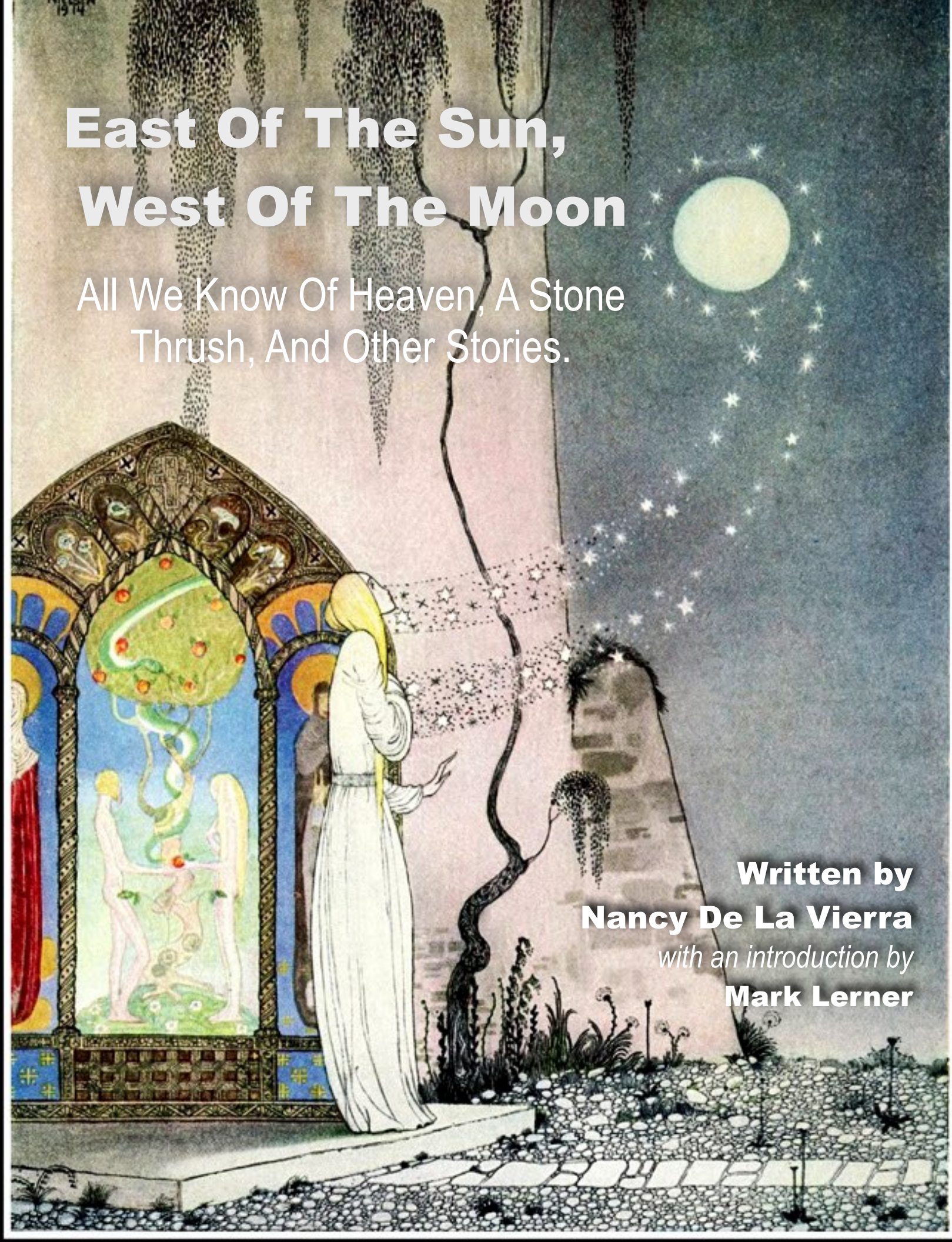


# East Of The Sun, West Of The Moon

All We Know Of Heaven, A Stone  
Thrush, And Other Stories.

**Written by**  
**Nancy De La Viera**  
*with an introduction by*  
**Mark Lerner**





## Table of Contents

Introduction by Mark Lerner 2

All We Know of Heaven 5

A Stone Thrush 10

EarthSigns 14

Slouching Toward Bethlehem 18

Mermaids in the Basement 22

A Thousand Bars 25

The Undeclared War 29

Earth in the Balance: A Review by Nancy De La Vierra 35

## *Introduction by Mark Lerner*

Following this introduction are the collected literary masterworks of Nancy De La Vierra. Six features were written for *Welcome to Planet Earth* magazine from May to October 1992 while the other two features (All We Know of Heaven and A Stone Thrush) are homages to Nance's father Gerald Lyle Vierra and her stepfather Fred Warren and composed thanks to her extraordinary lifetime skills as a Lucid Dreamer.

The never publicly-given eulogy has been silently experienced in hundreds of my daily meditative affirmations since Nance's passing on January 3\*, 2018 fifteen days prior to what would have been her 65th birthday. \*Every year on or within 1 day of January 3, the Earth makes its closest approach to the Sun — otherwise known as the Earth's Perihelion. I will leave this to your imagination of why I am including this astronomical fact.

It has been, is and always will be an honor to share 28 years and 145 days of time on Mother Earth with You...Beloved One, Spirit Companion, Twin Soul, Wounded Healer and Solar Systemic Incarnation to be Remembered Forever.

During our nearly three decades together, Nance explained many times that she imagined writing an autobiography of her adventures this time around under the title

***East of the Sun...West of the Moon.*** After her passing, I looked up that title to make sure it wasn't taken, but was surprised to learn that there were a series of Norwegian Fairy Tales under that exact name. Nance collected many books – especially fables, works of poetry and literary classics with many of them focused on the experiences of young people around the world – so it's possible that at some point in her life she saw an edition of the Norwegian Fairy Tales and thought the title and imagery would represent this lifetime's journey. On the other hand, she may have just related to the solar and lunar concepts independently as both the Sun and Moon are very prominently placed in the heavens at the time of her birth.

Please see the color flyer (*below*) beautifully designed by Katya Lerner on the day of Nance's passing for more on the Meaning of Her Life as well as the images and emails received during the January 18, 2018 celebration and candle-lighting rituals happening around 4:06pm PST on that Thursday. (*You can view these emails, images and listen to a few select songs online by [clicking here](#).*)

For anyone interested in astrology, Nancy De La Vierra was born (Nancy Lee Vierra) on January 18, 1953 in Roseburg, Oregon with revolutionary, radical-change agent, intuition enhancing, iconoclast, unconventional, joker, surprise-bringer, shock-inducer, lightning-like and expecting-the-unexpected Uranus Rising and Nance left for the Higher Realms of Existence when Uranus became Stationary Direct in the heavens in the Elevated region of her birth chart. Nance frequently said that she was proud to be a Native Oregonian.

It is my firm conviction that the vast treasure-laden adventures of her lifetime – along with the accompanying genius and in-depth understanding of the wonder and pain of human existence she experienced – is with Nance on the evolutionary journey that will forever continue.

***“There will be an answer...Let It Be.”***

***In Dedication...***Mark Lerner April 10, 2021

*In Loving Memory of Nancy Lee Vierra*

IN LOVING MEMORY & FOREVER IN OUR HEARTS

# Nancy Lee Vierra



**JANUARY 18, 1953 - JANUARY 3, 2018**

On January 3, 2018, Nancy Lee Vierra, my beloved partner of 28+ years, left her earthly body of great pain and suffering to enter the heavenly realms and its grand adventures. She is a guiding Soul-Spirit of Love, Beauty, Kindness, Knowledge and Wisdom who I and so many other people on Planet Earth are privileged to know. I Love You Nance and Always Will.

**"TO DIE, TO SLEEP - TO SLEEP,  
PERCHANCE TO DREAM..." (HAMLET)**

**"ALL WE KNOW OF HEAVEN" BY NANCY LEE VIERRA**

"All We Know of Heaven" is the lead Feature Story on EarthAquariusNews.Com. I so appreciate all your Love, Generosity, Kindness and Support for Nancy as she is a Living Presence in my Heart, Mind, Soul and Spirit and is gracing this Earth with her Higher Purpose lifetime after lifetime. Please take a moment to read this beautifully-written story. Love and Blessings Always, Mark

**"I FELT LIKE THE MOON, THE STARS  
AND ALL THE PLANETS HAD FALLEN ON ME."**

--Vice President Harry Truman on April 12, 1945 when reporters asked him how he felt in learning of the death of President Franklin D. Roosevelt

ON THURSDAY, JANUARY 18, 2018 – wherever you may be – please take a few moments of your time to honor the life of Nancy Lee Vierra, in your own way, born on this day in 1953. At 4:06pm, I will be lighting a candle and listening to a few songs which Nancy loved and wanted to share: Sarah McLachlan "Answer," Tim McGraw "Please Remember Me," Paul McCartney "The Long And Winding Road," and "Let It Be."



**THE ELEPHANT SANCTUARY**

Please also consider visiting the website of The Elephant Sanctuary to join Nancy in making a donation, becoming a member, and learning about their selfless efforts on behalf of these remarkable members of Mother Nature's all-pervasive presence on Planet Earth. The Elephant Sanctuary, P.O. Box 393, Hohenwald, TN 38462. Tel. 931-796-6500.

**WWW.ELEPHANTS.COM/TAKE-ACTION**







## *All We Know of Heaven*

**When I was small my father carried me down steep and rocky paths to lakes, rivers and the sea. Bodies of water became like second homes during my youth.** Nothing Mother Nature could proffer quelled the quiet assurance I experienced in his loving arms. I don't remember ever hearing the words from him, but the gentle manner in which he'd scoop me up whenever the way ahead became remotely dangerous, was love expressed to me. Growing up in the 1950s and 60s in rural Oregon was paradise. No matter what Dad pursued - piloting our boat, dancing with Mom, repairing vehicles, water skiing or awaiting a pitch during casual neighborhood baseball games, he exuded strength and earned the respect of everyone around him. I believed there wasn't anything he couldn't accomplish.

Water was the key element in which my dynamic father dwelled. We boated, kayaked, swam and floated our way throughout the Northwest. We scampered in the ocean

waves, climbed up dunes and slid back down them on our backsides. I enjoyed watching my father take part in our activities as much as the antics themselves. It made me so happy to see our sometimes stern father laugh and play like a child. Occasionally, Dad would take me by the hand and walk with me along the docks, pointing out how the boats were constructed and their operation. He served in the Navy during WWII as a tail gunner on the battleship, Manila Bay. He never spoke of it, but when I was about 7, I found his mariner's journal and read of his harrowing experiences during some of the terrible battles of the South Pacific and was so disturbed to think he narrowly even made it home from that war. I don't know if I came to love the water through him or if it was a natural inclination for me as well, but any activity on or near it was always a pleasure for me. We slept on the ground and feasted on the fish my father caught. I believed that the future was full of potential, but those blissful trips to the waterways of Oregon are seen now through a curtain of pain.

That quiet confidence I enjoyed while young has sometimes eluded me in my adult life. The way seems often fraught with perilous events and relationships. We were raised up to be self-reliant, never complain and to take what comes with a measure of grace. I've tried to follow those principles, but often fall short. In the dark of night, when the trials of the day come to taunt me, I visualize my father picking me up. It's remarkable, but I can still see and smell him. His scent was a pleasant potpourri of machinery, strong soap and the woods. I was always watching him, all the little details, gestures and mannerisms I recall now with piercing lucidity. A family member once said, "You came into this world loving your father."

For the most part, I keep this knowledge to myself. Few want to hear about the departed. An abyss of grief has confronted me for more than 40 years. It is an impenetrable void from which I can find no way across. I think it's possible to love someone too much. But how does a child know to maintain affections in moderation? It is only in the hard, cold plane of adulthood that such restraint is honed. Tennyson posed that "It is better to have loved and lost than never to have loved at all" ...but I wonder.

One day in July 1967, the Pacific took my beloved father's vital life and with it, all the security I would ever know. Troubled thoughts come unbidden surrounding my father's untimely passing. I see him, struggling against the waves and I am lost. In those last moments, was he thinking of us, those whose lives which would be so dramatically altered by the ending of his? Did he think of me, his raven-haired daughter who



shadowed him in life? These are questions with no answers. Our family drifted in the savage current of life for years; appalling experiences befell us all. There were no “grief counselors” or help from any quarter. The one bright spot I focused most of my energy on during that shadowy time was my little sister Lisa, not yet 3 when our vibrant father’s life ended. Sometimes, I think she came into the world to help us all cope with the tragedy soon to come. She has remained a constant source of sunshine in our sometimes dark, familial world. Eventually, most of my remaining family grounded themselves in the earth with productive and fulfilling lives. I’ve always worked, managed to stay solvent, maintained enduring friendships and had my own small family, but I never truly came ashore.

I avoid weddings and large gatherings, especially those with pairs of loving parents or anything involving fathers dancing with or celebrating their daughters. I don’t covet what they have in any way; it just reminds me of what we lost.

My father is like a ghost. There have been many nights when I have awoken from a deep sleep, hearing my father’s voice simply saying my name, nothing more, just my name. I awaken, “Dad, Dad, are you here?” Only the echo of his nocturnal summons hangs in the air. His voice, like everything else about him, was very distinctive. He has been the most frequent subject in my dreamscape since his death. Some nighttime expeditions are great; I’m on a quest to find him. When I finally do, he sees me and folds me into his arms. I’m so excited to bring him home to my siblings, my mother – inexpressible joy.

When I wake, of course, I realize it was only a dream, and the day is usually a gray one, regardless of the weather. My objective in these dreams is always the same. I desperately want to re-connect with him, talk with him, see his beautiful face, but more than anything, tell him how much he was, and is, loved. In so many of the dreams, I discover him somewhere far from home, ranching in the southwestern desert, building bridges in some faraway city or working in a fishing community on the eastern seaboard. I rush up to him with such elation. He sees me as a stranger. I remind him who I am (since I’m older now than when he died) and how much I’ve missed him. My entreaties to make him understand, to recognize and claim me as his daughter fall on deaf ears. He doesn’t care; he has a new family now, and doesn’t have any recollection of being our patriarch and usually turns his back on me and walks away.

Dreams of the latter variety are so painful I feel myself elevating, flying like a bird to escape the cruelty of his rejection. I'm far above him, his second family mere specks on the earth below. Some dreams are so powerful that they remain as memories with more clarity than waking life. One in particular - My once energetic father is alive but paralyzed and confined to a wheelchair. We are at a family outing up the North Umpqua River and everyone else is engaged in campsite activities. Dad is trying to gain everyone's attention, making all kinds of insightful suggestions about building the fire, setting up tents and other necessities. No one is paying him any mind. I am sitting on the ground at his side, my hand on his knee. He is getting very upset, "Why are they ignoring me?" he asks, exasperated. I try to reassure him, to comfort him. He keeps attempting to obtain their notice to no avail. Tears well up in his eyes. "Don't let it get to you, Dad, they love you, they just can't hear you," I tell him. "But you can," he replies. I nod and pat his knee. "Why do you suppose that is?" I ask. His answer is a simple one, "Nancy, it's because you're with me." I awoke in the middle of the night, feeling as if I had something far more powerful than a dream, more like a visitation.

As Father's Day looms, Melancholy – often whispering in my ear – sometimes gains an audience. I walk quickly past the store displays for "gift ideas" or avoid the shops altogether. Televised commercials intent on getting people to spend Father's Day dollars on their products are quickly muted. I don't begrudge others their celebratory day; I just don't want to think about it any more than my troubled mind can bear. Sometimes I imagine having him over for dinner, a beautiful meal, and all courses lovingly homemade by my hands. It saddens me that I never cooked for my father. Careless people complain about having to deal with elderly or cantankerous parents. I can't help think how much I'd be willing to sacrifice for the privilege of taking care of my father in his declining years. When I hear such banter, I want to scream - to rage. And yet, I do nothing but stuff a lifetime of desolation a little farther within. Family members too young, or not yet conceived while my father was alive don't understand. They think I dwell too much. They have no idea.

My maternal grandmother guided me into the world of poetry at an early age. She departed this life 2 years before my father. I discovered Emily Dickinson while most of my peers were beginning to discover boys. A line from one of my favorites, "Parting is all we know of heaven, and all we need of hell" resonated profoundly following Dad's demise. Circumstances were certainly all we needed of hell for many years. Often it feels like I'm only here as a half-person. The other portion of myself was buried in the



ground with my father. I was only 14, but I felt a tangible departure from deep within as they lowered his casket in the ground. There is no way to convey such despondency, I believe only those who've experienced similar loss can comprehend it.

A man, who would go on to become my closest friend, imparted his first impression of our meeting almost 20 years ago. He said he recognized and was drawn to the sadness in my eyes. I was both moved and surprised. I thought I managed to cover it fairly well. He's a sensitive soul, but I had no idea that my quiet despair was evident to anyone.

The solitary benefit that emerged from all this is I have learned to find happiness in small doses. Little victories, pleasant exchanges, the beauty of nature and the affection shared with family and friends are precious to me. I love and have loved many others on this journey, but I keep myself in check. I turn the damaged side of my heart inward. I persevere, but self-possessed. I wouldn't have wanted any other family and certainly any other father, but sometimes I think perhaps it's not better to have loved and lost. Sometimes.

My father carried me when I was small and I will carry him in my heart until I take my last breath.

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## *A Stone Thrush*

It had been a terrible year. Watching a loved one with a terminal illness in excruciating pain was daunting enough, but for him to take his own life because of it; and in an especially brutal manner—was nearly too much to bear. I was overwhelmed by melancholy, frustration and familial obligations. I had borne up pretty well for a long while, but the toll within was high. A darkness that defied description was stalking me. I held up fairly well during the daylight hours, but as the evenings unfolded, I found myself slipping into despair despite my best efforts.

I counted my blessings daily, focused on little things that brought quick comfort. Fred (the family member who had just passed away) and I shared a mutual love for birds. He always had a backyard full of them; made a science out of feeding them, knowing what sustenance would bring the greatest variety of individuals from the avian world. Fred



made sure wintering feathered friends had all their nutritional needs met, and they rewarded him with their presence year 'round. Two days before he died, he and I looked out his bedroom window. The ground outside was a sea of purple finches. He had tears in his eyes. I think he wanted to believe the flock had come to express their appreciation for the years of rations and care he had lovingly provided. We both had our favorites and the finches were one of his.

Growing up in the Pacific Northwest, I had only seen cardinals in photographs or on Christmas cards. For that reason, I guess, they had always fascinated me. The bright red color made them seem so exotic. When I finally began making trips to the East Coast, I was able to experience the scarlet gatherings first hand. On one morning at my friend's house in upstate NY, I experienced a somewhat common event for her, but for me—amazing. My friend, Peggy, aware of my love of cardinals, had sprinkled seed out over an early snowfall in front of her rural home. She gently woke me and made hand motions to come and join her in the front yard. There, dozens of crimson cardinals were enjoying their breakfast. What a wonder.

As fate would have it, another familial event proved to be the proverbial straw for my already beleaguered psyche. Its effect was pervasive and extreme. As time passed, I had more and more difficulty dispelling the shade settling over me. Eventually, I became resolved to take things into my own hands. There were no feelings of self-pity, quite the opposite. I had convinced myself that my departure would benefit others in a tangible fashion. I was okay with it; an appraisal of my life led me to the conclusion that my time was near an end. A key personal relationship was a crushing disappointment, my income-earning potential was fairly grim, I had no medical insurance, no hope of obtaining any, and my own middle-aged body was beginning to fail. I felt, quite simply—played out.

I went to bed one night...resolved. Plans were made and I felt a burden lifted. While I slept, I dreamt—I was traveling on foot in the high desert somewhere, I had no supplies; I had the profound conviction that where I was headed, there would be no need. The geography became increasingly hostile with each step. What little vegetation seen early on was quickly disappearing. Something within was driving me tenaciously. I began to climb. The way ahead was treacherous, and I had acquired a terrible thirst, but I persevered over rocks, thorns and hot sand without even a drop of water. Eventually, the steep terrain began to level out, and I looked upon an unforgiving wasteland. My bare arms were brutally torn and the rest of me didn't fare much better, but I was nearly

there. Off in the distance, I could see my destination. I plodded forward with a bone-numbing fatigue. Finally, I knew I'd reached my distressing trek's end. There in the middle of this brutal landscape was a cot made of hand-hewn timber and a short wall beside it constructed in a similar crude style. It was as quiet as the grave, no sign of life from horizon to horizon. I reclined, closed my eyes and gave thanks. It was finally over, all the struggling, sadness, disappointment and regret.

As I lay there, I could feel myself leaving my body. It was subtle at first, but then the feeling slowly intensified. When my corporeal departure was nearly complete, I was stymied by a noise, the chirping of baby birds, demanding food from their mother. I slowly opened my eyes and witnessed a blue bird, her beak full of squirming food for her hungry young. The azure birds had nested on the little wall near my resting place. The unlikely nature of this vision in this inhospitable place beggared my imagination. I watched them for some time with exhausted eyes, but eventually began the process of passing into the next world again. Leaving my body was easier now; I was nearly gone when clamor—louder now, disrupted my exodus. It took every bit of strength I could muster to open my weathered eyes, but I finally willed them to part. There, where earlier the blue birds were nesting, was a community of cardinals! They were all busy homemaking and creating such a racket I could hardly believe my ears or my eyes. I had, however, gone past the point of no return. My body felt like an empty sack and I was too weak to rise. I took a measure of joy from the cardinals, but I was no longer fully present. Without even trying, I began to leave my body in spite of the inspiring image of my favored birds. I experienced such a lovely sensation of lightness while hovering above the cot now; the body below was a foreign object. There was a sense of peace now, a long journey at an end. And yet, a sound more vigorous than the others began to disturb the scene below. With tremendous reluctance, I reentered my body. It took a Herculean effort to will my eyes open a third time and when I did, the sight I beheld both charmed and confused me. There on the same wall where the blue birds and cardinals had come and gone was a singular, nondescript, brownish bird, working away. The bird's tremendous industry was producing the disturbing cacophony. He was creating what appeared to be clogs for his feet. I watched dumbfounded, as he carved and shaped with his resilient beak one for his left foot out of rose quartz and the other of amethyst. Bits of quartz were airborne. The process took some time, but eventually, he seemed satisfied, shook his feathers and flew away with his tiny new shoes.



As my world-worn body watched him depart, I noticed a figure far away on the horizon. I felt compelled to reach this individual, but my body wouldn't cooperate. I endeavored numerous times to rise and finally succeeded in falling off the cot. The person had made a little progress towards me, but was still at an imposing distance. I began to crawl. The figure was obviously august, with a back like a question mark, walking slowly with a cane. After awhile, I was able to make progress on all fours and I reached what turned out to be a very elderly man with a long, white beard. With great difficulty, I rose up to



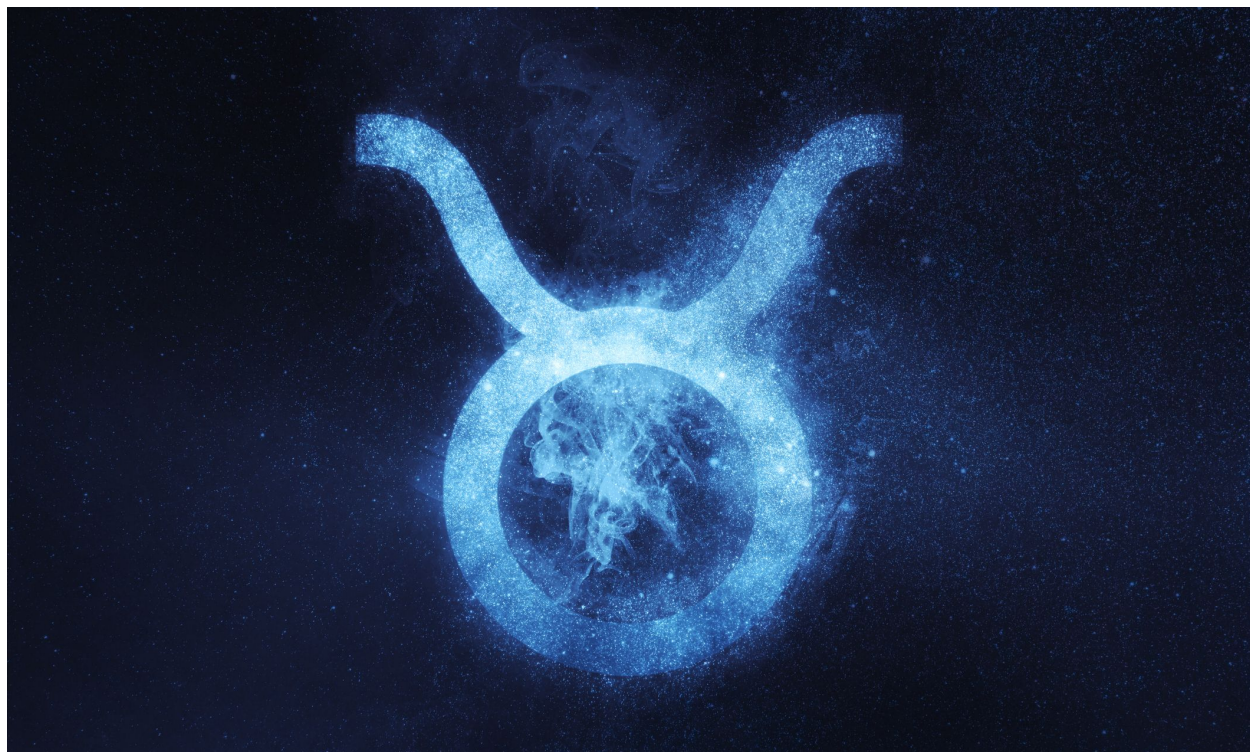
meet him. He looked at me with ancient eyes that shone with wisdom and kindness. "What have you seen?" he asked. My dry mouth and sandy throat were slow to respond, "I've seen something remarkable. There was this bird, cobbling shoes for itself out of rose quartz and amethyst. I saw you and I just had to tell someone." The old man appeared awed by my declaration, took his time and said, "Ah...you have had the privilege to see something quite rare—a Stone Thrush. Many believe them to be

extinct, but the truth is otherwise. While extremely uncommon and almost never viewed by humans, a few still remain." "Why was it creating footwear for itself?" I dryly managed to ask. The sage took his time to answer once more. "The Stone Thrush lives only in the harshest of environments. It makes its home on dry creek beds and chasms which are strewn with razor-sharp rocks and thorns. It has learned to adapt to its surroundings by fashioning shoes out of the most colorful rocks it can find. Without such protection, the life of the Thrush would be a short and painful one."

I felt strength slowly returning to my battered body. Looking into the all-knowing eyes of my new acquaintance had a restorative effect. After a period of silence, he gazed at me intently and asked, "Do you still want to die?"

I awoke with the wise man's query still ringing in my head. What had transpired while I slept would change my life. That was well over ten years ago. As with most lives, there have been many difficult and painful times; some of them testing the threshold of tolerance, but whenever the darkness begins to descend, I remember the Stone Thrush and I—soldier on.

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## *Earth Signs*

I am flying now, breathlessly accelerating away from the Earth. I feel no cold, just an indescribable impression of urgency. I am now far out in space, seeing our planet with an astronaut's view. Something is very wrong. I feel a sense of wonder and sadness as I realize our Earth is crying, disconsolately. She begins to show me how She is dying and how She is hurting. I awaken filled with dread, my heart beating furiously.

The previous is a dream I've had reoccurring for many years. It varies little and always leaves me with the same feeling of sorrow for days.

I thought it appropriate that I put pen to paper on this subject on Earth Day 1992. I felt (perhaps presumptively) that students of astrology may be keenly interested as well in the state of our own planet. [It is worthwhile noting that Earth Day falls on April 22 of each year at the beginning of the sign Taurus—the first earth sign of the zodiac—and that some researchers feel that Persephone (a planet beyond Pluto so far undiscovered but mathematically located), representing the principle of rebirth of Nature and recycling, is the true or higher ruler of Taurus.]



Recently, on a train trip from NYC to Washington D.C., I was dismayed to see the endless piles of garbage heaped within view. The detritus of snack foods, aluminum cans and plastic littered the ground everywhere. Even the still bare trees limbs were scattered with bits and pieces of 20th century junk.

My Northwestern naiveté was further disturbed when I returned a coke can to the dining car. I inquired of the waiter as to where the recycling bin for such was located. I was met with an incredulous countenance. He indicated the overflowing garbage receptacle. His English being somewhat limited (although it was his native tongue), I slowly explained that I didn't wish to throw it away, asking again: "Where is the recycling bin?!" He looked at me as though I had turnips growing out of my head and replied that it was too much trouble and was not worth it. His apathy incensed me, but I knew my indignation would be lost on him, so I reluctantly added my can to the burgeoning pile.

A non-profit research center in Durham, NC, recently ranked all 50 states for environmental conditions. I was pleased but not surprised that my home state of Oregon placed number one. Even so, our state has a variety of challenges. Since my youth in rural Oregon, I've seen the power of the dollar destroy most of our remaining old growth forests.

Our planet has been attempting to speak to us in many languages with many voices. Scientists have found alarming genetic and biological permutations in fish living in the toxic Great Lakes. In the summer of 1987, over 750 dead and dying dolphins appeared on the Atlantic coastline. In the following two years, four similar incidents occurred in Northwestern Florida, followed by 30 deaths in a Texas bay. Local fishermen in Texas and Alabama reported seeing floundering dolphins plagued by a mysterious fungal growth that covered them in brown slime. Overgrazing throughout public lands in the U.S. has helped put some areas in a state of desertification. Once fertile, these lands are dry, arid wastelands. Biologists and botanists maintain that thousands of species of plants and animals will become extinct before we can even discover them. Their voices are desperate whispers that land on dispassionate ears.

The following is a passage remembered from a long ago Sunday school class, Job 12:8.

*"Go and ask the cattle,  
ask the birds of the air to inform you,  
or tell the creatures that crawl to teach you,  
and the fishes of the sea to give you instruction."*

*Most people are at least hazily acquainted with the story of Job. If nothing else, the often quoted "having the patience of Job" strikes a chord. On a fundamental level, it is the passionate telling of an honorable man's journey through unbridled torment and ignominy delivered at the hands of Satan and allowed by God. Satan contends that Job is only virtuous because of all the blessings God has favored upon him. Take them away and he will curse you. God maintains that Job would serve him faithfully regardless of his situation and allows Satan to pummel him with loss and disease. God simply removes his grace and protection.*

*Ruminating over the seemingly hopeless situation of Earth's environment, I was reminded of the story of Job. Metaphorically, one could compare the Earth to Job. Our Earth, endlessly faithful and constantly revolving in its orbit, continues throughout the millenniums to feed and nurture Her ever increasing inhabitants. The Sun has in ancient times inspired humanity and been worshipped by many cultures. For this analogy, it could represent God.*

*When Satan approached God regarding the matter of Job, God questioned him. "Where did you come from?" Then Satan answered Yahweh: "From roaming the earth, and strolling about in it..." How like man was he! Allowed by the All Powerful to savagely attack the faithful servant (Earth) seeking to blast him (Job) into proving his point, by cursing God and dying. Ozone depletion and its frightening consequences represent God's removing his protective hand.*

*Beset by man-wrought pestilence, our universal Mother persists in her constancy, but begins to stumble. I believe if actions are not swiftly taken to protect the habitats of other life forms—to clean up the fouled air, polluted rivers and oceans—we will experience something of perhaps another Bible narrative, Revelation: "But I have this against you: you have lost your early love. Think from what a height you have fallen; repent, and do as you once did. Otherwise, if you do not repent, I shall come to you and remove your lamp [our sun?] from its place.... And there was a violent earthquake; the sun turned black as a funeral pall and the moon all red as blood; the stars in the sky fell to the earth, like figs shaken down by a gale; the sky vanished, as a scroll is rolled up, and every mountain and island was moved from its place, then the kings of the earth... all men, slave or free, hid themselves in caves..."*

The noted British novelist, John Fowles, put it this way, "I am glad there is no god. If there were, I cannot imagine that we rampant, myopic, and insatiably self-centered creatures should survive a single day more."

Unless humanity can learn quickly that living on this planet is a rare privilege rather than an opportunity to exploit and manipulate, we face a grim future. We need to become activists, each and every one of us. We must become involved in methods that challenge us to restore health and security to our planet. Margaret Mead was once asked: "Can a group of individuals, if dedicated and aware, really make a difference?" She replied: "It's the only thing that ever has made a difference." To those who would in the face of vanishing species and forests claim that man is more important and his needs (jobs and resources) take precedence, I would ask: What about the next generation? After we have destroyed all that is beautiful and replenishing (old growth timber stands, rainforests, natural wetlands, etc.), how will you answer your grandchildren? It would follow that if we must behave in a "me first" manner, isn't protecting our home and all that is in it a prudent course of action? Never was the sixties mantra "Love Your Mother" ever more timely. We must realize that forests, oceans, rivers, animals and the very air itself are not here for us, but with us in a marvelous symmetry.

It is unconscionable that our President—at this writing—is undecided on whether or not he will attend the upcoming Earth summit. So much for the "Environmental President."

To feel disempowered and impotent within this avalanche of worsening environmental conditions is natural. But there are steps every individual (to borrow from Jerry Brown's campaign) can follow to "Take It Back." If there is not a recycling program in your area, send a postcard to the Environmental Defense Fund for a free recycling action guide. The address is EDF-Recycling, 257 Park Ave. South, New York, NY 10010. Get involved, write your congressional representative. We need to analyze our actions, collectively and individually, to determine the environmental ramifications.

As lifelong whale researcher Roger Payne suggests asking ourselves: "Will what I'm doing diminish the ability of the environment to support life? And if so, don't do it." Choose an environmental organization; there are many and they desperately need your support. Any donation, regardless of size, will be meaningful. We can all make a difference!

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## *Slouching Toward Bethlehem*

***"We all inhabit this small planet, we all breathe the same air, we all cherish our children's future and we are all mortal." –John F. Kennedy***

***"Turning and turning in the widening gyre  
The falcon cannot hear the falconer;  
Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold;  
Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world,  
The blood-dimmed tide is loosed, and everywhere  
The ceremony of innocence is drowned;  
The best lack all conviction, while the worst  
Are full of passionate intensity."***



The preceding is the first stanza from W.B. Yeats' apocalyptic ***The Second Coming***. Written in the first part of this century, it is all too appropriate now.

Our "***Environmental***" President, Mr. Bush, has by his apathy nearly sabotaged the Earth Summit. Only when he made it perfectly clear he would not be party to any "deals" did he agree to attend. He has approached what could potentially be a critical beginning to real change with longstanding indifference. ***"The best lack all conviction."*** More concerned with voter approval than real leadership, he has sold out our future for his own popularity.

For eons, humanity has exploited nature in the mistaken belief that the fabric of earth, air and water was so vast, so enduring, no real harm could be done. As this century draws to a close, we are destroying ecosystems and proliferating ourselves at breakneck speeds. In effect, we are creating our own apocalypse.

In astrology, Gemini is known as the first ***air*** sign and is affiliated with the realms of language, communication, education and literature. The condition of our air is of grave importance. We can fair pretty well without other basic needs, but take away that air, and our lives are over. We have taken that precious commodity for granted far too long. Increased incidents of asthma, bronchitis, allergies and other respiratory ailments are merely symptoms of the problem. Since the 1960s, ground-level ozone has increased by more than 60% in the United States and Europe. In some countries, contemporary transportation rivals agriculture as a consumer of the land. Equally disturbing are the consequences of high levels of carbon monoxide intake from vehicle emissions. As a result, our hearts must pump more blood to supply the oxygen needed by our tissues. Additionally, the trace toxic chemicals emitted in the exhaust fumes have been directly linked to lung damage.

Ernesto Sabato, an Argentinian writer, put it this way: "Man is the only animal to have created his own environment. Ironically, he is also the only one to have thus created his own means of self-destruction."

I see a parallel between the gradual erosion of our once healthy environment and that of our language. Through the media, pop culture has succeeded in altering our very speech. I was recently visiting the home of an acquaintance. Heavy metal "music" threatened to quell any attempts at conversation. Sensing my discomfiture, she inquired as to what type of music I preferred. I mentioned that I loved classical, to which she queried, "What is that?" I imagine she expected me to make allusions to "rap" (perish the thought) or something equally mindless. In retrospect, I probably should have foregone an explanation.

In the public, I have noticed with increasing dismay, the appalling lack of ability to communicate with any kind of skill. In fact, one who is well-spoken is often the target of derision. Our culture actually endorses poor speech. Our language has become as polluted as our environment.

Values are easy targets of the advertising media—a media that has actually shaped many present-day social standards. Ads dictate what is socially acceptable, what is sexy, what has value. Our popular literature seems equally bereft of virtue. There is a plethora of novels with themes of graphic sex, horror and violence. A combination of the latter almost guarantees a bestseller. Have we lost our powers of discernment?



Carl Sagan, a leading exponent of the environmental movement, states: "We understand that what is regarded as sacred is more likely to be treated with care and respect. Our planetary home should be so regarded. Efforts to safeguard and cherish the environment need to be infused with a vision of the sacred...." *[Editor's note: Dr. Sagan is also a critic of astrology even though he has never studied the subject—scientifically—in depth.]*

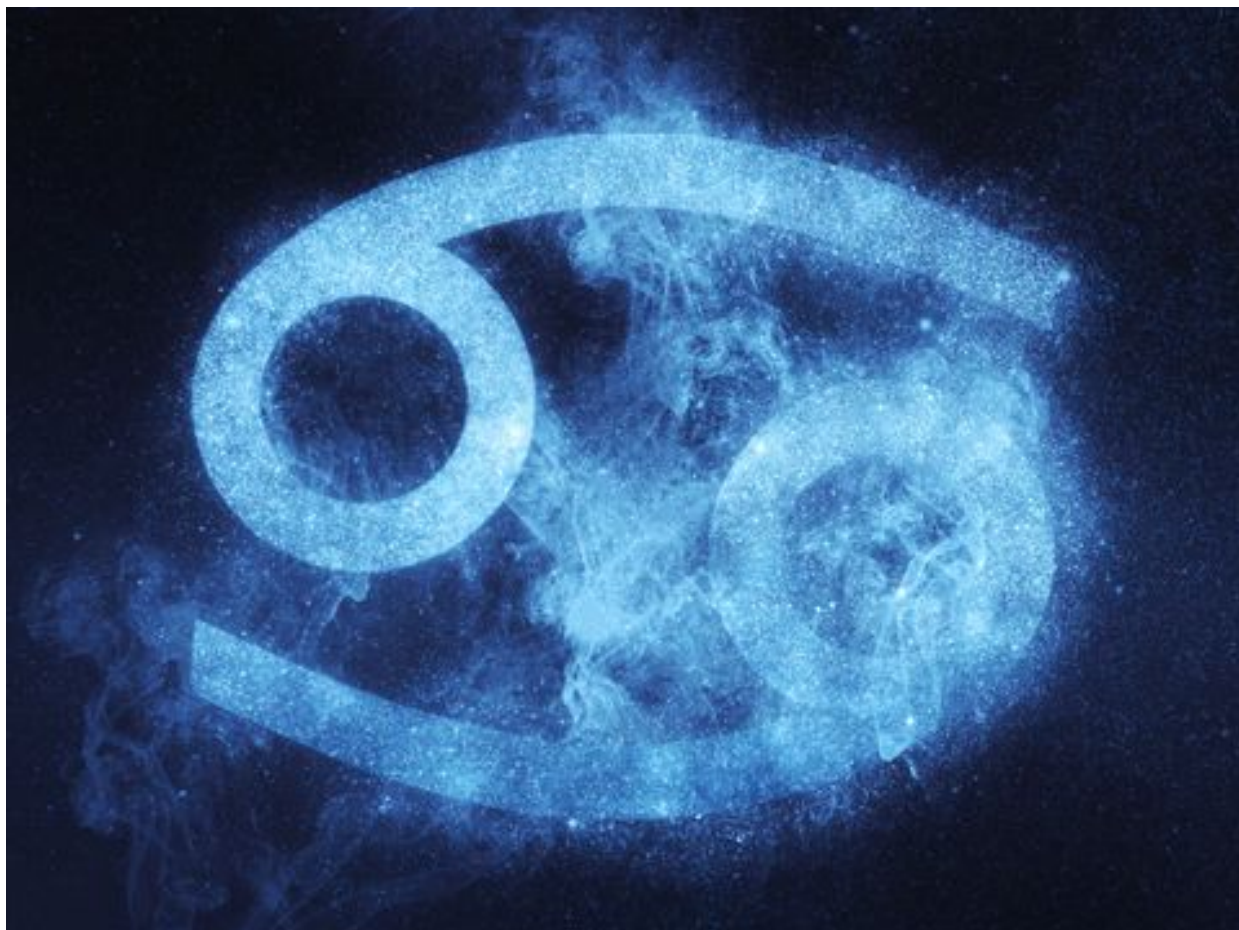
What then must we do? I maintain it is time for true

heroism—the sacrificing of one's own comfort and security for the enduring security of all, present and future. We mustn't allow the apathy and deceit of our political leaders to discourage us. And it is a time for activism, from the quiet letter writer to the most vocal "extremist."

In closing, I shudder to think what visionary Yeats would think about the present state of affairs. He was, in life, an avid student of metaphysics as well as a brilliant poet. Perhaps the last two lines of his portentous ***The Second Coming*** would suffice:

***"And what rough beast, its hour come round at last,  
Slouches toward Bethlehem to be born?"***

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## *Mermaids In The Basement*

**I started early, took my dog,  
And visited the sea;  
The mermaids in the basement  
Came out to look at me....  
--Emily Dickinson**

I inherited from my father a compelling love of the sea and those creatures who inhabit it. Dolphins, in particular, have mystified and inspired humanity throughout the ages. Only the most callous individuals would not be moved by their playful antics. They remind us of our better selves. I was about four when I caught my first glimpse of them in my father's National Geographic. Their perpetual smiles beckoned me, their apparent love of life and felicity warmed my heart. Many early civilizations thought of dolphins as



our cousins of the sea. In astrological analysis, Cancer is the first water sign of the zodiac, ruled by the Moon and has a strong kinship with sea creatures and ocean life.

Since March of this year, over 120 bottlenose dolphin carcasses have been found in a network of bays along the Texas Gulf Coast. Their deaths are man-wrought; it's just a matter of determining what toxic poisons or combinations dealt the blow. Marine biologist Nina Young commenting on the recent deaths said: "Dolphins live along our coasts, using the same water we do and consuming the same fish we eat. If indeed they are dying because of the consumption of contaminated fish, then these contaminants could wind up on our plates."

On our plates indeed. A 1991 Consumer Report found that 43 percent of the salmon and 25 percent of the swordfish in the supermarket shelves contained PCBs as well as mercury, lead and arsenic. We are systematically and unfortunately, quite legally, killing our oceans. Most marine pollution is attributable to fertilizers, pesticides and the discharge of sewage sludge into the sea. A 9.5 mile sewage effluent pipe, underway in Providence, Mass., will pump more than a billion gallons of waste a day into Cape Cod Bay. This project has earned the euphemistic title of "The Big Flush."

PCBs (polychlorinated biphenyls) suppress the immune system. In 1987-88, over 2,500 bottlenose dolphins died of bacterial infections along the East Coast. Tragically, in 1988-89, half the population of European harbor seals died of a virus resembling distemper. Sea turtles around the world have developed tumors on their necks and flippers that develop until swimming or eating is no longer possible. The oceans are vast and seemingly eternal but so are the seas of man-made pollutants that threaten to destroy them. In the North Sea, where harbor porpoises are disappearing, recorded levels of PCBs in their flesh have been alarmingly high.

I think it is noteworthy that our cetacean cousins choose to beach themselves on our doorsteps when faced with unspeakable adversities. We are, after all, the architects of their undoing. Perhaps on a psychic level, they are reaching out to their executioners, asking for mercy and, more importantly, extending a warning. In 1854, Chief Seattle, addressing white civilization, issued a timely admonition: What is man without the beasts? If all the beasts were gone, men would die from a great loneliness of the spirit. For whatever happens to the beasts soon happens to man.

Species of plants and animals are exiting our planet at breathtaking speed. It is a situation so dire that it is an onerous task to speak of it with any kind of patience. As one after another makes their way down that long, gray road to extinction, it is easy to despair. But we must not. Ralph Waldo Emerson once said: "... if the single man plant

himself indomitably on his instincts, and there abide, the huge world will come round to him...." A case in point. Most well informed people are aware of the murderous toll drift-netting takes on seals and especially dolphins who tend to swim with the intended victims—tuna. A small group of individuals, mostly adolescents, deluged the top executives of Heinz-Starkist at their residences with mail expressing their anger. They were relentless, indomitable. Eventually Starkist buckled to public sentiment and acknowledged by halting drift netting!

Consider the gentle beluga whale, the only freshwater whale in existence. Its fat is already sealed. The species has the misfortune to inhabit the St. Lawrence River in Canada. Over the last 40 years, the buildup of industrial pollutants and human waste has rendered the beautiful whale TOXIC. The concentrations of dangerous chemicals are so high that, under Canadian law, their bodies must be disposed of as toxic waste. And consider the plight of yet another decidedly benign creature, the manatee—their doom brought about by the proliferation of high-speed boats and a general destruction of habitat. The thrill of speed is apparently more important than the continuation of a species whose North American ancestors evolved in the Pleistocene Epoch a million years ago.

As more species are irretrievably lost, our own futures will be questionable. And as a corollary, with magnificent examples of creation gone, would you want to share the world with the sorry assortment of cockroaches, slugs and weevils that remain? The recompense is not in the roster of wild things seen, but in the sentiments engendered by their presence. I can't help but think that the absence of dolphin dreams would be felt throughout the universe. The dearth of diversity certainly would leave one with a great loneliness of the spirit.

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## *A Thousand Bars*



***"Grandfather, do you hate the white man now?" "No, but now I understand them. I no longer believe they are fools or crazy. I know that they do not drive away the buffalo by mistake or accidentally set fire to the prairie with their fire-wagon or rub out Human Beings (The Cheyenne) because of a misunderstanding. No, they want to do these things and they succeed in doing them. They are a powerful people."***

So spoke Old Lodge Skins in Thomas Berger's *Little Big Man*. Most of his people had just been wiped out by the U.S. Cavalry at Sand Creek. I recalled this particular passage from the movie I saw twenty-two years ago. It left a very deep impression—so much wisdom was manifested by this Cheyenne chief.

While the rest of the country is suffering in the possible death throes of the recession, the Pacific Northwest has flourished. As I watched new subdivisions and industrial complexes gobble up countryside, I couldn't help but feel dispirited by the continual loss of natural habitat. Every time another thousand acres are paved, non-human animals are losing their homes. This is occurring with biblical proportions on a global level as well. In India and Africa, exploding numbers of poor farmers compete for land, putting the issue of their diverse animal species more in doubt than ever. Consequently, it has become apparent that the last pathetic hope for the thousands of species extirpated by this ever increasing problem is—zoo confinement.

I never liked zoos; even as a small child the crestfallen countenances of the inhabitants reached my young heart. R.M. Rilke captured the pathos in his Panther:

His gaze from staring through the bars has grown so weary  
that it can take in nothing more,  
For him it is as though there were a thousand bars  
and behind the thousand bars, no world—

The lissome stride of soundless padded pacing,  
revolving in a circle almost nil,  
is like a dance of power that embraces  
a core containing, dazed, a mighty will.

At times, the curtains of the eye lift  
without a sound, and a shape enters,  
slips thru the tightened silence of the shoulders  
reaches the heart, and dies.

Most zoo officials and directors would have us believe that they are somehow involved in conservation efforts and wildlife protection. They assure us that the animals are comfortable and well-fed. However, as with most of Man's endeavors, the impetus for caging wild animals is monetary gain—pure and simple. Evidence of this can be easily found on identification signs on or near specific cages. An example:

African Lion—

Environment: Savannah and open plains.

This information on the cage of lions—in nothing short of ghetto conditions. Rotten food and feces are the only compliments to this magnificent beast's concrete abode. [In astrology, the sign of Leo is symbolized by the lion.] It is not uncommon for zoo



"casualties" to serve as meals for their fellow captives. Many zoos serve totally unpalatable synthetic foods rejected by animals until they are starving.

Knowing nothing pleases the simple-minded paying public more than baby animals, zoo officials breed them without constraint. I wonder how the hot dog-toting patrons would react if they knew what eventually becomes of those cute cubs and kittens when they are older and no longer "cute." Unfortunately, too expensive and space-consuming to retain, they are usually sold to "dealers" and research labs. The dealers sell them to the highest bidder. Their lives, if they are lucky, are ended abruptly by brave trophy hunters on "game ranches." Disoriented, they are let out of their cages, with no chance of escape and gunned down by a paying guest. Fees for this manly "thrill" begin at about \$4000 and climb upwards. A very rare and endangered species might fetch as much as \$15,000. The fate of animals sold to research labs is unspeakable.

It is our nature, as humans, not to question authority. We accept the misguided idea that those charged with the care of zoo animals are competent. The reverse is often the case. One only has to visit a poorly run facility—they are everywhere—to see evidence of this. I remember being convinced by family members to attend a zoo in my home state. I put up resistance, but was the only dissenting vote, so I acquiesced. The conditions were more horrible than I could have imagined. I recall a male elephant, his feet manacled. He was lolling back and forth, the picture of misery and despondency. Copious tears coursed down my face as I witnessed his pain. His tiny enclosure was filthy and totally devoid of vegetation. A black bear in a similarly inadequate cage had lost most of his hair and was covered with untreated sores. With no place to hide from the jeering crowds of onlookers, the bear masturbated in a kind of daze, his eyes vacant. I could see no more. Quite frankly, after what I had seen that day, I wanted nothing more than to pull the plug on the whole operation.

To be equitable, there do exist facilities where the animal's health and welfare are a priority. They are to be commended. Unfortunately, they are the anomaly. Most operate for purely mercenary objectives. Management does not have to labor too intensely to pull a major snow-job on the ticket purchasing public. They fail to mention the high mortality rate of creatures that are trapped, drugged and transported for their purposes. Also ignored are the rather obvious shortcomings in the habitat department. They would have us believe that a nocturnal lemur or ring tailed cat is happy in a lighted, glass enclosure, or that a continent-traveling elephant is content in a small, dirty, cement pit. Bears and big cats are housed in slippery concrete or tile-lined floors (easier to clean). Revenue is more often spent making the displays appear more "natural." I doubt the lions and other big cats draw much appreciation from garishly painted jungle scenes or synthetic jungle foliage. Such additions are merely an attempt to hide the grim realities

of zoo life. These animals are prostituted to provide amusement for bored adolescents and restless toddlers. Prodigious sums of money are expended for elaborate facades and promotional efforts, with little or no revenue to render their charges' lives more pleasant. Staff are often unenlightened and don't possess a clue as to what constitutes proper animal husbandry. The best life—the lion's portion (pun intentional)—that zoo animals can hope for is one of deprivation of fundamental activities and intolerable monotony and boredom.

What is it about the human animal that he must subjugate everything else that lives? I believe it has a great deal to do with his need to destroy the feminine. After all, no one ever refers to Nature as...He. The Earth is and will always be our Mother. What man does not understand, he seeks to control; what he cannot control, he ultimately destroys. Old Lodge Skins continues:

"Human Beings (The Cheyenne) believe everything is alive, not only man and animals, but also water, earth, stone and also the things from them (white men). That is the way things are. But the white man believes everything is dead, stone, earth, animal and people, even their own people. If things keep trying to live; white man will rub them out...that is the difference."

I think it is time for us to decide whether or not we are human beings. Zoos may indeed be the tentative ark of the future. If so, we must make revolutionary changes. The management must learn to adopt animal practices that are above reproach or be replaced themselves. Consideration must be shown towards the comfort, both mental and physical, of the "stock." Many are troubled to see a dog tethered to a stake in the dirt, but we will pay money to see magnificent wild creatures treated similarly or worse. If zoos are to be endangered species' only chance of survival, then we must treat them with the respect they deserve. No more eating junk foods or any food for that matter in viewing areas; clean and appropriate habitats must be provided for all creatures. If it can't be provided, then I believe we can do without ogling miserable creatures huddled in dank and squalid corners. No more solitary confinement. We treat our hardened criminals, guilty of the most heinous crimes, with far more concern and sympathy than these pathetic creatures who committed no crime, but simply were at the wrong place and time. We must make peace with our fellow beings and a good place to begin is our zoos.

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## *The Undeclared War*

**Note from Publisher Mark Lerner:** *Nancy de la Vierra wrote this remarkable feature in the summer of 1992 for our Welcome to Planet Earth Magazine. Before we met in 1989, she had been married twice and suffered various types of severe abuse in both relationships. With the #MeToo movement now strong and pervasive in 2018, I am re-publishing her stunning insights from 26 years ago—insights that are both a testament to the centuries of degradation suffered by women at the hands of men and prescient about how our society is just beginning to wake up now to this hidden truth about rampant predatory behavior by the male side of the human species.*

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Seventy-two years ago, on August 26, 1920—after being denied the right to vote for 144 years—the 19th amendment was ratified, giving women the right to cast ballots. At this critical turning point in our past, the Sun, Venus and Saturn were all located in the sign of Virgo. Exactly 15 years later to the day, Geraldine Ferraro, the only woman to run for vice president in one of the major political parties, was born with the Sun, Mercury,



Venus and Neptune in Virgo. On January 22nd, 1973, the right of women to choose to have an abortion was confirmed by the Supreme Court in the Roe vs. Wade decision. On that day, the Moon, symbolizing feminine issues on the broadest scale, was passing through the sign of Virgo, thus re-energizing the beginning of women's suffrage in late August 1920 with the Sun in Virgo. In this supposed "Year of the Woman," with large numbers of women running for political office, Geraldine Ferraro has returned to prominence in New York, running for the Senate against a conservative Republican.

Traditionally, Virgo is a receptive sign that represents the perfection of the feminine principle. In remembrance of the events of 72 years ago, I'd like to share some thoughts about an extraordinary book that extrapolates the abuses against women, both tangible and intangible. Susan Faludi, a Pulitzer prize-winning journalist for the Wall Street Journal, took on the Herculean task of documenting and meticulously researching the issue of the subjugation and abuse of women. Reading *Backlash: The Undeclared War on American Women* was personally illuminating. I was flooded with painful memories.

As a very young (20) and naïve wife, I recall being frightened by my husband's extreme mood swings. He would become violent without provocation—when intoxicated this quality took on nightmarish proportions. After the birth of my daughter, he deeply resented his new responsibilities and things began to further deteriorate. I remember vividly one night in the fall of 1973. My then husband had been "out with the boys," and was high on mescaline (he later confessed). I was awakened by him yelling and pummeling me. He was talking completely out of his head. He beat me so badly, I lost consciousness. The tenant in the adjoining duplex phoned the police, reporting that someone was killing someone "over there." When the police arrived, I was passed out on the lawn. My husband, completely unscathed, was reclining in his chair blowing smoke rings in the air (an activity that held particular amusement for him). When I came to, the police asked me if he (my husband) had done this to me. I had two black eyes, numerous cuts and abrasions, and my face was beginning to take on the dimensions of a basketball. I nodded dumbly, my face beginning to streak with blood and tears. Next they asked him, "Is this true?" He just leaned further back in his chair and responded by

saying, "Well, she fell down some stairs and I roughed her up a little bit." First of all, we had no stairs, and why would I need roughing up? I had been sound asleep! The men in the room exchanged some completely irrelevant remarks about the weather, cars and other matters, as if I were invisible. The policemen looked at each other somewhat conspiratorially and stepped outside. A few pregnant moments passed in which my husband indicated if I even considered pressing charges, he'd kill me. The policemen asked me to join them on the porch. They stated that they could see what happened here; if I would file charges, they would arrest him. However, they would not be responsible for the ramifications of his actions when released or any retaliatory behavior on his part. I was in shock and totally bewildered, fearing for the safety of my infant daughter. I did not file charges, but packed up kit and caboodle that very night.

My daughter and I took up residence in a cheap, run-down apartment in one of the poorest sections of town. I had no money and did not wish to participate in the welfare system. With no experience in the field, I felt fortunate to quickly secure a position managing the front desk for three busy surgeons. For the purposes of this article, I will refer to them as Drs. A, F and S. I was a quick study and the doctors expressed pleasure with my competence. I was struggling against the seemingly impossible task of locating and retaining trustworthy daycare for my daughter, but felt this was a good beginning for us. From the start, however, I was disconcerted by the unwelcome advances of Dr. S. He was married and had three young children. At the onset, his comments were of a fairly innocuous nature, but they soon became sexual. His "sleaze" factor was apparently no secret; he was openly having an affair with his assistant. At that time, I did not believe sexual harassment was even an issue or articulated as such. My kind, but firm refusals only buttressed his resolve, and one day he cornered me in the lab room. I was working through my lunch and the office was deserted. Dr. S came towards me, saying that I had to know how attracted he was to me, etc., and shoved me up against the wall. I pushed him away; told him firmly I wasn't interested and to please leave me alone. He walked away, chuckling. I felt trapped and thereafter I avoided him as much as possible. He became surly towards me, finally cornered me coming out of the ladies room. He said he needed to make something clear. His tone was intimidating

and stated that if I said anything to the other doctors regarding his behavior, he would tell them I was lying and they would believe him, of course. I told him I had no intention of "telling." He continued to make my work days miserable and my childcare disappeared for the second time. Feeling defeated and overwhelmed, I resigned. Doctors A and F attempted to dissuade me, but I felt they knew of Dr. S's unprofessional behavior and were choosing to ignore it.

Another experience that served to make me rethink my earlier "Pollyanna" views on the status of women in this country happened years later. I was driving home from work, nearing a familiar intersection when a Blazer ran a red light turning my car into something resembling an accordion. The driver, an off-duty police officer, had been driving drunk. He admitted he didn't see my car. He didn't at that time admit to driving drunk, but did later. Soon after the collision, an "officer" arrived on the scene. One of the witnesses (a man, to his credit) was helping to extricate me from my now pathetic Celica. The self-proclaimed "officer" (I later discovered he was a game warden checking fishing licenses at a nearby river) operated in the most curious and threatening manner, attempting quite obviously to find a witness (there were several) who would say that somehow I was to blame for the accident. He was unsuccessful. His behavior towards me was totally inappropriate and hostile.

One of the witnesses phoned me a few days after the accident to express his concern. He stated that he had some new information that might explain the perplexing behavior of the "officer" who came on the scene. Not only was he an employee of the Fish and Game folks, but a hunting and fishing buddy of the driver of the Blazer (an off-duty police officer).

Things got even more convoluted when at the insistence of family, I paid a visit to the local police department to file a complaint. The officer on duty refused to take the complaint. He said he knew both gentlemen; they were hunting and fishing buddies of his and "really good guys." At this time, I truly began to believe I had entered a battlefield. The lines had been drawn so long ago and I was on the losing side.

To add insult to injury, my auto insurance came up for renewal following the accident. Ironically, so did a male family member's (T) who had recently caused an accident that totaled one car and did significant damage to two others. The company happened to insure us both. The company decided not to renew my policy (the driver of the Blazer was found to be 100% at fault in my accident and his insurance company paid for repairs to my car and for all my medical expenses), but to not only renew T's policy, but to keep him in preferred status! He and I decided to confront the insurance agent. After all, they were not out one dime on my behalf, but paid out significantly for his claim. We felt perhaps there had been a mix-up. The head office replied by sending back a telegram saying simply: Even though Ms. Vierra was not at fault in this accident—We feel she is an unlucky person and are choosing not to renew her policy. I had never caused an accident and never had a claim! As a result, I was forced to find insurance at usurious rates. The battlefield was loaded with land mines.

I think what happens to most of us (myself included), in these situations, is we tend to store all these memories away in files marked that's just the way it is. In *Backlash*, Ms. Faludi succeeds in giving credence to everyone who has had similar experiences. She exposes the misogynistic roots of our media, employment history, legislation and advertising. Seemingly without prejudice, she manages—through this brilliantly written, expertly researched book—to lay open the roles of gender in our society. She uncovers a backlash that in many respects is flourishing and supported by the news media and our popular culture. As I read this book, I felt pulled back into the aforementioned remembrances and many others, whether I wanted to be or not. The book helped to give me a greater understanding of these events and, as difficult as some of the startling revelations are, they must no longer be ignored by men or women.

Even in Hollywood, which more and more shapes the way we perceive issues, this disturbing phenomenon is rampant. More and more, in our media, if women are not the victims of senseless savagery, they are the perpetrators. Consider the blockbuster *Fatal Attraction* and all its copycats. There is currently a detective program running whose



weekly plot routinely deals with the calculated brutal murders of beautiful women. The assailant and his motives are glorified and mystified, while the detectives stand over the victims' corpses speaking as if the issue were whether to have egg salad or tuna for lunch. The program's title, *Body of Evidence*, is embellished on the screen over the profile of a nude woman's body. Similarly, the lyrics of many popular "artists" are intended to foment dangerous attitudes by young men. Recently, I paid an unexpected visit to a friend's house. She is a single working mother of two teen-age sons. Curiously, the front door was ajar. Rap music was literally pounding through the house. I stood on the threshold and called out; my friend was not at home. The lyrics were of a most degrading manner, detailing what reprehensible actions the singer and the listener should exercise against women's bodies. I quickly departed with another veneer of naïveté stripped away.

Suffice it to say, there needs to be big changes here. Until the American viewer makes a clarion demand for more positive and uplifting materials, we will continue to be deluged with a diet of irresponsible and misleading programs. As a corollary, how can men feel truly free as long as their female counterparts are subjected to such vilification?

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## *Earth in the Balance: A Review by Nancy De La Vierra*

**Note from Publisher Mark Lerner:** In the fall of 1992—now 26 years ago, and when Senator Al Gore was nearing his forthcoming ascendancy to becoming the USA Vice President for the next 8 years—Nancy de la Vierra wrote this short and yet inspirational review and cover story for our astrological magazine (*Welcome to Planet Earth*) of Senator Gore's pioneering book on climate change entitled *Earth in the Balance: Ecology and the Human Spirit*. Over the decades, many people have laughed about VP Gore's incredible insights regarding the Internet and the Environment, but as Nancy tuned into so accurately a little more than a quarter century ago, he deserves to be recognized for his clarion "wake-up calls" to the present and future generations of our species — in particular those dedicated individuals, groups and nations striving to protect and safeguard this beleaguered planet in the solar system.

October 7, 2018: An urgent report by the UN's Inter-governmental Panel on Climate Change released late last night – Sunday October 7, 2018 with the Moon in airy Libra – “warns that the world might be on a path toward catastrophic climate change if greenhouse emissions aren't cut dramatically by 2030.” This firmly suggests the need to reconsider the trailblazing work by former VP and Senator Al Gore – including the Academy Award-winning documentary film *An Inconvenient Truth*, starring and written by Al Gore and which was released to the public back on May 24, 2006 with the Sun and Mercury in air-sign Gemini, and Ceres (the largest asteroid and often considered

*the Earth Mother celestial body) and a stationary Neptune in the globally-energizing air sign of Aquarius.*

*Many Blessings,  
Mark Lerner*

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Libra, ruled by the planet Venus, begins the second half of the zodiac and suggests the need to weigh issues and personal ambitions relative to socially-accepted standards. In Mundane Astrology, Libra is associated with human rights, international law and justice, allies or open enemies, the search for planetary peace and solutions to the environmental crisis. The striving for balance, equilibrium, equality and fair treatment under the law are all part of the higher Libran world view.

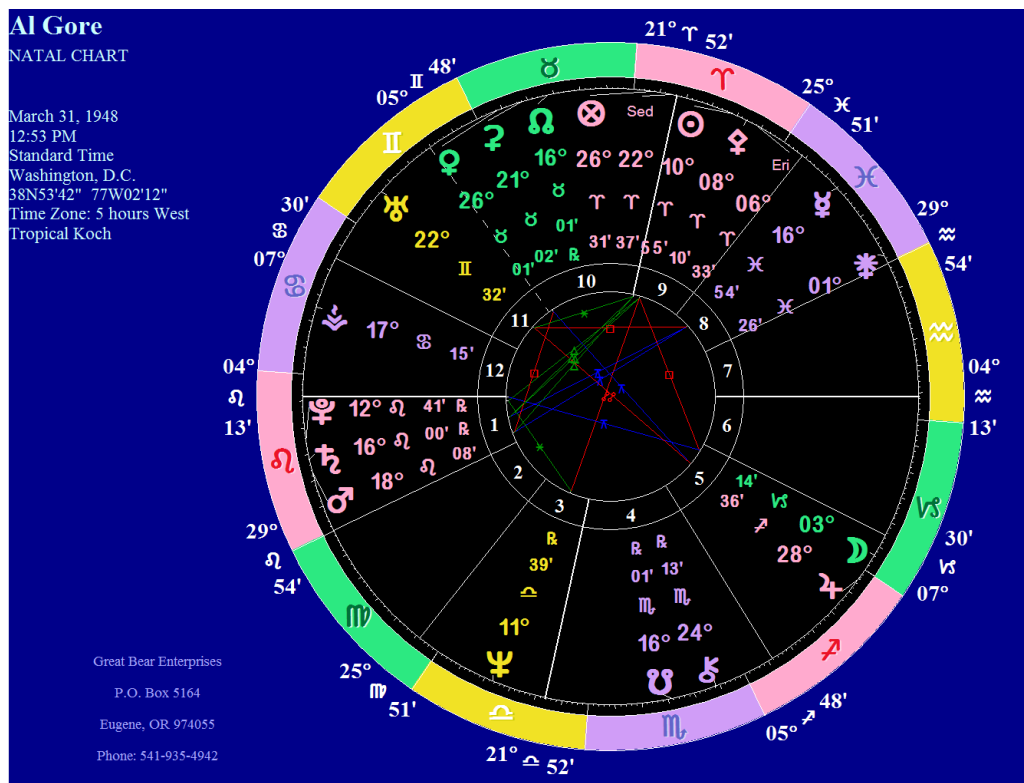
With this in mind, it isn't surprising that Sen. Albert Gore, with prominent Venus (Nature), Ceres (Earth Mother) and North Node (Destiny) all in Taurus (first Earth sign), would be the one to deal effectively and honestly with the politically volatile issue of the looming environmental crisis. His leadership abilities (Sun-sign Aries) have already been tested and many environmental pundits consider him a true trailblazer. At the 1992 Earth Summit, Sen. Gore was a chief spokesman for the U.S. Senate delegation. His book, *Earth in the Balance: Ecology and the Human Spirit*, has remained on the best-seller lists and may be the most comprehensive and graphic analysis of the world's environmental condition. Not only does it put into layman's terms many mind-boggling concepts, but it offers the most progressive and courageous plan for solutions ever written—and this from a politician!

*Earth in the Balance* tackles some of the toughest international issues, including the fragile relationship between the industrial countries and those struggling to develop. He, without hyperbole, stresses those problems that demand attention immediately and exposes our own Government's complacency and its collusion with the worst offenders. In an impassioned and erudite manner, Sen. Gore details some of the most fascinating and extreme historical environmental conclusions in his chapter, Climate and Civilization: A Short History. In spite of the gloominess of the subject matter, Sen. Gore balances the scenario with a positive and uplifting attitude, dramatically stressing his faith in humanity to cohesively find solutions.

V. Pres. Quayle has criticized his opponent's book and made statements to the press so erroneous that one can only conclude that either he has not read the book or that his powers of comprehension are as limited as his spelling abilities. Quayle feels that the

environment and all non-human species may be decimated, spoiled or altogether exterminated for the sake of industrial production and growth. He has stealthily worked to sabotage and trash the environment through his direction of the White House Council on Competitiveness. Sen. Gore, on the other hand, stresses the need for a world-wide coalition, a partnership of an unprecedented design that will benefit all. He has been referred to by his colleagues as an "environmental Paul Revere." The Senator was studying the Earth's dilemma long before many were even remotely aware of it. His ideas are ground-breaking, but if we are to stem the tide of global destruction, it is his thoughtful and eloquent approach to the matter that we must employ and embrace.

This fall the United Nations will be tackling a new round of disputes regarding the United States and its European allies against developing countries. Underway is the creation of a new body—the Sustainable Development Commission—which will be charged with insuring that nations comply with the pledges they made in Rio. The world is at a crossroads, a true pivotal point, environmentally and politically. And the American electorate, on November 3, has a golden opportunity to harmonize with the positive direction the U.N. and many enlightened nations are moving in regarding environmental issues by supporting Al Gore and any local initiatives on this topic.



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