

DON'T WORRY, WE CAN ALL GO TO MARS

(An open letter to COP26)

In the beginning we were informed by a book that God created the heaven and earth and then said, "let there be light." I don't recall being asked to pay for this light.

We came from the seas to breathe the oxygen filtered by our atmosphere and free for all. But you want to charge us for air to pump into our tyres, air to treat us in hospital. Is it me or what?

Let's talk about our atmosphere – that blue shelter that ebbs and flows with the seasons. You will recall as children how we drew a thin blue line at the top of our drawing paper and nothing in between that line and a grassy knoll at the bottom, except maybe a few birds flying in the blankness. And our drawings often containing a detached house with a front door centrally placed by our knowledge that the garden path will always lead us to safety. The beautifully manicured garden, with flowers and sculptured trees, was always penned in by a picket fence and three-foot-high wooden gate. It was always summertime in our garden. Did the Janet and John books lie to us? I remember Paul McCartney singing *Waterfalls* housed in that quaint English cottage not too dissimilar to A A Milne's. An arching rainbow of water depicting the utopian circle of life. Out of our reach now?

The interaction of the Earth's magnetic fields at the poles, twist and turns our planet on its axis just enough to keep us out of harm's way. We are, what astronomers tell us, in a temperate zone – a zone characterised by mild temperatures and seemingly locked in our orbit until our Sun becomes a supernova? But, wait a minute. We are intent on destroying ourselves so perhaps we need to add the word "temperance" to the zone?

The evidence suggests our Sun is about halfway through its lifecycle, a yellow star plotted on a reliable diagram called Hertzsprung Russell, named after the two scientists that brought this theory to the table. The truth of our self-styled destruction will hasten our star to take action sooner rather than later. The Greenhouse Effect has already had dire consequences on our neighbour Mars, and yet we seek to go there. For what? To start over? No more wars, no more acts of unkindness?

Most of us, would, I suggest wish to have a return ticket to Mars; but the choice may not be that simple. Mars cannot protect us from the Earth's implosion, nor our Sun. for the Martian atmosphere is decidedly thinner than that of the earth (our child's thin blue line on our drawing paper), and its poles have already melted away leaving seas of dust. No, Mars is not the answer.

Board your private jet planes and go back to your deadly industry of greed.

If we do nothing, we shall wake soon to find the matter our of our hands.