her lungs are choked up with thick smog, her voice box gone. At a time when she can't, we must speak for her, make a change.

Millions of students worldwide can numbly recite meaningless equations, injected into their brains as soon as they stop thinking for themselves. They think thoughts they have been conditioned to think, molding them into what will be known as the next 'general public'. But how many students know anything about the world that we are so carelessly destroying? We won't be shut up. We won't ignore what is happening.
Hear our voice.

When the adults can't grow up and get it done, the youth will. This letter is to bring into the light the crimes which our government has been condoning for years past. You can no longer hide in self-inflicted ignorance.

We, as a population, as a nation, know there's a problem when everyday schoolkids know what needs to be done, more so than the leaders of 'Great' Britain.

From a student at Cams Hill School

Dear government (or whomever it may concern),
My letter:

Please. I beg. She begs. He begs. Greg from work begs. Pat from school begs. Johnny from Sainsbury's checkout begs. We all beg. On behalf of our planet, we beg. You wouldn't smash up your television screen or destroy your furniture or wreck your grand piano. Just for your plastic bag or your crisp packet or your Macdonald's straw. This means that you definitely wouldn't watch your world rapidly die and suffer under your watch. Just for your children. Your grandchildren. Your great grandchildren and all the future generations to come. But you do. You don't care if in the future, children won't be able to swim in the sea or climb trees or even breathe without wearing a dreadful mask. You don't care if global warming is killing bears, fish, birds, lizards, insects, big cats, cattle, frogs. Humans. Humans die due to extreme weather conditions, land slides, floods and droughts. You just watch and announce that we need to stop climate change while you are in your mansion, stinking

rich from deforestation and the mass production of plastic. People all over the world fight for our planet and the plants, animals and humans within it. But not enough people. Animals can't help with climate change. Animals can't stop driving cars which pollute the air. Animals can't stop launching rockets into the sky, wasting materials and sending junk into the atmosphere, and around it. Animals can't stop driving noisy speed boats and jet skis and cruise ships which send oil into our ocean and mess with whale calls. Even if they could, why should they? They didn't start this, we did. It's our responsibility to do something before it's too late and you need to make sure that happens. Stop fussing on tiny problems such as Brexit, start focussing on the more important things in life. That thing is life.

We hear birdsong by April de Angelis

SCIENTIST:

An impulse took hold of me - you know how it does - suddenly you realise there is something you should have done - and it torments you - why didn't I do this before? People always say don't they about someone that's gone' Why didn't I tell them I loved them more'?

I drove here without stopping. Electric car. Of course.
And here I am shouting at you in the street. Giving scientists a bad name!
I won't keep you long. I need to tell you something that happened to me. Tell you here. Right now. Sorry. What do you think when someone tells you they're a scientist? Brainy but bad fashion sense? A bastard who does bad things to rats? I'm an ornithologist. I don't go anywhere near rats. With me it's always been birds. Endothermic vertebrates characterised by wings, feathers, beaks and the laying of hard shelled eggs.'

Hail to thee Blithe spirit! Bird thou never wert, that from heaven or near it,
poorest thy full heart in profuse strains of unpremeditated art'

Try thinking about the human imagination without birds. Bird song; it's all about sex, a byproduct of these randy little winged creatures wanting a shag. The hoot of an owl, the song of a thrush has always accompanied us. Made us feel less lonely.

A year ago a colleague came into my office. A researcher at my institute. I can't do this anymore she said'. Have you noticed? Sit down, I said. I won't sit down until you admit that I have a point. 'What is it Kate, you look deranged'. 'I drove to the coast to see my mum on Sunday,' she said. 'How nice.' I replied. 'It's summer', she said. 'Great, I said, holidays.'

Something was bugging me.' Bugging you?' 'Bugs' she said.' Literally. None flattened against my car window. It's eerie.' 'That's not evidence Kate' I said. 'You'll have to do better than that. You couldn't put that on a research paper - I had a funny feeling.' 'I have evidence' she said. And she put a file on my desk.' From Germany, from France, from Holland. They're disappearing. Those tiny lives we think are so insignificant but which hold our future in their little bodies. They're vanishing. We have to speak out. If we don't who will? This isn't what the institute pays you to research Kate. I know she said. But what can you do? 'Let me take a look, I said.' Birds are the closest living relatives to crocodiles. They survived the last great extinction by migrating to less hostile regions. Parrots and crows are among the planets most intelligent animals. I knew a man every time he went to leave the house the parrot would imitate the phone and the man would scurry back. Fooled every time. He was dumber than his bird.

'I'm sorry Kate. Your sources are not impeccable. Your science has to be water tight - unassailable'. We can't go round making stuff up- we're not politicians. It's pesticides, she said. like with the bees. The neonics - the seeds get sprayed to make them more resilient but it poisons the bees - what did they ever do to us - they're hard workers, they make honey, they're stripy. The hum of a bee - who wants a silent summer? I can't sleep at night.. She did look shit actually. Take a holiday Kate. I said. It's the same for all insects she said. Kate - this is hysteria- it's not science.

Bit of a silence.

All kinds of birds are vanishing, she said. And it starts with the insects. If the insects go - the birds go. Pollination goes. We all go. She looked at me 'This is about our funding, isn't it?'

Everything's about the fucking funding Kate. I'm doing nothing to threaten that. Even if our funders make the pesticides?

How's your mum, Kate? I remembered her mum was ill.

'Dying but don't change the bloody subject.'

'Without Monsanto this institute would have to close down and I'm not sure I can do that to the birds. The research we do on Crows and finches.' Sorry Kate. You've got to see the bigger picture. Kate left the institute. She walked out and didn't come back. I liked Kate.

And then I pushed it to the back of my mind. I'm good at doing that. For years.

I woke up yesterday morning, my house on the edge of the common.. A baking hot day. And I listened for the sound of the birds. I listened and listened and listened. And the silence carried on. The heat shimmered across the ground, a cloudless, sky.

I got in my car. I drove past the institute. I drove to the city. To tell you.

By a student at Cams Hill School

Deforestation

It is a plague on every generation

Our nation doesn't care

Sending our forests up in flames

With it our hope salvation

Our children and our children's children living and dying

In this hell we created

Flames burning are us alive

We started cooking without instruction

Now we are too close to self-destruction

Never knew what danger it would bring

We didn't know what it cost
Endless frustration
Just for what they call "innovation"
They call it progress
They call it improvements
They say they are making break thoughts
In tech media and mental Health
They say they care that they can help
Yeah let's go green they say
They try to create, to make, to attempt to help
But they have already done too much
Retrace our steps
Correct our errors before they become our mistakes
We are a ticking time bomb of our own creation
Only twelve years
Make **your** difference
Make **your** change
There **IS** still hope

A letter from Marian Greaves

Dear Parliamentarians

I have been a nurse for 40 years; I have worked for the last 10 with people with dementia.

Dementia is no respecter of status, wealth, class or prestige.

I have nursed doctors, lorry-drivers and paedophiles.

I accord them all the same human dignity and respect; I give them appropriate care regardless of who they are and how they have lived their lives.

I have learnt to communicate with those whom dementia has robbed of their ability to speak coherently; I have learnt to communicate with those who are mute, literally having no voice.

You have a voice, and you have the status and power to use your voices to represent those of us with none.

My 5 month old grandson does not yet have words; he communicates his joy

at life in myriad ways.

He laughs, he squeals, his smile beams like a beacon on a stormy day.

His joy is palpable; he wants to experience life in all its' beauty and richness.

But if climate change continues as predicted by the IPCC what will be his future?

And what of the future for your children and grandchildren?

Please, on behalf of all of those with no voice, use yours to bring change, so we may all have a future.

Yours faithfully

Marian Greaves RGN/Mother/Grandmother

From a student at St Bede Catholic College

There was a world. It was covered in trees that could touch the clouds, trees that could clean the air. In the skies flew birds of all shapes, sizes and colours and bees that pollinated plants. There were vibrant coral reefs scattered all over this world filled with shimmering fish. Crystal blue seas surrounded the lands and in them lived dolphins and seals. Golden beaches spanned across the edge of the waters, stretching for miles upon miles.

There is another world not far from the first – our world. Our world is dark and dreary, trapped in a cage of smog and spite. Our world is void of trees that cleanse the air or house the owls at night. No colourful birds light up the sky, no bees or butterflies that fluttered between flowers. Our air is tainted with pollution and our seas poisoned with plastics, its once

glamorous creatures sick and morphed. The skilful, beautiful cats that protected the thriving jungles and the white, majestic beasts that guarded the land of ice – those are nothing but creatures of myths.

Our world is your future. Do you want this monstrosity to be a place your children grow up in? A world filled with poison and sickness? A world where everything is dark and dirty? Do you want your children, your future generations, to grow up in a world that is dead?

From a student at Cams Hill School

Dear future generations,

I'm sorry that we couldn't save,
the planet on which we were made.
The planet that gave us the food we ate,
the air we breath and the place we once existed.
I'm sorry that our planet of mess,
Now your planet of distress.

I'm sorry that we took away your chance to live,
and I don't mean your heart beating and your body moving,
I mean to really live, to see the things you have the right to see,

To do the things you have the right to do and to be the people that,
because of us, you can no longer be.
I'm sorry that we were too busy worrying about our own problems,
to focus on THE problem.

Please believe me when I say that you weren't the only ones affected,
polar bears lost their home due to global warming,
people struggled to breathe the very air that caused their health problems
and thousands of homes drowned in the floods that our pollution caused.
I'm sorry that we called our destruction, progress.

I'm sorry, but I refuse to believe that this is the way it has to end,
if we all work together to reverse the effects of our pollution,
then we will no longer be guilty,
of burning the futures of the next generation.
Stop driving and start walking.
Stop wasting and start saving.
Stop harming and start healing.

A letter from Jo Baker

February and it's too warm to wear a coat. We feed the groggy bees with
sugar-water from a calpol syringe.

You say, I'm frightened; I'm frightened of this weather and I'm frightened of
what the world will be like when I'm older.

And I'm frightened too. My body's frightened of this little summer; it's out of
time and out of tune. I'm frightened of what the world will be like for you.

I say hopeful things, that humanity can do better; that we will get our act in

order. That we will have to.

We get our own small act in order. We take the train, go vegan, refuse plastic, buy less and less.

But that is tiny. We are tiny. We watch parliament cut itself to pieces. We watch the cars belt past our house, planes tear across the sky. We feed the bees. And we are afraid.

By schoolchildren at Woodroffe School, Dorset

To the beings that roam upon me,
I am your Mother, your home, your freedom.
Matricide will be your suicide.

How have you ignored me when I'm underneath your feet? How have you not noticed my suffering? Do you have no respect, no gratitude for my struggle to uphold you over the years?

I'm rotting away, strangled by your selfish actions. My seas, that were once clear, are now saturated by your waste. Over 1 million seabirds and 100,000 sea mammals are killed by pollution every year because of YOU.

My skies turn grey, not with anger but with sorrow. You've ignored my cries for help. Some of you are grateful, and try to make a difference, but "some" is not enough.

They say money makes the world go around, but soon there will be no world to turn. Stop the conflict, stop the corruption, stop the lies. There are bigger issues than Brexit, you know. Bigger issues than Trump's twitter antics. One of the most powerful people in the world simply thinks that climate change is a "hoax".

At the end of 2018, the UK was spending its official development AID funds to promote fracking abroad - the Foreign Office funded 14 more projects to promote oil and gas drilling in India, Myanmar, Brazil, Mexico, and the Philippines. This money should be used to AID the world you live on, not contribute to the destroying of it.

Stop procrastinating and get a grip. This is OUR future and YOUR children's lives. Please listen while you can and don't discard this message, like the majority have. THIS IS A GLOBAL WARNING AGAINST GLOBAL WARMING.

NOW MEANS NOW.

A plea from YOUR Mother Earth.

By Luca, 16

British Government,

I am writing to express my concern about the climate and how it is changing. Since I am not old enough to vote, I feel that it is necessary that I remind you that you alone hold our fate and our future children's fate in your very hands and that this fate seems like a destructive one. This leaves us youths in the position of asking the important question;

Are you willing to do anything about it? The earth is called mother for a reason. All the damage we have created is enough for the earth to hate us, but she still gives us the food and water we need. The evidence of this

damage is as strong as brick: more than 2,000 scientists contributing to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate change (IPCC) have made it clear that cuts of at least 50% to 70% in global greenhouse gas emissions are necessary to allow our climate to re-stabilise. In Van Gogh's words, "Conscience is a man's compass," and if you, the Government has a conscience, you will lead us in the right path of change and action. Please give us hope.

From a 12 year old student at St Bede Catholic College

To the leaders of the world,

I only have one question, are you really a true leader? Do you truly care for the wellbeing of your nation? You have unimaginable power in your position and you are supposed to be educated. I hope you notice the emphasis on the word supposed. I think this because educated people act in disastrous times. They would acknowledge the threatening consequences to these problems if they do not fight them. They would acknowledge that their environment is in

need of attention, treatment and time. However, you, the people who have the power to do this, are in denial of this ecological corruption.

It is not only 50% of the globe's trees which have decreased in the last 100 years. It is also your attention and consideration to the environment. You do not care about the people. You do not care for the children in China who have to wear pollution masks to school or the thousands of homeless people in Bangladesh. You only care about the mask you put on to the public hiding your true selves and the thousands of dollars you gain from promoting fossil fuel companies. You would not care about the 25 orangutans we lose every day to our monstrosity of destroying their homes for palm oil. In fact, I bet you would worry more about losing 25 dollars from your salary.

You are creating huge problems and are obstacles on our path to a good future. You should be sorry. Not just to the people of today but also to the environmentalists who you have denied. Be sorry to the future generations who have to clean up the messes and mistakes you are making right now. But that is the problem. If you do not act now, the mistakes you are making will not be able to be corrected. If this happens, none of your precious 'achievements' will matter anymore because you will be known as the cause of one of the biggest environmental catastrophes. As Prince EA once said, "An error only becomes a mistake when you refuse to correct it". You can still make a change.

I write on behalf of the world's youth when I say give us control over our future. Let us make our mark in the world which means more than your reputations and sponsors. This is just the beginning. We may see worse effects of global warming if we do not fight. So I ask you again, are you truly a good leader? Do you really care about the wellbeing of your nation? If your answer is yes, then do one thing...
Act like it.

Yours sincerely, Anna

A letter from Noah Evans

Dear Earth,

The future! Ahhhh....the future. Don't we all look forward to the future? Flying cars....food you can press a button to cook in the packet....cures for all diseases....you know the story.

But what if I was going to pose this question: **How likely is this, legitimately?**

Because at the moment, we might get a smartphone embedded in our retina and that'll be the furthest we go. Sound good? No?

Climate Change and Global Warming aren't fancy words for (most) world leaders to chat about in a big gold-plated room. They are big words that need to be conventional words. Everyone needs knowledge of both, because we have a world to defend - a few people with briefcases can't do that. The only group that can protect and save our planet are a group that is not often talked about, but really well known. Any ideas? No?

The group I'm talking about go by the name of **Humanity**. Yes, that's right. Not a country, not a group of politicians and their paperwork. Everyone. Including those politicians and that country, but also every other politician and every other country.

We all need to come together and forget our nationality, forget our differences that make us, us, and become one species. The only thing the same about every human is that we are all different from each other. You may look the same as your twin, you may look the same as that guy you saw in the French mall last year, but inside, you are different. Everyone is.

We already know that when we come together, amazing things happen. No one person can change the world, and no one person will ever change the world. **The only people that can change the world are everyone.**

So please, to protect our future, to protect the flying cars, and to protect the world as we know it today, **spread information**. You don't need to know which polar ice cap is going to melt next, or which company deserve a fine for using too much fossil fuel, you just need to know that it's happening too spread the word.

Tell everyone, no matter their religion, skin colour, nationality, or thoughts. Tell those world leaders that those meetings are not really helping. We need to **stop planning and start doing**. That's how to save the planet, and that's what we need to do.

Kind regards,

Noah Evans

A letter from Sarah

Dear Arthur,

I am writing this letter to you because I want to say that I am so sorry that I haven't done more to prevent the devastation that you & your children are going to live through in the near future. Now it is 2019 and you are five-years-old & a tiny little human, with a cheeky little smile and childish innocence. You love wrestlers, pirates & dinosaurs & getting hugs from your

mammy & singing Michael Bublé with your Daddy. It's not fair that you are going to grow up in a world full of flooding, famine & war over resources because the governments of the world do not care enough about you or your children or about the other millions of children just like you in that live in the southern hemisphere who will face the devastation first. It is very difficult you see, for the government to take our imminent mass extinction seriously because they are all trapped in a system that prioritizes money & capital value above human life.

The last two summers the weather has been so hot here that it could have been Spain. In February the UK reached 21.2 C which is normally only reached in the summer. The evidence from 97% of scientists is irrefutable but doing something about saving your life and saving our beautiful planet will mean that they have to stop prioritising money. This actually terrifies me – because I am not sure that people can do it. The pull of money is so, so great. People who have more money are seen as better. Striving constantly for money is seen as the best way to be in our system. Whole countries in the middle east have earned such high levels of money due to them having 60% of the world's oil reserves – the same fuels that are going to cause your extinction because they are making the world too hot.

I am guilty too of being a slave to money. Like billions of others, I drive around in a car every day which runs off fossil fuels. I just don't know what else to do because just like other normal hard-working people I am trapped in a system whereby my livelihood depends on my ability to drive. If I don't get to work, I don't earn money, then I can't pay bills, I can't feed myself & I can't have control over my life. I do desperately want to solve this problem but sometimes I feel so hopeless about it because of the things I have just mentioned. I am only one person in a mass of billions & I am not rich or powerful but maybe if I play my small part by writing this letter I can be one of the ripples in what becomes a tidal wave of change. For this reason, I am going to submit this letter as part of the Extinction Rebellion 'Letters to the Earth' project this morning.

I wuv you my little boy. XXXX

A poem by Shaky Shergill

At twilight
a circle of shadows forms
and a mother
calls her child

You've slaughtered your kin.

Taking bone, blood and sinew
for vanity
and I was silent,
because I love you

You've ruined habitats.
Raping forests, seas and mountains
for profit
And I was silent
Because I love you

You've defiled the wholesome.
Marring purity, innocence and fertile
for greed
And I was silent,
Because I love you.

You've corrupted milieus.
Polluting rivers, oceans and winds
for avarice
And I was silent,
Because I love you.

And now it's your turn
What will you stop, protect or change
Because you love me?

TELL THE TRUTH

Something nagging by Conor McGlone

...It's easiest to handle what's in front of your face

Available for public performance 15-28th April 2019

Close to home, fixed and firm
Of immediate concern

Step back, it's overwhelming
You can't manage
The waves of panic
At the scale of the damage to the planet
What can you, a grain of sand in the vastness do?
Quick!
Retreat forward again
And it's hidden, comfortingly from view
Zoom in, in, in until your surroundings are reassuringly yours
What you know, cozy, safe and secure

Focus on bubbling kettle
Absorb the day to day
Pitter patter of innocence on the stairs
Plug into the news
(Brexit stress in the West, is bleak
A flood kills hundreds in Mozambique)
But it's far away over the radio waves
Outside the sun bathes the place in shimmering grace
Boisterous birds, still singing
Everything's gonna be okay
The street is alive with blossom
The world has bloomed too soon
But what a picture for sore eyes!
Argue with your lover over who said what, when
Let life take over
Everything's normal
Everything's zen

Drive the kids to school
The panic is subsiding
Referee their backseat squabbling
Traffic jam tempers rising
Like the deep, growling blue.

We've really *pissed off* the elements
They say, at the office
The footmen of productivity.
Amidst the chatter of
bottom lines, targets, profit
Then pub.
Celebrate promotion with clinking glasses, laughter
It's what you've been after
But still you can't shush those nagging questions you can't answer

Steal twenty minutes
You can fix it
With some fast fashion retail therapy
How can That Shirt
Leave a trail of misery
and destruction
Around the World?
Yet look so nice
At such a low price?
Suppress and repress thought like;
Was that purchase vital?
Can it ever be recycled?

Pour petrol in the tank

Beat the rush hour slew
What's a carbon budget to the likes of me and you?
Polar caps melt
But it's not our fault, it is the life we were dealt
City dwellers.
Stay disconnected for ever from the land
And the weather
Except to check before work if we need an umbrella

The world's trying to tell us something
But we're in a hurry, dear
Zipping to blissful extinction
In designer gear

Finally you're alone with your head
The kids are in bed
All is quiet,
The roar of silence
The doubts have been knocking
Now they barge their way in
Absentmindedly you fill the void with
Whatever it takes
Switch something on
To drown out the wind's song; a nagging gentle refrain
Impatient it whips up a howl of pain
Criminal Negligence, Criminal Negligence it bays
The full wrath of nature is on its way

But
It's

Not too late
Alone your strength lies in knowing
Find the time
Walk outside,
Observe nature at its work
Then,
Grasp an outstretched hand
Reach out to another grain of sand

In this time of science and knowing
Never as a species have we had more power
To turn the tide of events
Reverse this sickness
Leading us hour by hour
To the end

An abrupt ellipses...

A letter from Alexander Tomlinson

Dear past, you never knew of what would happen next or that the world you knew would end. You never could imagine the pain and suffering your actions will cause and the death they would create.

You never would believe the beauty you would destroy. But I know that this is what you did, I know of the world ending, I can imagine the suffering and death your actions cause, I believe of the beauty you destroy. Because you are my past and I am the consequence of the pain you cause.

Dear present, your name is good but you are no gift. You are the constant passing of time that we all feel yet never notice. You are here and gone in an instant yet leave a destructive mark behind. You kill for your own preservation not thinking of the consequence. You realise the damage you do yet still don't change. I am ashamed to be one of you and look around in horror. I beg you to change your ways and heal the damage you do.

Dear future, you may no longer be there but I write to you in hope. Hope that things will change. Hope that the damage will heal. Hope that beauty comes back. Hope that there is a future still to be had. You are the crossroads we are approaching. One to the dark and the other to towards the light of what could be.

Dear Human race, you are all of this, you are pain, death and suffering. You are the thing that destroys, the thing that kills no matter the cost. You are the destroyer of beauty, the thing of horror. But I still have hope in you that you will change, that you will recreate the things that are destroyed and recover the humanity you have lost. I hope we will choose the right path, the one of light are bright future we could have.

Save the world in hope.

A Letter from Mairead aged 16

Dear fellow citizens

Not of England, not of Europe, but of this planet.

Thank you, to those of you that have put your differences aside and united to combat the catastrophe we are facing. Thank you for spreading this word, this movement, this energy, to unite the global population in a movement of non-violent, loving urgency. The Earth will be eternally grateful.

Thank you for telling the truth, although it makes us uncomfortable. Thank you for refusing to hide the gruesome facts. For inspiring the young generation to rise up and have their voices heard.

The terrifying stories, reports, photographs- the ones that the media are continuously failing to show- may be a little overwhelming. The truth is not a pretty sight. There is a lot of shame in what we, as a species, have done, and we need to keep this in mind. We must be careful not to let the guilt and sadness pull us into a vortex of anxiety that inhibits our productivity.

Acknowledgement is of course important, but an overload of depressing information can oftentimes burden us to a point where it is too much. Where we lose hope, and hope is what is most important in this situation. We need to be stable and healthy enough to be in a space that allows us to create a productive response to any negative climate news or statistics.

Sometimes we feel as though we are too small. As though we are not big or strong enough to have a real impact. We all feel this way sometimes. When you do, when the small child in you is saying, "I need help with this! I can't do it! I give up!" consider phenomena such as the butterfly effect. Consider discontinuous change: if you put a bottle of room-temperature water in the freezer, there is a continuous change in the temperature of the water as it cools. However, if the freezer had a transparent door and you could watch the process, you wouldn't see a change until the critical moment where the water changes state and freezes. This is the discontinuous change. The water was always in the process of freezing, but you can't tell until it has actually frozen. Of course this is relevant with climate change, but it is also applicable to our efforts. Don't give up because you can't see an immediate change. Consider how water, which is so soft and supple, can break a strong glass bottle when it freezes; it can even break concrete and stone.

It is important that we develop a strategy here. Not just because we need to overcome climate change, but to deal with new problems in the future. Of course this is our priority now, as it should be, but if something new arises, and it probably will, our knowledge of how to bring about change and spread awareness will help us greatly.

Go forward from here with fire in your hearts, and bring about the change you wish to see in the world.

The Earth will be eternally grateful.

You Don't Need Us (when will we learn this) by Elizabeth Hunter

Your waters are gentle
They soothe and feed us
Tides in, tides out
We think they need us
Your waters become ferocious
Could it be they are tired?
Of all the harm
At them we fired
Your waters come crashing
The ice and wind too
And all of our tomorrows
Slide out of view
You're done with us
There is no more time
We had our chance
But black suns don't shine
It's stopped.
You've moved on
Us, We, You've forgotten
And now we are a figment
In a place we made rotten

A letter from Anna Orridge

Dear Fossil Fuel Executives,

You have taught me to hate. And that is my loss. Although I've never been a moderate in politics, I was at least moderate in temperament, anger fizzing like sherbet on my tongue, its tang lost in a moment. Once I could give you the benefit of the doubt. And now I can't..

I suppose you can chalk that up as one of your many achievements, although I doubt you're as proud of it as those rows of zeroes in your bank statements and investments portfolios.

I wonder if any of you saw the footage of an inundated Mozambique, all those desperate people crowded onto roofs, murky water swirling around them. Do you feel even a twinge of guilt for the lobbyists you paid to undermine even modest efforts to reduce emissions?

I am as mystified by you as I am disgusted. I know you know about the horrors to come. You're not ones to let any risks to your money creep up on you unawares. You long since filed your reports to governments, requesting subsidies to keep all those off-shore rigs viable, the ones that will disappear under the waves along with our coastal cities and hundreds of millions of human lives.

Billions, perhaps.

I hear some of you are buying up property in New Zealand and Canada: places that might just retain their hospitality to life. Others of you have indulged fantasies of colonies in Mars, or built luxurious bunkers underground.

Bunkers, eh? I don't think there are walls high enough or tunnels deep enough to protect you from parents watching their children starve.

Well, let's say you've chosen well. Your locks hold out, your weapons keep the hoards away. Your servants, if you have retained them, do not yield to the temptation to steal your food or slit your throats. But even the most impressive stockpile cannot last the span of a human life. Tins corrode, dried food rots. So what then?

You'll venture out. You'll breathe the poisoned air. You'll tread upon the soil, drained of its richness by the rapacity you encouraged. You'll look up at the

sky your fuels once helped to criss-cross with the vapour trails of planes, like nails dragged across a beloved face.

I doubt there'll be any planes, though. Or birds. Christ, there might not even be any clouds.

Then your children, forced to behold this devastation, will perhaps ask you whether those rows of zeroes were worth the vast nothingness you have made of our once beautiful home. And what do you think you'll have to say to them?

Yours,
Anna Orridge

Letter To Nana by Suzy Miller

Dear Nana

Sorry it's been so long since I wrote you a letter. The village wells have run dry again as the water table has gone down so there's been a bit of a panic on. But the desalination plant is working properly again so that seems to have quelled the fears. Lucky old you, you don't have to worry about that where you are.

Your favourite granddaughter (she always giggled when you called her that) is thinking of you - her 'favourite' Nana. Carly's doing great working at the prison rehabilitation centre and she's thinking of maybe starting a family with her partner. They've held off for years for obvious reasons but things have settled down a bit now and there is a sense of hope in the air.

A picture appeared on my Facebook stream of you and I, cheering on the Extinction Rebellion Pilgrimage as they marched through the village on their way to London back in 2019. A blast from the past. It seems like a world away now. You even walked some of the way with them, handing out water bottles and wishing them well.

Looking back, I feel a deep sense of shame and guilt that I was part of what had led up to the crisis. Do you feel that too?

We were so gullible. Is that an excuse?

It's another steaming hot April day. **When climate scientists warned** of heatwaves like the 101.3 degrees we had in Kent in 2003, predicting that would become the norm in summer by the 2040s, they weren't kidding. But it's even hotter in the cities as you can't air-condition the streets - though I've been thinking of using an old hydrogen powered ice cream van to sell hats with solar fans attached to keep cool in-between buildings. We have to be entrepreneurial these days to keep afloat! I feel so sorry for the hospitals and care homes not designed to deal with extreme heat – not to mention many being located in flood-prone areas. Thank goodness we got you into one that was on higher ground with a cooling system before it got a waiting list longer than most people's lifespans!

Back in 2018 I didn't pay much attention to the reports that nine of our nation's 17 record-breaking rainfall months since 1910 had occurred since just 2000.

Somehow it didn't sink in what that really meant. Now I've lost most of the trees in my garden from the storms and my favourite flowers can't cope with the heat and lack of ground water - crazy since we get such heavy flooding - it still doesn't quite compute. The lavenders seem to be coping well though. You always loved the scent, didn't you?

When I read about the **the increased risk of the Asian tiger mosquito, carrying the Chikungunya virus, dengue fever, and Zika virus** - (take your pick!) - I thought it was just scaremongering. We never had to worry about that kind of thing in England. Mosquitos LOVE me - I spend half the year covered in netting and citronella spray. Makes Carly laugh her head off! She says I look like a ghost on my Health Visitor rounds through the village.

I asked her straight the other day. "Can you ever forgive us?" And she laughed.

But how can her generation forgive us Nana. We voted in governments who made it all worse and we were complicit in the destruction of our own planet. Yes, we've pulled it back from the brink but not without permanent cost to our children. I don't understand how they don't just despise us, even though they love us, for what we've done?

You know what she said? She said that in the rehab for the prisoners, it doesn't matter how many times someone has done a criminal act. The moment they accept responsibility. The moment they atone for the harm they have done and focus on what they can do that is life giving, life supporting, community focused - all is forgiven. She says that some of the worst criminals she's worked with are the ones who give back the most.

They said it was quick. They didn't know if it was Chikungunya virus, dengue fever, or Zika virus (take your pick). Sometimes they get past the nets, those pesky Asian Tiger Mosquitos.

Some fever, some delirium, then death.

I wish I had been able to get to see you once more before you went Nana.

God bless.

Your loving daughter.

Dear future generations,

I am so sorry. What you are facing is pure injustice. The chaos of your everyday life was not considered a priority by the powerful today, and it was too scary for ordinary people to face. Now it's too late. We could have done so much more.

I'm sorry for taking breathable air, clean water, and plentiful food for granted. I'm sorry for enjoying the unseasonable weather brought on by climate change. I'm sorry for thinking that this wasn't the biggest problem humanity has ever faced.

I hope that we have united as a species. I hope that we can survive together. I hope, I hope, I hope.

Sincerely,
Emma

Letter to an unborn child by Sue Hampton

I can't imagine your life, and why would I want to try? It'll be a different way to live and breathe and be afraid. And that's not fair. You'll pay the price for the carelessness that went before. But my generation's way was meant to be cool, convenient, fast – everything up for grabs because consuming and possessing meant success, no questions asked and no blame, no responsibility. I mean, hey, we didn't invent coal or oil. It was there to burn, like everything else. Ours to use, for the lifestyle we deserved as recompense for the hours we worked – or spent caged on motorways. We didn't doubt the plastic or the concrete.

Carbon made our world and kept its wheels spinning. And as users we didn't just accept the norms, we wanted more. We didn't even wonder whether anyone in manufacturing had ever looked beyond the profits to a future as distant as yours. Or cared what they might see. Because everything that was poisoning us seemed so useful and appealing. It was all around us and it crept into our thinking until it seemed like a need. And nothing was labelled 'danger'.

No one talked about carbon, and fossil fuels were just energy: a great word, a buzz, a quality we needed to exhibit in the world if we wanted to get on in it. So we didn't know what we were doing, we really didn't. And we relied on the people in charge to know for us, to act responsibly on the best information. It's the least we can expect, isn't it, from our leaders – given their salaries and status, their famous faces? And the least we could expect from their friends in industry and business, the ones with the best suits and the most influence? What can I say? We were played. We were the market, the audience, the figures. Soul, anyone?

At least for you, that may be over. Along with other things. There's a cruel irony, I guess, because we've been playing fast and loose with nature, no care or respect, in our sealed-up, fast-track lives – and now nature's resisting, rising up, rogue. So maybe you can make peace, and amends – if fire or water hasn't claimed you. There'll be lucky ones, and the truth is you'd better be white with money. Unless the winds of change strip away all that, and leave... humanity.

Just that. No war, just one common enemy. And cooperation? I hope for your sake you find a way. I like to think you'll be wiser; you'll have no choice. You'll find your way back to truths we chucked on landfill with the outdated technology and outmoded fashion. You'll live in the knowledge of what really counts, and that won't be numbers. I hope so. We lost the plot and you'll need a whole new narrative. I'm just worried about how it will end.

I suppose you might say, if you could, "Isn't that up to you?" and you'd have a point, because I'm still here and you're not. You can't shape the future yet but I can. My lot: the generation with the power. But so much needs to change, completely, and overnight. It's a big ask. I'd do my bit but I'm not sure how much difference that could make, in the big picture. It's so complicated, you see. You couldn't imagine. But then when I hear the young ones talk I know that's no excuse. I tell myself it's up to us to do what we can – for them and for you. And sometimes I watch the crowds with their placards and banners and I envy them their guts, their clarity, their vision. Because the governments have none and that's a fact. And they'll do nothing but gas-guzzling, frack-away business as usual if people let them. And people... includes me. I could say better late than never, except that for you... well, I wonder.

Don't think I haven't lain awake for fearing. Don't think I haven't cried. So imagination dares after all. I've said sorry. I won't ask for forgiveness. But now I can see.

From Ashby, 15

I want you to fucking listen to us. We are the ones in education with the information and a future that we are trying to protect. *No one is exempt.* Anyone who has ever heard "you don't matter" in your life, listen to me, now you do the matter. Care about the environment and I will show you how much you matter in this world.

Someone wise once told me, do not try change the minds of those with power, they do not listen and are never affected. She said to create change, go to the people. And that is what this is.

You tell us as children that we matter, so why don't you listen to us? Imagine knowing that through destroying billions of trees and leaving us with the dire consequences - you directly impact the young generations mental health. As politicians and money hungry people, you have fucked our planet and yourselves up, then left it to us as unasked for inheritance.

I get told *all the time*, you "young bright minds" can fix it. WE ARE TRYING. Let us get on with it.

From a student at Cams Hill School

The earth's name is unique. We need to keep it.

E=Energetic

A=Amazing

R=Respectful

T=Trusty

H=Happy

The letters of the EARTH are what keeps us alive, without it we will be extinct.

Please forgive us for our mistakes. It's up to us to support the earth. The

Earth was energetic, amazing, respectful, trusty and happy.

This is what it will be:

E=Extinct

A=Angry

R=Ruined

T=Threatened

H=History

Change the earth back to itself. Not to what it will be.

From a student at Egguckland Community College

Dear Next Generation,

This is rather urgent so I shall have to skip the niceties. The planet has been, and still is being, destroyed by our carbon emissions. I'm sorry but the house you will be unable to afford (thanks to past generations destroying the economy but that's a different story) will most likely be underwater anyway. Unless things in my time change.

I cannot stress enough how little those in power care about this issue. Yes, I'll hear about it. Once or twice. It's described as the "Global Warming Crisis" like something ought to be done. Nothing is going to happen though. "Global warming increases dramatically..." no one in power, to put it frankly, gives a monkey's.

This is because global warming is caused by excessive fossil fuel emissions, and fossil fuels make money. Most people are relatively happy to turn a blind eye when it comes to money.

People are also reluctant to change their ways. The fashion industry is desolating the planet. So much water is used and wasted in the creation of clothes. The females of my generation (I am one but I feel this cannot go unsaid) consume and discard many clothing items because they are "like... out of fashion." Pathetic, I know.

I am sorry that this is so bleak but I must speak my mind.

From a student at Penrice School

To those few who it might interest,

I am only 15 years old, yet I am concerned. Concerned for our planet. Concerned for our environment. We are nearing a point of no return which, once met, will be the final nail in this discordant planet's coffin. I don't suppose this statement comes to the surprise of many, however, if this is the case, why are there still 16,000 metric tons of garbage escaping our overpopulated land and swimming away in our behemoth ocean? Every. Single. Day. The more we allow this to happen, the more we will torture our planet and the more our beloved Earth will cripple under the weight of those items we no longer desire - this must stop.

Picture this: You embark on a journey through different cultures and traditions, but all you find is an environmental minefield devastated by mankind. Now picture this: Towering flora with architecture beautifully shaped to work with nature, not against it. Unless we care, this will forever remain a distant dream in the heads of those who made it impossible to achieve. The sparse relics of our incomparable world need to be rescued.

We had such a beautiful and unique world, fascinating fish swimming wildly through our azure-coloured, clean seas; giant redwood trees towering beneath the gleaming sky of California; majestic animals guarding the fragile

balance our world relies on. What happened? Humans happened. Our irrational human desire to own everything - necessary or not - has starved our planet of what it once was. Not to forget our insane illusion that we can take whatever we want from Earth without even the hint of consequences.

This illusion will end sooner than many hope.

Please start caring, before it is too late.

From a Year 7 Student at Tanbridge House School

Dear the Humans of the Earth,

No. Don't walk away. Keep on reading, seriously. And don't you laugh. Will you laugh when YOU find out that your family and friends have gone, when smog billows over your city, when your favourite animals' existence we take for granted now is pulled apart as easy as a dandelion? We are at a time where if we do something, we MIGHT just stop climate change. We have found ourselves at a decisive turning point.

The world can't just sit here anxious about this. We have to act because we are the killers and we must unite. YOU have to spread the word. If you refuse you will be refusing the small chance we have left of saving not only our own lives, but all the nature that relies on the climate. YOU will be the killer. There is already too much evidence to refuse the fact that the Earth is in a cataclysmic crisis. We have inflicted pain on ourselves and we have inflicted pain on the animals that make us who we are. We are slowly killing ourselves. Look at the facts. Look at them now. Due to the greenhouse effect that's wreaking the world of our fossil fuels we burn maliciously, sea levels are rising. Ice caps are melting.

INNOCENT arctic life is dwindling. Forest fires are scorching INNOCENT wildlife. Plastic is strangling INNOCENT turtles and dolphins. Would you care if you had destroyed your best friends' lives? Would you care if the creatures you most admire are confused, dying out by being choked by a plastic bag? The world needs to care. But to truly care you have to do something about it.

In this time, in this life, you have to care. Would you care, or would you watch your animals die out, watch your paradise crumble because you were too idle to do ANYTHING about it? You need to speak up for our wrongdoings. They

will never be fixed the way we are going. We are too stuck in our era of modern technology we don't look at what we left behind. We left behind a haven, and we are killing it. We are plaguing it. If you're scared of sharks, look at yourself. You are the one animals are scared by, and there's no denying. You, you humans, you only have eyes for technology. You don't care about the things that are a part of us. You are blind right now, and you should feel ashamed. You don't. You will in thirty years, but by then it will be far too late. That's why our last chance is now. Come out of this having listened and cared and feeling ashamed. It is becoming a reality. We need to open our eyes to the world or it will close its eyes on us.

Yours sincerely, A Human.

By Theo, age 15

Here's a fact: planet earth is 4.5 billion years old, mankind, about 140,000 years old. If that's put into perspective, condensing the earth's lifespan into 1 full day then we have been here on this planet for 3 seconds. 3 seconds, and look what we've done.

'Over time, action has an equal and opposite reaction.' So if we were wise, we would not be shocked when we see storms stronger than ever before, drought, hurricanes, or wild fires stronger than ever before. Because there is more pollution than ever before, more carbon, more trees cut down than ever before. We are the reason for animal extinction, all these beloved animals are predicted to go extinct. Lions gone, rhinos gone, tigers, gorillas, elephants, seals, polar bears gone. In 3 seconds, and some of these species who have been here longer than us will be gone, because of us, in just these 3 seconds.

We cannot accept this future. An error doesn't become a mistake until you refuse to correct it.

We can redirect this. This is our only home, so we must look after it, 'globally warm our hearts and change the climate of our souls.' We aren't apart from nature, we are a part of nature, saving nature is saving us. So whatever we're fighting for, we must fight and support together, to help save the environment together as one, or we will be equally extinct.

Sometimes I wonder if we'll reach that 4th second.

A letter from Stephen

Dear Future Humans,

One hundred years ago...in Western Europe, in the so-called United Kingdom:

- we imported our fruit from across the world and forgot how to grow our own
- we signed petitions to ban dog-meat farms while tucking in to steak and chips
- we got cross about Fair-trade coffee but didn't think to cut down
- we went shopping for new clothes every weekend and felt smug when donating to charity shops
- we ironed bedclothes and tumble-dried our underwear
- we forgot how to mend things and threw them away
- we changed our phones every time our providers reminded us
- we did yoga and other self-work and felt good every second or third day
- we flew thousands of miles a year in half empty aeroplanes
- we tuned into adverts and went on-line shopping
- we opened the door, tiny things arrived with heaps of packaging that we frowned at
- we drove in diesel cars on our own and moaned about the traffic
- we ate meat from polystyrene boxes, with plastic forks and drank a high sugar drink
- we gave up referring to them because it was hard to know what to do about these things
- we felt anxious and went shopping again - everything was in black

plastic

We left you with our shit to clear up.

A 12 year old student at the John Wallis Academy

Dear Earth.

Recently, I have realised that we as humans are destroying you. You used to be all beautiful, clear skies and growing trees. A happy place to be. But we have made you skies dirty and smoky and chopped down the trees. Not such a happy place to be after all.

I am not going to sit here, typing on the computer that I knew what was going on. Because that would be a lie. Honestly I had no clue that sea animals, birds and our ocean were dying because of us! We are the reason that turtles are choking on bottle caps, birds are picking up plastic folders thinking they are fish and feeding it to their babies. I had no clue the ocean, where we could swim happily and animals used to have a decent home, is now a place where the plastic now lays. The fish that we eat, are filled with plastic that we through away. So when we think we are eating a healthy fish in a sushi place or a restaurant, we don't know that the fish is filled with chemicals from the everyday items that we use and thoughtlessly dispose of.

People may not know they are killing these animals. Hey I didn't even know! But that shouldn't be the case. When we are watching the news, we see things about everything but the

detrimental effect we have on the environment. A few days ago we could probably recite every little thing about Brexit, and maybe one thing about these dreadful matters. This shouldn't be the case! There are worse things happening in this world than someone robbing the mini market, or someone's dog ran away or some celebrity couples breaking up.

Moving on.

Animals are an amazing. They are smart, beautiful, and something our world needs! And it's our responsibility to keep them. But that's not what we're doing! Do you think killing cheetahs for their fur for design is saving these creatures? Do you think cutting off elephant trunks for ivory, our own greed, is acceptable? Over 100,000 animals dying a day because of us. We do not give these animals the appreciation they deserve. They deserve the respect and dignity that we would expect from one another. Animals may not be able to speak, or act like humans, or drive a car... but that's not their fault. The least we could do is not kill these incredible animals for a design on a piece of clothing. Our generation has incredible technology, that someone could just print that design off, without hurting any animals.

In 50 years' time, these animals that we know and love may not be here. My grandchildren may never see elephants or tigers or sloths. They will never know what a rainforest is, or clear skies, or beautiful lakes. But we can change that. They deserve to have the same experience that I have at the moment. But if we keep doing what we are doing, everything will vanish in front of us. First the land, then the animals, then us. We don't know it, but by destroying our world, we are slowly destroying human kind.

We are not terrible people. We are only human after all. But we can make a change.

I may be only 12 years old, but I care, and you should too.

From Damiesha, age 13

To my Great-Grandchildren,

I am writing to you on Wednesday 20th March 2019. All ready we have been warned that in 12 years global warming will be irreversible. In December, Greenland's ice melt has quadrupled; I'm frightened. Once again, in December Australia suffered an extreme heat wave 14°C above average; it exceeded over 40°C. Parts of Australia suffered severe drought; this is a "global catastrophe". Wildfire season is lengthening in the US as temperatures rise. Higher temperatures in spring and summer, earlier spring snow-melt result in hotter and drier forests; prime conditions for wildfires to ignite and spread. Trees are being cut down right left and centre meaning that our oxygen supply may possibly be demolished by the very beings that depend on it for a sustained life. Who are we to take the right of oxygen away from 8.7 million different species? There is no replacement for oxygen, we can't lose it.

The way things are going maybe your grandparents, my children, will not even be born.

We need to stop being greedy and think about the future generations; we need to live a sustainable lifestyle.

I am sorry that the world you live in is terrible; no beautiful views or clean air to breathe. I fear that you may not have any oxygen left and the world is heading to an end. I am sorry that you may not be able to experience the hot summers and the icy winters. I am sorry that you may not be able to see the

marine life which beautifies to the vast oceans. I am sorry that rainwater will become so acidic that you can't play in the rain or jump in puddles. I am sorry that tsunamis, earthquakes and wildfires will become a norm. I am sorry that you can't live life without worrying that this moment may be your last.

On Friday, all over the world children protested against global warming. This gives me hope that I'll meet my children and theirs, maybe even you. I might never meet you but my dearest's I love you with all my heart.

Hugs and kisses,
Great-Grandma

ACT NOW

From a student, St Bede Catholic College

Dear Earth,

How are you doing?

I hope you get well promptly, you're always having parts of you severed away like trees, in fact in the past 100 years 50% of your trees have been seized from you. I'm sorry earth. I'm sorry as humans we are using you as a credit card with no spending limit and I'm sorry as humans we had the nerve to call this destruction progress. I thought I was surrounded by people who think of themselves as a part of nature as a part of you so why are we destroying you were just destroying ourselves. sorry earth.

As humans we can fight so hard for equality for every cause including race, gender or sexuality because in the end if everyone doesn't work together we will all be equally extinct and we will lose you earth. in the past 10 years 11 of your species have become extinct and if I and humanity aren't careful we'll be next to go. In the words of David Attenborough

"leaders of the world, you must lead." and he is right earth, we can't help you get better unless we all work together. sorry earth, sorry for brutally murdering your innocent species and sorry for poisoning your seas so much humanity can't swim in them anymore. sorry earth.

Earth as humanity have found, there are solutions to save you, to save us. we can use re- usable hydroelectric power instead of burning fossil fuels and there is a plant grown in west Africa named the jatropha bush and humans can create oil and the waste can be used to create energy. earth we won't lose hope for there are solutions to our problems but we must work together we can save you earth just hang in there.

A poem by Cate Chapman

I don't know where I've got this balance wrong

- either a surfeit or a deficit of faith. Either way, all my incredulous anger somehow elects to curl itself around, back inwards, sets to something far more solid: I refuse (with a stubbornness I've been told is unbecoming, unfeminine, inappropriate), right from the root, to let this experience diminish me, to beat my heart down

back into the easy shallow peace of cynicism, keeping pace with the mute, drowsy rhythm of our shitty broken culture of forgetfulness, resignation. I know this poem is like something a teenager might write, too raging and too earnest, but so what? Why is it so embarrassing to allow ourselves to feel anything? I don't want to be inured, resigned, despondent in the face of all the senseless destruction and injustice, the dull complicity. If I'm angry

then I have every fucking reason to be.
And that anger is beautiful: a great bright thrust of energy, action, hope, confidence, knowledge,

love.

A letter from Rebecca Solnit, first published in The Guardian

I want to say to all the climate strikers today: thank you so much for being unreasonable. That is, if reasonable means playing by the rules, and the rules are presumed to be guidelines for what is and is not possible, then you may be told that what you are asking for is impossible or unreasonable. Don't listen. Don't stop. Don't let your dreams shrink by one inch. Don't forget that this might be the day and the pivotal year when you rewrite what is possible.

The lessons infantile adults can learn from children go far beyond climate change

Richard Russell

What climate activists are asking for is a profound change in all our energy systems, for leaving fossil fuel in the ground, for taking action adequate to the planet-scale crisis of climate change. And the rules we are so often reminded of by those who aren't ready for change are not the real rules. Because one day last

summer a 15-year-old girl sat down to stage a one-person climate strike, and a lot of adults would like to tell you that the rules say a 15-year-old girl cannot come out of nowhere, alone, and change the world.

Sweden's Greta Thunberg already has.

They will tell you the rules are that those we see in the news and the parliaments and boardrooms hold all the power and you must be nice to them and perhaps they

will give you crumbs, or the time of day, or just a door slammed in your face. They will tell you that things can only change in tiny increments by predictable means. They're wrong. Sometimes you don't have to ask for permission or for anything because you hold the power and you yourselves decide which way the door swings. Nothing is possible without action; almost anything is when we rise up together, as you are doing today.

I am writing you in gratitude and enthusiasm as someone who has lived for almost six decades, which

has been time enough to see extraordinary change. To see what had been declared impossible happen over and over again. To see regimes topple when ordinary people rise up in nonviolent direct action. To see dramatic expansions of rights in both law and imagination. To see what were once radical new ideas about gender and sexual orientation and race, about justice and equality, about nature and ecology become ordinary accepted ideas – and then to see people forget how our minds were changed, and how much that process matters too.

The world I was born into no longer exists. The role of women has changed extraordinarily since then, largely for the better. The entire Soviet empire collapsed suddenly 30 years ago, a few years after the east bloc of communist countries liberated themselves through the actions of people who were themselves supposed to be powerless to topple regimes backed by great militaries and secret police. I saw apartheid fall in South Africa, and a prisoner doing life become its president. I was born into a world where to be gay or

lesbian or trans was criminalized, and I watched those laws and attitudes be change in states, in my country, the US, and in many countries.

I saw wind and solar power go from awkward, ineffectual, expensive technologies only 20 years ago to become the means through which we can leave the age of fossil fuel behind. I have seen a language to recognize the Earth's environmental systems arise in my lifetime, a language that can describe how everything is connected, and everything has consequences. Through studying what science teaches us about nature and what history teaches us about social forces I have come to see how beautiful and how powerful are the threads that connect us. Here's one. Who did Greta Thunberg describe as a key influence on her actions? Rosa Parks.

That a black woman born in Tuskegee, Alabama, in 1913 would influence a white girl born in Sweden 90 years later to take direct action about climate change is a reminder that everything is connected and your actions matter even when the results aren't immediate or obvious. The way Rosa Parks broke the rules and lived according to her ideals still matters, still has power, still has influence beyond what she could have imagined, beyond her lifetime, beyond her continent, beyond her particular area of activism.

The rules are the rules of the obvious, the easy assumptions that we know who holds power, we know how change happens, we know what is possible. But the real lesson of history is that change often comes in unpredictable ways, power can suddenly be in the hands of those who appear out of what seems to the rest of us like nowhere. I did not see Thunberg coming, or the Sunrise Movement or Extinction Rebellion or Zero Hour.

When I went to Standing Rock I never dreamed this indigenous-led uprising against an oil pipeline would inspire Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez to run for office. Nor

that she would go on to win a victory that broke all the rules and become the great spokesperson for a Green New Deal. I didn't dream it, but I knew that something powerful, magical, alive with possibility was happening. That's why I wasn't surprised when it did, and why I don't assume we have seen all of what that gathering in 2016 achieved, either. It is not over, any more than Rosa Parks's impact is over. Good work matters. Acting on your ideals matters. How it matters is not always immediate or obvious.

Today you are standing up for people not yet born, and those ghostly billions are with you too.

What I see all around me is what I call climate momentum: people from New Zealand to Norway stepping up their response to climate change. I see pipeline blockades in Canada and the US, I see investors backing off from fracking and coal, I see universities and pension funds divesting from fossil fuel, I see solar farms and wind turbines going in all over the world and engineers working to make the technologies better, I see lawsuits against oil companies and coal companies, I see politicians, newspaper editorialists, businesspeople and others who have power under the usual rules getting on board in a way they never have before. There is so much happening, in so many ways, to respond to the biggest disaster our species has ever faced.

It is not yet enough, but it is a sign that more and more are facing the catastrophe and are doing something about it. I don't know what will happen, because what will happen is what we make happen. That is why there's a global climate strike today. This is why I've started saying, Don't ask what will happen. Be what happens. Today, you are what is happening. Today, your power will be felt. Today, your action matters. Today in your individual action you may stand with a few people or with hundreds, but you stand with billions around the world. Today you are standing up

for people not yet born, and those ghostly billions are
with you too. Today you are the force of possibility that
runs through the present like a river through the desert.

By a student at Woodroffe School, Dorset

Fast forward to next year,
Global warming's still a fear.
Temperatures are rising,
Species are declining
The Government still hasn't batted an eyelid.

10 years from now,
People riot and row.
The polar bears are dying,
The government is still lying
Who needs to die to make you listen?

30 years on,
All the ice caps are gone
London's under the sea

Then where will we be?
The damage has been done.

Only we can stop this

Recycle, reuse, reduce!
Consumerism fuels the abuse
You're never too small to make a difference.

A letter from Jenny, St Bede Catholic College

Dear Planet Earth,
I am sorry we have mis-used you, messed you up and physically abused you.
Now we are pleading for forgiveness; though we have done nothing to prevent it, we brought it upon ourselves.

Not everyone understands the problems that our planet, and consequently, we are facing. No one truly understands how terrible deforestation is, its unbelievable yet real. Fifty percent of all our trees are gone in the last one hundred years: that's our century's work, our destruction, and we aren't doing anything to lower the rates. Fifty percent, half of one hundred, and what for, palm oil, money, and 'space'. Space, for towns and cities to be made, space for another area to be polluted and destroyed with fossil fuels...eventually. Space for another area to be flipped upside down, just for them to find fossil

fuels underground. In one, and one only, single minute, forty football fields of trees are lost. Forty football fields, a minute. In one of my school lessons- one hour long- 2,400 football fields of trees have been cut down. Then, by the end of my school day, (the school day is six hours long) we lose 14,400 football fields of trees. As I'm in school, wishing time would fly by, people are ripping these many trees from the earth, every single minute is another bruise, another scar, the earth gains. And, it's all for what?....

It's like watching a child drown, and instead of saving him, you slowly watch him sink, sink slowly to the ground.

Because planet earth, we had the chance to catch you. We had the chance to save you. Though people chose to ignore you. They chose to look away and say, "that's not my problem to face." I'm sorry that when you stumbled, and fell, we didn't kiss your bruise better: we didn't place a plaster over your cut: we didn't even blow it better, we just left it, untouched. I'm sorry that we paid more attention to our problems, than we did yours. I still have faith, and as many wise men say, a mistake only becomes an error if it's not corrected. Help me correct our mistake. Help me catch our world: save our planet.

A letter from Gus

How am I supposed to live with you now? I must ask myself this before I ask how to live with myself. More important is asking the question of how to live with others, with everything else, before thinking of myself.

What if the first question in fact answers the second? Looking myself clearly in the face means that I look you clearly in the face. There is no one without the other.

I must live by what is demanded of me as a living being. These demands are not insignificant.

My life is a gift and it requires the constant appreciation of attention, and the care of awareness. I always fail but that doesn't mean I can't try.

My addictions mean a primary need is filled by one or several deeply unsatisfactory replacements.

Am I greedy, omnicidal, insane, sick, uncooperative, selfish, ungenerous, uncontainable, insatiable? No, I'm not. Why is the world in which I live shaped by those that are?

There is no place deep enough in the world or in my imagination with which to bury those lead us, who condemn me and themselves and their eternal descendants to death, in order to chase imagined wealth for a half of a second in time. In which to bury the world which has hundreds of thousands of children having to leave school to demand that they not be sacrificed to money and greed. They cannot be redeemed, and they can never wish to be.

Every culture knows at its core knows that its mistake was in turning away from the world and every culture finds that it cannot turn back. Every religion knows this. Everything has been tamed – it is to serve, be useful, or die. You are becoming a place of refugees. Ourselves and the other species, the rest of life. They run from us now and soon everything will run from you, and a home will exist for very few.

Especially the ones we most value. Hungry, thirsty, homeless, afraid. Wildness has become hunted at every turn, as we press for the civilisable, the known, the valuable, the measurable. We have had the dominion promised in the Bible, and now we brace ourselves knowingly for the Revelation, and the reaping of what we have sowed. Or sowing what we have reaped.

The most valuable thing I can have is not courage, or hope, or determination, but imagination. Imagination can find ideas that are old and new. Old ideas may be more valuable than the new. At the same time, I can think of the future. I must try to imagine the future, even on a beautiful, calm and peaceful day, like today, when the future that is coming seems physically unthinkable.

What about my desire for a career, family, money, travel, experience, raw life to live and feel in? I don't know about those things anymore. I don't think of them in the same way, with the same sense of entitlement. I've already started thinking in possibilities and not certainties.

I think we must not underestimate how similarly most of us feel. Underneath it all, our panic is more or less the same. We are the same matter of people as our distant ancestors, and we yearn for the same things. Stories tell us so.

Our stories and our narratives should begin to unravel our fear, our sadness, our panic, our sense of where we are.

I am Western, I am white, I am straight, I am male, I am middle-class, I'm a British citizen, I am privately educated, and I am a graduate of Cambridge University. The only definite thing I have in common with anyone listening is that I am a human being who lives on a planet called Earth and nowhere else. I feel alone but so does everyone. I find this idea somehow beautiful. We must reckon with the times we really live in, and the times that we will live in. A kind of urgent hopelessness is probably the right thing to be feeling. There can be no despair, not for long, not if we are to live. But things have quickly become desperate and will become more so. That has to be understood somehow.

To live at all in the future, to maintain our humanity, enough of us will discover a sympathy and kindness which has been dormant for thousands of years. Perhaps it was never accessed before. But in its access, in imagining it, is where my hope lies.

I know that somewhere in you my sadness is felt and echoed more deeply and solidly than I can feel it. And I hope and believe that somehow, you will be more generous than we deserve.

A Confession by Simon Michael

I always thought of my generation, the Baby Boomers, as the “golden generation”: the first in three not to face a major European or World War; beneficiaries of a seemingly stable post-WW2 balance between NATO and the Warsaw Pact; one that had faith in organisations like the UN, the IMF and the World Bank to steady the international ship; one where enlightened capitalism seemed to work.

How lucky, I thought, to have been born me, here, now, in a liberal Western democracy. The Golden Generation. The Blessed Generation. What an idiot. If future generations survive to write any history, at the very

best they'll say we were blind and recklessly culpable. More likely they'll say we were selfish, greedy and far too often consciously wicked. Too many of us were hypnotised by the snake oil salesmen; the self-interested politicians and corporations whose only care was for their brand of instant gratification, whether it was power, profit or dividend. So we handed over our forests in exchange for hamburgers, our clean air for VWs and our icecaps for power stations, new fridge-freezers, four-by-fours and holidays of a lifetime to beautiful islands which are even now sinking beneath the waves.

Only now is it dawning on some of us that the brakes on the runaway train have already failed. The Paris Climate Accord target of limiting global temperature increase to 1.5 or even 2 degrees is both inadequate and impossible to achieve. We are heading inexorably towards the seventh circle of hell of extreme weather events, uncontrollable immigration, wars over water and conflict over crops and other resources.

All we can hope is to wake in time to mitigate the worst effects, and even that will require

immediate change to the entire world order, a more profound change than has ever been seen in the history of mankind. Indeed, we need a World War.

Mankind has no choice but to rise up now, immediately, and fight the alliance of apathy, ignorance, wilful blindness, self-interest and, the deadly fifth column and the most enfeebling enemy of them all, the sense of helplessness.

Humans have become a cancer in the body of our own planet; our uncontrolled multiplying and our insatiable consumption have destroyed the delicate balance essential to its health, and the Earth's response is planet-wide chemotherapy. Unless we take mass action — and now — the cure will eradicate the plague of the human race, together with most other lifeforms. At least then the few surviving species will have the opportunity to start their slow Darwinian crawl towards to the top of the food chain. Let's hope, when they get there, they'll be wiser than their predecessor, homo sapiens.

A letter from Debbie

To whom it may concern,

My name is Crystal, I am from the future. I have sent this via email through the wireless technology. You can reply if you like but I am the only one who can answer. I am the only one left.

This is why I write to you, to warn you of the future. Your future. To warn you that your race, the human race, must take action now!

This action is simple-TAKE RESPONSIBILITY.

Take responsibility to care for your planet Earth.

Clean up your trash. Remember-only losers drop litter. You are the losers

because all the trash, the rubbish, the fly tipping that you have left behind has caused your demise.

You fill the seas with your trash. You poison your air with pollution. You strangle the countryside with your rubbish.

Now is the time to clean it up, now is the time to change your attitude and care for your planet instead of using it.

Now is the time, otherwise it will be too late. If you do not change your ways this timeline will continue and it will be too late to clear up, to clean up your mess.

Climate change has been sped up thousands of years due to your pollution. With it has come a change in weather, you are experiencing the beginnings of what will become disastrous catastrophes. The changes in the seasons, the worsening of the weather, it will cause catastrophic disaster for your eco system which will have an effect on you, the humans.

I have seen it, in my timeline.

I am Crystal, created by your sciences, a computer program made to find solutions to your problems. Your biggest problem is YOU.

The only answer I have to stop your own demise is to send back this message in time and warn you.

I repeat, Take Responsibility, care for your world, do not destroy it with your lack of concern for this planet.

A letter from Bob Langton

Dear Earth

I'm writing from the early spring of 2019 and wondering how you are in 2082, when my eldest grandchild will be the same age as I now am. At least, I hope he will be and that you are able to provide him (and his younger sister and cousin) with the support and joy you have given me.

I think that will all depend on the next few years as we have now reached the

absolute crisis point after so many years of shilly-shallying around, despite the best efforts of so many people. And yet, I am probably more hopeful now than I have been for several years - the wall of obfuscation and denial that has been so strongly defended by the fossil fuel industry and their wealthy backers seems finally to be cracking open. Even with the massive funds that are used to sustain it, it can no longer deal with either the evidence or the anger that confronts it.

People all over the world are finding common cause and recognising the strength of their numbers. Children have with horror discovered how badly their elders have compromised their futures. And, finally, politicians are realising that they have to listen even if many still delude themselves that they can get away with platitudes rather than actual actions. But, now and in the nick of time, there seems to be a chance that we will do enough to enable you to continue to provide a home for the wonders we are so at risk of losing and for us. And, I hope, we humans we will have learnt for all time that we are part of nature and cannot exist outside it.

With love, hope and gratitude.

A letter from Richie

Dear Earth.

It's very dry here. I don't suppose it was always this way. I have heard that this was a far less lonely place once, with life in glorious abundance and countless species of incredible variety. My neighbour told me this but she has long since

gone and I have no idea where she heard this story. Hard to believe really, when all I can see is dust. She said that once there was something called "rivers". She tried really hard to explain to me what a "river" was but I couldn't really understand what she meant. Something about "water" that flowed and moved great distances and emptied out into great vast areas of more of this stuff called water. She said that this was also abundant with life. It's all so very hard to comprehend when all you've ever known is dust.

She said that "people" destroyed it all with their short sightedness and greed. Oh yes, I know people you still see one occasionally passing by. But the ones I see don't look capable of anything much.

Kind Regards

I

Letter to the Earth from Thomas Schorr-Kon

Dear Mother,

Thank you for this body you have gifted me with, that houses my spirit. This body, that is proof of the love you are sending me, at all times. It is a universal conspiracy of love, that you are part of, as the phosphorous in my

bones was not made on Earth, but was made in the stars. Without you it would not be possible to laugh and cry, to smell the sweet scent of your beautiful wild garden. To hear the uplifting song of the birds, the sound of your wind, making such different notes as it blows through the leafy hair of the standing people. To tenderly remember holding my first child.

Thank you for showing us the cyclical nature of all processes, the purity of life giving to itself, the need for both the dark and the light. For evoking the wonder and reverent astonishment that makes my heart burst with joy each day I am embraced by your presence. Thank you for reflecting me back to myself so I can glimpse my true nature.

Thank you for allowing me to be like an unruly child and go against all you demonstrate, to feel separate, alone, unloved, to suffer grief, to be held in your knowing that none of that is true. Though like spring rain these experiences softens the soil of my heart to allow me to feel and surrender to the love I breath in every breath. As separation is an idea and suffering a story I tell myself. Through all the disconnection and destruction you still forgive, you still show such deep resonant love.

Though I hear the ancestors weep for their grandchildren and feel the wider elemental family rage at the wrongdoing of those who have forgotten how to be human. And like the Earth, I pray for those who are missing their heart, to be able to feel again, to slowdown and melt the numbness, heal the trauma that has made them afraid of love.

Give me one last thing, the courage to be more loving like you in the face of these times. Help me to celebrate being as one with you and all that means; dissolving in to your energy as I slowdown in your flow, dancing with the multitude of spirits and merging in to the vast stillness. From that huge reservoir of love, let my actions flow; let me become an instrument of creation of reconnection and regeneration.

What we do now matters by Clare Rousell

They are wanting to tell us something, the future people
The people of whom we are the ancestors
Yet they are the wiser
They are wanting to tell us that what we do now matters

They want us to know that they see the dismembered ways that we live and how difficult it is for us to re-member how to return to the family of all things

But their existence is testament to the fact that it is possible

They know we feel trapped by this system of entanglements and obligations and the amputations of our imaginations in a system that only ever intended to keep us blind to the bars of our cages

But they want to remind us that there was a time when we could not imagine a world order that was not based on the divine rights of kings

And before that even, there was a time when we knew what it was to belong

When we knew we were Eland, Mantis and Dancer

When we knew we were the firefly and the ocean, the stuff of stars and the breath of birds

They ask us, stroking our hair and touching our faces, how did you know that something else was possible? Where did that idea germinate inside you?

Show us, point to the place.

Tell us the story of summoning your brothers and sisters to revolt for a life of connection and dignity? For what dignity is possible if dignity is not available for all?

They ask us, how did you manage to build this world in the flames of capitalism, and yet all the while you were disconnected from your rituals, from the rhythms and songs of your people, the tiny sacred acts of care that ensure that the world is recreated with every dawn chorus?

How did you handle knowing all that you knew without becoming paralyzed with terror and despair?

What did you do with your despair, personal, collective, ancestral?

How did you carry its magnitude in your heart without being overcome with madness, or perhaps while carrying your madness, your addictions and your chronic sadness, never really knowing the full extent of your vitality?

Did you carry pieces of it everywhere you went, stuffed in pockets and purses like used tissues,

Pulling out every pot and pan as the house flooded with tears?

Did you feel it hanging in the air and walking alongside you, the ghosts of extinct creatures following you around reminding you of all that is at stake, suffocating you with the thickness of their memory?

Did you taste it in your food, forced from the soil and sea with chemicals and

violence, food that no longer nourished but flared up in rashes and welts as it entered your body?

Did you feel the suffering as you dressed yourself in the forced labour of people and animals, their exhaustion stitched into the seams and hems of your clothes?

We see you, they say, standing on the shore with five hundred years of industry and environmental wreckage and slavery and torture at your back, gasping under its weight, with only the vast black sea in front of you.

We see you.

We see you holding the crumbling world in one hand and the germinating seed of life in the other.

We know you are listening. Listening to your children, to the wind, to the birds, to the voice that startles you from sleep just before dawn, to the harbingers of a new consciousness.

We feel how you allow your heart to be broken while every day preparing the house for love, making up her bed, setting a place for her at your table. All with no good reason for hope and every reason to despair.

We see what is to come for you. And what will remain when the storm, from which there will be no refuge, is over.

We see in you the thousands of varieties of potato and corn and wheat, the cornucopia of culture and craft, language and art, the compassion and commitment to the value of the life of the individual and the group. We know what you have known across time and species, across geography and incarnation. We know what you are capable of.

We salute you.

Because what you do now matters.

A poem by Seastar

GAIA
shimmering lantern of life

flooding your beauty
your grasses and your insects and your snakes and your penguins
and your molluscs and your birds and your eels and your trees
and your mammals and your fish and your microbes and your flowers
generously
into the silent,
watching universe
who birthed you

we weep and we cry
and we weep again
we beat our hearts and we huddle in grief
for what we have done to you
to you who has birthed each one of us
we weep for what we have done to ourselves

we hear you now
so, so late
we see you now, at longest last
we feel the moving within us now
of that deep spark of life
that has refused to die
so many times

we beseech you now:
heal us
that we may love life
so much
that life shall heal
that we shall heal.

A poem from Carolyn Jacobs on behalf of her son
Dear Earth

I am only 3 years old.
I haven't yet had the future told.
I love to role around in piles of leaves
I splash in puddles and get messy.
I breath your air and eat your fruit.
Chase pigeons and squirrels
Cos it's a real hoot!
I haven't travelled very far
but my stride will lengthen
and my wanders on par
With Magellan himself and
I'll see all your beauty
And through my eyes we'll travel the stars
Together in harmony
But I can't see.
Through the fog and catch my breath
A tightness grabs my chest
And guides me
to stay inside as
The yellow death surrounds me
The poison leeches take my sight
And murky wastelands dawn to dust
Abandon our lusts
Its gone.
All we had and could have been.
For my children will see nothing but
dusk.
Instead of your wonders and see how
We are the beauty in each of us and
Connected that way.
Everyday
In everyway
We are one another and each of us must come to the aid of you Mother.
For you are us and we are one.
We can rebuild in fire and char

The beginnings are churning
Let us not further mar
What we could be in unity
With compassion and charity
The best of us all.
For you are us and we are one.
Mother.
I am only 3 years old.

A letter from Harriet Hulme

Sleeping in the Forest, by Mary Oliver

I thought the earth remembered me,
she took me back so tenderly,
arranging her dark skirts, her pockets
full of lichens and seeds.
I slept as never before, a stone on the river bed,
nothing between me and the white fire of the stars
but my thoughts, and they floated light as moths
among the branches of the perfect trees.
All night I heard the small kingdoms
breathing around me, the insects,
and the birds who do their work in the darkness.
All night I rose and fell, as if in water,
grappling with a luminous doom. By morning
I had vanished at least a dozen times
into something better.

Letter to the Earth, by Harriet Hulme

The poet Mary Oliver died this year. Her poems have always summed up, for me, the relationship we can, and should, have with the natural world – the wonder, the peace, the beauty, the challenge of recognising how interconnected we are and must be with every layer of our planet. I live in a beautiful, rural area of Hong Kong. Every morning I wake up to the chirping of the birds; when I walk home in the evening, the bats dart above my head and the frogs croak in a deafening symphony. There are water buffalo in the fields, red crabs in the wetlands and pink dolphins in the sea. And there is also plastic, floating in the water, washed up on the shore, buried in the sand. There is an invisible layer of pollution choking the air and my lungs. There is the threat of the next typhoon, promising to flood rivers, break windows, and uproot trees. There is the news, every day, of another devastating environmental disaster, in Afghanistan, in Mozambique, in Australia.

The balance which Mary Oliver describes so beautifully has gone and every day it breaks my heart. Sometimes I feel suffocated by grief, inaction swallowing my desire for action, my attempts to share my fears with others collapsing in the face of what feels like our universal refusal, or inability, to truly confront what we have done to our planet.

But sometimes, now, I also feel hope. Hope that, if we can come together, we

may still be able to save those 'small kingdoms [...] who do their work in darkness', which Oliver describes so beautifully in her poem 'Sleeping in the Forest'. Hope that we may, again, remember the earth and be tender towards her as she has been to us. Hope that, together, there can be 'something better' for us all, to lift us out, finally, of this looming, 'luminous doom'.

A poem by Liberty Evans

Straight down the river we go
Our need for that tiny rescue boat.
Each bend starts to show...
The havoc we caused
Destruction of the earth
We need to learn...
Following your life going with the flow.
Never mind that you start to cry...
Releasing everything inside.
Be kind to those that follow the footsteps
Those scars so deep that they leave behind.
Golden lines across your heart.
Be kind to those that have come so far.
So stand up when we feel broken
Dance amongst the stars
We are strong we are the mountains
Fight without 'their' so called weapons
We have our own...
We use the depth of laughter, use the grins on our children's faces
our hands shoot towards the sky.
Swaying and chanting as we go.
We will never give up our hope.
We will stand for those who will be lost.
We will Rebel for their lives.

THE HEART

I love you Earth, you are beautiful,
I love the way you are
I know I never said it to you,
But I wanna say it now
I love you, I love you, I love you, Earth
I love you, I love you, I love you, now!
I love you Earth, you are beautiful,
I love the way you shine
I love your valleys, I love your mornings
In fact, I love you everyday
I know I never said to you,
Why, I would never know
All of the blue mountains, all the green fields
I wanna scream about it now!
I love you, I love you, I love you, Earth
I love you, I love you, I love you, now!
You are a meeting point of infinity
You are turning point in eternity
I love you, I love you, I love you, Earth
I love you, I love you, I love you, now!
We love you, we love you, we love you, Earth
We love you, we love you, we love you, now!

Yoko Ono

Cruise Control

The weather will change,
We'll think it malicious.
Speak hurricanes' names and worry in secret.
The waves will build somewhere way out in the ocean,
And flatten whole towns when they break on the beaches.

It won't be enough. We'll plough on
The mightiest we've ever been.
Standing like gods on the shoulders of history.
Or tossing our curls in the sun.

We'll stare down at the screens in our hands
And smile at the photos. *Didn't we laugh.*
Strange voices will sing from street corners.
Powerful men will mumble it into their backs
Of the people they fuck. *This is the end.*

Health and safety slogans will resonate like ancient proverbs.
Don't use the lifts in the case of fire.
Make yourself aware of your nearest exit.
We'll bury our heads in the sand of our lovers.

The waters will boil in the oceans.
Dead things will float on the waves.
The ice caps will thicken to slush puppies
As hurricanes twist.
Like boxers in sleeping bags, trying to throw punches.

Dear Pa,

It's not that I'm angry. Really it's not.

I'm not angry, not most of the time. And, I mean, I get angry easily. Alarmingly easily. About all kinds of things.

I'm angry about Jeff Bezos losing 70 billion dollars, enough money to stop all hunger in all the world for two years, and still being the richest man on the planet. I'm angry about kids, horny lonely idiot, idiot kids stabbing each other, probably down the road from me. I'm angry that the US gave founding members of Al-Qaeda half a billion dollars, and wound up essentially giving the Taliban a fucking hundred and fifty billion dollars, and on top of that gave the house of Saud hundreds of billions of dollars (of money they apparently didn't have and never will have to spend on people who need or deserve it), and then had, still has, the audacity to blame terrorism on the mums and dads of the kids in the town I grew up in. . I'm angry that one in five kids in this country can't afford enough food [personal example?] I'm angry that the world is full of brilliant, smart, kind women who are treated like absolute shit by their dads and their boyfriends and their brothers and their sons and their uncles and by strangers and by people who are supposed to love them and protect them. I'm angry when I come home and my sister starts yelling at you for trying to talk to her, just like my brother did before her. I'm angry when Gilbert does a shit on his walk just when the traffic lights change.

But I'm not angry with you or with Ma or what you said about my selfishness or about the research programme. I'm not angry about climate change.

I'm really not.

I'm sorry I've taken a while to reply to your email. College has been a bit busy. I fucked up my work schedule a bit and ended up having to do three papers in one week which meant a lot of late nights. But I did it. It's done now. I've got one more paper and I'm doing some work on the magazine but then I'll be done for the term and I'll come home.

But yeah, I've been busy and that's one reason I didn't write.

And to be honest, Pa, I wasn't sure what to say.

I wanted to get it right.

You wrote to me that Ma would be disappointed about me not coming to France with you all this summer. You said she misses more than she lets me know. And you said not thinking to tell her in advance was selfish. And you said that I sounded really angry on the phone when we spoke. You said I hadn't told you anything about the summer's research. I can send you the site about it if you want. It's in Ontario. Its affiliated with Harvard, I think. To be honest, I don't know much about it, but it looks like what they're doing is important and it seems like I could actually help which makes a change, as far as summer projects go. You seemed confused by my reaction, that I would care so much about what is, to be fair, basically an internship. You seemed genuinely hurt and alarmed, so I felt like I owed you a proper explanation.

Well. This is me explaining.

Obviously, there were times in the past when I was annoyed with you. I threw tantrums, as a kid, then louder tantrums as a teenager, and then subtler, sharper, crueller ones as an adult - fuck me, I guess I am an adult now - but angry? I'm not really angry.

How could I be?

You've given me everything I have. You've given me life! It sounded dumb as a kid but now I have to cook my own meals and do my own laundry and put myself to bed and tell myself my work is worth doing, I realize that it involved more than just a bit of how's your father once in 1998. It was hard fucking work and you did it, both of you, for twenty fucking years. You're still doing it. Whenever I see you, you still instantly snap back into 'Can I get you some food?' 'Have you got any laundry?' 'Have you booked your driving test yet?' 'No, really, I'll do the washing up, you go to bed you've had a long day.' Still! After twenty actual years! And you've asked for nothing back, really - well, nothing much.

You've made me into quite a nourishing person, I think, by and large, I don't like to brag, but when it comes to my girlfriends, to my friends, even people I don't know super well I try my best.

I try and look after everyone, but fucking hell, Pa, how do you manage it? How

did you look after me, so consistently and so patiently and so totally, for two decades?

And you've given me a beautiful, if frustrating little brother, and a beautiful, if frustrating, little sister. And a beautiful, if frustrating, three-year-old puppy. And you've taken me all over the world, to four fucking continents. Not many people can say that let alone people of my age. Not many people in the entire sweep of history have been able to go to four different continents. It's a fucking miracle, really. And you've been a dad who, well, sure you're not perfect but you're fucking there and you hug me and you cry in front of me and you joke about how mental my grandparents can be so I learn it's okay to be pissed off with people you love and you show me how to be kind to people and how to apologise to people when your kindness fails and how to play guitar. And you made me mixtapes I still haven't listened to, full of brilliant music, which I'm still surprised by every time I dust another one off. And you've held my hand down a path to one of the oldest and weirdest universities in the world. And you've given me confidence in myself, and more importantly in the people I love. And you've given me holidays and laptops and bikes and steaks. And you told me a great story about how you always wanted to be a writer but you put your dream on hold to train as a schoolteacher, so you could afford kids and then in your second year teaching your first son was born, I was born, and when you got back from the hospital you had a voicemail from the Royal Court telling you that they were going to produce your play. And that one thing you'd dreamed of all your life was coming true. You brought me into a world, and gave me a childhood, and told me all my life that that could be me. I always believed that - maybe not with fucking theatre but with maths or film or faith or something - eventually, that would be me.

But it won't be.

My world, my whole generation's world, doesn't extend that far. We don't have that amount of time.

Last year the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change released a report saying there's only twelve years left to keep global warming to a maximum of one point five degrees centigrade. If global warming rises past that, even by half a degree, the risk of droughts, floods, extreme heat and poverty for millions of people will rise out of our control. But then, on top of that, natural geochemical mechanisms which limit carbon dioxide impact, like ocean absorption, forest growth, glaciers, even clouds, will stop working and when they stop the carbon dioxide levels will go up exponentially. The

change will become irreversible. There will be nothing anybody can do.

We have twelve years.

Twelve years.

My sister's age.

My BABY sister's age, who I remember holding when she was a day old like it was yesterday, and I turn around and she's in secondary school and she's got an exercise book full of "her writing" and she's playing video games and beating me at chess and wearing make up.

Twelve years.

From 1991-2003, the twelve years after you were my age, from when you were twenty to when you were thirty two, you went from doing a history degree at York University and flirting with actresses to living in Edinburgh and meeting my mum and working at a shop to working at a cafe and working at a bar to being in a band to being a teacher to being a dad to being a playwright to having, owning, a house, in London to being a dad again to working in Germany and working in America. You fucked up and you fixed it and you learnt.

And in that same amount of time I've got to save the fucking world.

Obviously not just me, obviously everyone, together, but I still have to. How the fuck can I do anything else? How can I hope for anything else, knowing that I have twelve years? Once I graduate, that'll be ten years. If I do a PhD, that'll be six years. How can I go back to uni, how can I go up Manchester to visit my girlfriend, how can I take my sister to school, how can I walk the dog, how can I fly to France to get pissed with my friends and go swimming with my brother, how can I write and draw and do maths and sleep and dream and love and hope and despair and eat biscuits and read books when the world is on fire and none. Of. You. Fucking. Did. Anything.

None

Of

You

Did

Anything

And you knew.

The thing that kills me, the thing that did, really, genuinely make me really fucking angry was when I realised that you knew the whole time and you didn't. Fucking. Do. Anything.

You recycled water bottles and you used "bags for life" and you cycled to work but you still perpetuated a culture where every facet of everything you did was dependent on burning the world.

And I know that it's not about individual choices. I understand that it's about economies, and systems, and that a hundred, primarily American companies cause 70% of all global CO2 emissions.

And I know you did it because you loved me. Because you loved Ma. Because you loved my brother and my sister and your friends and your dog and your mum.

And I know that for all my vegetarianism I'm still basically doing the same thing.

But you knew. You were the first generation, and a generation of normal people not just kings and prophets but everyday ordinary people, the first generation of any civilisation in the history of mankind, in which everybody knew it was destroying itself. And did nothing. Nothing.

And now I've got twelve years.

Yours was the first generation which knew, and mine is the first generation that'll be there. We'll be there when Sub-Saharan Africa becomes uninhabitable. And then when northern Africa becomes uninhabitable. And when Southern Asia, the most densely inhabited place in the world, becomes uninhabitable too. We'll be there when people realize it's our fault, the West. We built our factories in their towns. We'll be there when people realize the food isn't coming back. When there's the water wars, the food wars, the flood wars. When the nukes fly. When the world stops working. When everyone I know, and love dies.

And you knew that this would happen. And you didn't do anything.

I can't even figure out how to set my central heating to a timer, or how to get my flatmate to do the dishes, or how to get the telly to work, or how to let my

brother and sister know how much I love them. How much I miss them. And I've got to figure out how to save the world.

So I'm not coming with you on holiday this year. I'm going to Ontario to work on theoretical modelling of ocean movements in the hope that somebody might one day understand something that might change things. I don't want you to be angry about it or for Ma to be broken hearted and I'm honestly sad if that's the case but I refuse to apologise.

I don't think the research will work by the way. Your generation made that clear: nobody reads it.

I don't think that the forecasts will work or the batteries will work or the vegetarianism will work, or that the biofuels will work or the recycling will work or the community forests will work or the cap and trade will work or the carbon capture will work or the geothermal energy will work.

I don't think the anarcho-syndicalist gardening clubs will work. I don't think the trade unions will work. I don't think the socialist agitation will work. I don't think the militias will work. I don't think the eco-jihad will work. Not in twelve years.

I think we're fucked.

I slip, occasionally, into the habit of thinking about what it'd be like to have kids. What I'd do. This was never something I used to think about, not something I really think about necessarily being part of my own dreams even now, but I just imagine it. What would I do? How would I do it? What'd we do at Christmas? Ooh I'd love to have proper decorations! Like Ma did, like Granny did. You know, I'd love to decorate for all the seasons! Celebrate the summer solstice. Would I try and raise them religious, somehow, in some direction? Buddhist? Muslim? Christian, even? Would I let them eat meat? I'd love to try and teach them a second language. How would I talk to them about sex? How would I talk to them about school? How would I let them know it's okay to be sad, or to be angry? How would I let them know how much I love them? I slip into what you always taught me I should do, when I grow up: to remember what you and Ma got right and trying to learn from what you got wrong. But I don't think I'll ever have kids. I think mine might be the last generation. I don't think I could live with bringing people into the world we'll have then, the world I'll leave them, the world you left waiting for them.

Because when I think, when I sit down and grasp the white-hot metal doorknob which is the crisis you left for my generation to fix because we're so

smart and bright and young and passionate, when I let myself think about it before I collapse, too numb to weep, into bed I really think we're all going to fucking die.

I'm not angry with you, Pa. I'm really not. But I do blame you. And I don't forgive you.

I don't think any of it will work.

But I have to do something.

Oscar

Letter to an Ending by Jay Griffiths

Dear Esa,

Your name Esa means "the only one" in human language: "the lonely one."

After your last heartbeat, a world will be gone — forever. Not, people think, an important one. Only yours but your only world.

After your last flight, a freedom will be lost — forever. Not, people think, an important one. Only yours, but your only freedom.

After your last song, a category of music will be silenced — forever. Not, people think, an important one. Only yours, but your only song and the only one you ever wanted to hear sung back to you. For while you live, you can sing your female laughingthrush call all you like and no male will ever answer you and you will never know why.

Your story happened because of the slaughter of songbirds. In flocks once, then trapped, traded and caged, sentenced to solitary, forced to sing solo. Bird-sorrow for a status- symbol.

You are a nervous bird. In the photograph I have of you, you look frightened. Your eyes are an orange circle with a black centre, and you don't like being in the eye-line of your keepers. You are easily stressed, and would rather be hidden in deep foliage, tucked in thickets of forests.

You have never wanted to call attention to yourself, except for a mate, but now you have the cachet of true tragedy. Your kind, the rufous-fronted laughingthrush, sub-species slamatensis, is named as the world's next most likely extinction.

You, exactly you, Esa, one single individual bird, are the last. Your death will mark its extinction. You, Esa the lonely one, as the last individual of your kind, are an ending.

This is what extinction sounds like: the silencing of song that should have been forever yours.

Forever yours.

A poem by a student at Cams Hill School

2030, judgement day,
The day we are all going to pay,
For our actions, what we have done,
It definitely ain't gonna be fun.

It started out simple, just some fossil fuels,
Bit of plastic there.
Not that much,
But now it's causing despair.

Then the CO 2 started to rise,
The factories multiplied,
Soon our thumbprint became a footprint,
And our plants started to die.

Sure, we have excuses,
But CO 2 induces,
Death, Decay,
We need to be reducing.
We didn't notice this ever-rising crisis.
The pain, no gain

It ain't worth it.

Everything is Connected by Jackie Morris

When I was young I would lie, pressed to the earth, eyes wide to the skies. I would watch you in your hundreds, criss-cross, hunt on the wing, layers of birds, some so high, seen only as dark commas against the blue, some so low to skim the reaching seeds of long grass.

When I was young I believed you carried the promise of summer sun on your wings.

When I was young I watched as you gathered mud in your mouth to build a home beneath the eaves of the houses of humans. Architect, potter, parent. I watched your shadow rise and fall, heard your children call, saw you answer them with food, watched them fledge.

When I was young I marvelled as you gathered, toward summer's end, small dots on wires like wild music, fast, furious rhythm, written against the sky.

When I was young I didn't know the distance you travelled, away from my winter, to warmer lands. I didn't know how you carried in your bodies the maps of the earth, the paths of the flight, scenting the land, knowing its shape, each rock and stream and tree and river and ocean. I didn't know how this knowledge was born in the egg, before egg became bird became flight, but I knew you were a miracle. Every single soul.

Once some believed you slept all winter beneath the ice in ponds.
Once some believed the Earth is flat.
Now some believe climate change is fiction.

But now, when I lie on my back in the long grass, breathing its scent, eyes wide to the sky, my heart still lifts to see your wings, though you are now so few. Each year more sky, more space, and each single swallow more precious for that.

And I still marvel to see you gather as autumn scents the air, still writing your wild music on the wires in the sky. But now the music is a lament, more space between each note, a song of praise and loss, an elegy for the ghosts of gone birds.

And I know, I cannot live without you.

A student at St Bede Catholic College

Dear Future Generations,

We are sorry. Truly, truly sorry that we have left all this for you to clean up, when we made the mess. Left you to pick up the pieces we've left behind. I am so sorry we were so caught up in our own affairs, our own problems, to realise

how badly we have damaged the Earth. That is, if anything of the Earth still exists. I am sorry we had a terrible mindset of money and business over the welfare of our future generations, our future children.

Did you know that 50% of our trees have gone in the past 100 years, at a rate of 44 football fields every minute? Half of them gone in just a century! And for who? Ourselves and our own benefits. For what? Money and profit.

Nowadays, everyone's first thought is money. Money, money, money. 25 orangutans dying each and every day across the globe. 9125 each year. We are the foundations of our future, the animal's future. But is forcing species to extinction the way to go about this?

Just imagine, all the animals extinct. Species dying out and habitats after habitats being destroyed. But for you, future generations, you probably don't need to imagine. For you, it's most likely a reality. Something you must now live with because we, the people of the 21st century, were too lazy to sort it out.

But what will make us change our ways? What will awake us to strive for a difference? Disaster. Absolute disaster is the only thing that will make people realise: "Wait, Global Warming is real. We should have made a change back when we could." By then, it will be too late. Too late to change our errors, our irreversible mistakes, our excuses to do nothing, our thoughts of 'How does this benefit me?', rather than 'Is this damaging to the planet?'

Us, the youth of today, are willing to make sacrifices for this planet, our planet. Whether that be massive changes, or just small everyday changes we can imply to our lives - everything counts. We will play our part whenever we can, so you, future generations, hopefully don't have to suffer. Us young people hope that we can convince leaders across the world in this mission. The ultimate mission to save the Earth.

A letter from Maria Dzhambulova

Love is always the answer, it is the only ultimate truth and the all encompassing knowledge. Our true nature is love, it is the true nature of life in all of it's perfect manifestations. We are everything and everyone once we are in harmony with ourselves. We have everything we need and are cared for as we care and give freely. This planet is a home we all share, a loving home for those who appreciate it and are grateful in their conduct. As we are well aware the world we see is the reflection of the world within. Look around, also inward, make sure these insights bring you joy. Create the world to celebrate every moment of your life in, you certainly deserve to and you absolutely can. Your power and light, in fact, are infinite.

Dedicated to the genius of nature, my favorite artist of all time.

Dear Mr Walnut Tree,

I would like to apologies on the behalf of mankind for ruining your beautiful earth. I would also like to thank you for holding strong and even managing to hold my weight,

year after year. Thank you for being such an easy-to-climb tree, and thank you for being there whenever I have

needed you. I would also like to say sorry on the behalf of my dad for leaning the old fence on your trunk. I hope you don't mind me swinging on you all the time. I'm also sorry for carving my initials at the very top of you with my penknife. I shan't do it again I promise.

Ollie, Eggbuckland Community College

