

MY MESSAGE IS THAT WE'LL BE WATCHING YOU.

GRETA THUNBERG TO THE UN:

"This is all wrong. I shouldn't be up here. I should be back in school on the other side of the ocean. Yet you all come to us young people for hope. *How dare you!*

You have stolen my dreams and my childhood with your empty words. And yet I'm one of the lucky ones. **People are suffering. People are dying. Entire ecosystems are collapsing. We are in the beginning of a mass extinction, and all you can talk about is money and fairy tales of eternal economic growth.** *How dare you!*

For more than 30 years, the science has been crystal clear. How dare you continue to look away and come here saying that you're doing enough, when the politics and solutions needed are still nowhere in sight.

You say you hear us and that you understand the urgency. But no matter how sad and angry I am, I do not want to believe that. Because if you really understood the situation and still kept on failing to act, then you would be evil. And that I refuse to believe.

The popular idea of cutting our emissions in half in 10 years only gives us a 50% chance of staying below 1.5 degrees Celsius, and the risk of setting off irreversible chain reactions beyond human control.

Fifty percent may be acceptable to you. But those numbers do not include tipping points, most feedback loops, additional warming hidden by toxic air pollution or the aspects of equity and climate justice. They also rely on my generation sucking hundreds of billions of tons of your CO2 out of the air with technologies that barely exist.

So a 50% risk is simply not acceptable to us - we who have to live with the consequences.

To have a 67% chance of staying below a 1.5 degrees global temperature rise - the best odds given by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change - the world had 420 gigatons of CO2 left to emit back on Jan. 1st, 2018. Today that figure is already down to less than 350 gigatons.

How dare you pretend that this can be solved with just "business as usual" and some technical solutions? **With today's emissions levels, that remaining CO2 budget will be entirely gone within less than 8 and a half years.**

There will not be any solutions or plans presented in line with these figures here today, because these numbers are too uncomfortable. And you are still not mature enough to tell it like it is.

You are failing us. But the young people are starting to understand your betrayal. The eyes of all future generations are upon you. And if you choose to fail us, I say: We will never forgive you.

We will not let you get away with this. Right here, right now is where we draw the line.

The world is waking up. And change is coming, whether you like it or not.

Thank you."



IT'S HAPPENING!

A student of mine is on his cell phone.

I tell him to put it away. He does so, angrily, puts his head down and starts to cry. I know this can't be the normal response to me telling him to put his phone away, so I take him outside and ask him what's wrong.

The text he received in my class? His mother was collected by ICE. She is not a US citizen, which means he is not going to see her again. She is going to a concentration camp (don't even think about coming at me about calling them that, that is EXACTLY what they are and if you think otherwise, kindly fuck off).

I pull him into my arms and do my best to comfort him while he just cries and cries and I try my best not to cry (I'm crying right now as I'm writing this) but what can I do? What comfort can I give him? How can I tell him everything is going to be ok when it so very clearly will not be ok? I can send him to the counselor's, but what can she do? What can any of us really do?

I knew this was gonna happen. I feared it before school even started, but this just confirms my fears. I know he will not be the last. How long before all of my students' parents are rounded up? How long before they come for my students? How long before they come for me?

How can I even tell them they should be focused on school and the stupid fucking STAAR test when they're family members are disappearing from their lives and being subjected to God knows what, never to be heard from again?

I'm outraged. I'm furious. I'm frustrated. I'm heartbroken. I feel so helpless.

I could feel it in my gut when they told me I'd be teaching all ESL, that I would fall in love with these students immediately and that they would be subjected to true horrors that I could not possibly begin to help them with. I'm just one person after all. But I'm gonna try. I'm gonna try until I die. And I hope that'll be enough.

Marisa Ramirez
Katy, Texas
August 29

I Have Travelled The World For 53 Years Now, These feet have been everywhere,

this body has been a guest of table and bed, in adobe huts, in gypsy palaces and shanty towns, cities, farms, favelas, luxury hotels and flea-bag guest-houses, trailer homes and squats, Buddhist monasteries, gurudwaras and sufi dargahs, all over the world.

I've been welcome in ever so many homes, meeting ever so many people and sharing cultures, religions and ideas.

What's lived and learned can't be denied - Now I live in a fairly big village and it's 2019. You'd think people would be aware and slightly cosmopolitan in any case. Nowadays, prejudice, slander and racism are punishable by law, officially.

But in my village it hasn't dawned yet. Too many people pride themselves on being insanely narrow minded. Let's say I live on '**Purgatory street**', and most of my neighbors seem hell-bent and hell-bound.

They bark, growl and judge like beasts, without proof or consideration. From which deep fear and confusion they act, I really don't know. We all have a good life, a roof, food and more or less stuff to share and enjoy. So why this hatred of others, why these machinations?

In a film we all love a Mother Courage who raises her children alone, and takes care of an old grandma too... so why in real life do we treat her worse than a street dog? And why if I don't play along with the hypocrisy, am I made out to be traitor or stupid gullible fool? Often it takes only one hatred filled human, to poison everybody else's minds. Is fear and hatred so addictive? Is the power to make someone else miserable so irresistible?

I love most of my friends and neighbors worldwide, but I will not accept prejudice. Not against gypsies, not against Muslims, not against myself, not against sexual orientations, not against anyone.

Hypocrisy and friendship don't mix. Racism and discrimination of any kind don't mix with a balanced human life. I hope I'm forgiven for my honesty, but I will always stand with the oppressed, not because I like to suffer or make sacrifice, but because I want to maintain my own right to breathe and exist, in accordance to my energy and human integrity. And as the fortunate know, love is the greatest of virtues in any circumstances and a smile is a free gift with instant positive response. (unless you smile at a monkey, than it might tear your head off) For those who wish to understand, I took the trouble to explain. From Purgatory street, these feet will always walk to heaven, they will never ever walk with the mean, nasty and miserably minded. Your choice. For the fear-mongers and the judgmental ones, go right ahead and hate, gossip, poison all you want... I'm glad I'm not one of you. But remember, every pig has it's Saint Martin. In the meantime...

लोकाः समस्ताः सुखिनो भवन्तु

lokāḥ samastāḥ sukhino bhavantu

~ Isa Esasi (low-kaah'-ha suh-muh-staah'-ha soo-khee-no' bhuh'-vun-too)

