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A Nearby Future

By Nevada Gomes

I'm gently awoken by the sound of my beeping alarm. I take a nice, long yawn and look at my watch. Its hologram screen is telling me that the time is 8:00am, I swipe left to check the weather. There is a 20% chance of acid rain and it will reach 100° today. *Great.* I sit up on my bed and grab for my glasses on the nightstand. I walk towards the sliding glass door in the center of my studio, that leads to the back yard. I pull back the curtains to see beautiful green mountains and blue skies with white clouds. There are trees everywhere, people tanning on the white sandy beaches and swimming in the clear water. *Yeah, let's turn this fake stuff off.* Once I tap on the glass, a screen that says exit display appears in the middle of the right glass pane, I proceed to tap on that. *I feel like it's more depressing constantly looking at what my surroundings once were, than what they are now.* What my morning is greeted with now, is high sea levels, a gray polluted sky, and the seven palm trees in my neighborhood. *At least it's my reality.* "Show me today's news," I say out loud as I start to walk over to my tv stand, grab my water bottle, and walk over to my couch. In the left hand corner of my glasses a woman dressed in a gray pantsuit and black shirt stands behind a screen. "In today's news, grain crops have shown failure after multiple attempts.

Oxygen levels are showing a new critical low, it is government advice to not go outside without your oxygen mask.” I look down at my water bottle and open the pill organizer on the handle. *Ah my delicious breakfast, morning pills.* The three pills consist of enough vitamins to supplement vegetables, fruits, and fish oil. “Do not go outside without your oxygen mask, please be safe.” I dump all three of the pills into my cupped hand, and I take them all at once. While I pour some water in my mouth, I continue to listen to the news. “BREAKING NEWS! Today is a day that will go down in history, the last coral reef that has been preserved until now, has died. This makes it official. Your children and the future generations to come will never see marine life.” This makes me choke on the water that was once in my mouth. I turn off the news, and walk over to my desk. After taking a deep sigh, I sit down and open my journal. I put the date in the right hand corner, July 12, 2050, and continue to write.

Dear Oceans and Lands of the World,

I'm sorry that the human race as a community has failed to protect the wonderful gifts you gave us. By polluting your airs, we caused the death of 6 million people a year. In addition to your dirty skies, the warm weather caused by global warming also speeds up the chemical reactions that produce even more pollution. I'm sorry that we have filled your water with microplastics, which have made their way to our food, air, and drinking water. The different toxic and carcinogenic chemicals that they are made of, have not only made their way inside humans, but they have also filled the stomachs and suffocated

your beautiful marine life as well. I'm sorry that we have decimated your underwater forests that were once overflowing with a variety of plants and animals, some of which held potential cures for countless diseases. You gave us so much, the only planet in our solar system that was filled with all types of life, yet we took it for granted and wasted it. Our ecosystems have been sacrificed for a very limited amount of people to make imaginary wealth. Ecosystems that once provided people and animals with breathable air, drinkable water, bountiful seas, and fertile soil. The world is no longer this beautiful planet of life. We neglected your cries for help, and now we have to deal with the consequences. We took advantage of your gifts, and didn't realize what we had until it was gone. If I could go back in time and send a message to everyone in the world, I would. I would tell them how now is the time to stand up, make your voice heard, and take action. I would tell them it is our responsibility to protect Mother Nature, and we could redirect our course for the future, to save it. If only I could go back in time. If only we realized that we needed to make change, before it was too late. I'm sorry that we failed you.