**Planet Earth**

**The earth is the Lord's and all that is in it,**

**the world, and those who live in it.**

***(Psalm 24:1)***

**I can think of a more probable alternative universe than the one we’re in. *(Joyce Carol Oates)***

**The world is before you, and you need not take it or leave it as it was when you came in. (James Baldwin, in Nobody Knows My Name)**

**You’re on Earth. There’s no cure for that. (Samuel Beckett)**

**We are the belongings of the world, not its owners. (Wendell Berry, writer)**

**The black holes at the galaxy’s core: Scientists have finally confirmed the existence of a dozen black holes at the heart of the Milky Way – and they believe there may be many thousands more. Lying at the center of our galaxy is a supermassive black hole, Sagittarius A\*, that is about 4 million times the mass of the sun. Astronomers have long suspected that Sagittarius A\* is surrounded by black holes. But because these enigmatic celestial bodies are invisible – their gravitational field is so strong that even light can’t escape – they’re extremely hard to find. In this case, scientists studied old observations gathered by NASA’s Chandra X-ray telescope to look for “binary” systems: black holes with an orbiting star, which together emit telltale radiation. They identified 12 black holes in total, all within a few light-years of Sagittarius A\*. Because binary systems account for only a small proportion of black holes overall, they calculated that 10,000 other black holes must be lurking in the same area. With an abundance of dust and gas, the galaxy’s center is a “hothouse” for black hole formatrion, reports BBC.com. “(It’s sort of like a little farm,” says lead author Chuck Hailey, an astrophysicist at Columbia University, “where you have all the right conditions to produce and hold on to a large number of black holes.” The dust and gas first form large stars, which collapse inward when thet die and become black holes. *(The Week magazine, April 27, 2018)***

**The earth is mostly just a bone yard. But pretty in the sunlight*. (Larry McMurtry, author)***

**We have grasped the mystery of the atom and rejected the Sermon on the Mount. Ours is a world of nuclear giants and ethical infants. (Omar Bradley)**

**Today is September 19, World Cleanup Day, a day for all of us to help clean up litter in our communities. Studies show that, each year, millions of tons of trash end up in the oceans, and communities spend millions cleaning up litter. (The Daily Chronicles)**

**Earth is the cradle of the mind, but humanity cannot remain in its cradle forever. (Konstantin Tsiolkovsky, rocket scientist)**

**If only the world's demand for stupidity were as great as the supply! *(Ashleigh Brilliant, in Pot-Shots)***

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**If God created the world, his primary concern was certainly not to make its understanding easy for us. (Albert Einstein)**

**The world is so full of possibilities that dogmatism is simply indecent. (Albert Einstein)**

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**The world is full of magical things, patiently waiting for our senses to grow sharper*. (W. B. Yeats)***

**The most important fact regarding Spaceship Earth: An instruction book didn’t come with it. *(R. Buckminster Fuller, inventor)***

**The meek shall inherit the earth, but not its mineral rights. *(J. Paul Getty)***

**I didn’t invent the world I write about – it’s all true. *(Graham Greene, British author)***

**Earth’s hum: The source of a mysterious low-frequency “hum” emitted by the Earth has been pinpointed, according to seismologists writing in the journal Nature. It has been known for years that the persistent noise – between 2 and 7 millihertz and well below the range of human hearing – is caused by large emissions of energy at or near the Earth’s surface. But University of California at Berkeley experts Junkee Rhie and Barbara Romanowicz have determined that the hum originates mainly in the northern Pacific Ocean during the northern winter, and in the Southern Ocean near Antarctica during the southern winter. They believe storm energy released in deep ocean waves during each winter interacts with the seabed, creating vibrations that cause the hum. *(Steve Newman, Universal Press Syndicate, as it appeared in Rocky Mountain News, October 4, 2004)***

**This is an interesting planet. It deserves all the attention you can give it. (Marilynne Robinson, novelist)**

**Today, the invisible multitudes still dominate the earth. From their viewpoint, we are a minority trespassing on their planet. Dr. Rene Dubos of the Rockefeller Institute estimates that the total mass of microbial life on earth is approximately 20 times greater than the total mass of animal life. *(Rutherford Platt, in The Living World of Nature, p. 129)***

**“Johnnie,” asked the kindergarten teacher, “is the world round?” “No, ma’am,” was the reply. “It isn’t!” exclaimed the teacher. “Then I suppose it’s flat?” “No, ma’am.” “Well,” said the teacher with a smile, “if the world isn’t round and it isn’t flat, then what is it?” “My dad says it’s crooked,” said Johnnie matter-of-factly. *(Bits & Pieces)***

**We’re here to put a dent in the universe. Otherwise why even be here? *(Steve Jobs)***

**In the fight between you and the world, back the world. *(Franz Kafka)***

**It appeared to me that God had given mankind sort of a stage to perform on. (Jim Lovell, former astronaut, who survived the near calamity of Apollo 13, talks about being one of the first to see the earth from deep space)**

[**A magnetic catastrophe: About 42,000 years ago, Earth's magnetic poles flipped. Previous research has suggested that this event -- which happens every now and then, cosmically speaking -- had little impact. But a new study suggests that this switch in fact caused drastic environmental and climactic changes around the planet, reports The Guardian (U.K.). Earth's magnetic field acts as a shield against damaging solar radiation. When the poles switch or wobble, that protection weakens, leaving the planet more exposed to high-energy particles. Using radiocarbon analysis on the fossilized remains of kauri trees -- which can live for thousands of years -- from New Zealand, researchers were able to pinpoint the specific 800-year period when the magnetic field occurred. The researchers then looked at archaeological and climate records from that period and found that numerous environmental changes took place around the world: tropical rain belts shifted dramatically; an ice sheet started to stretch across North America; and a severe drought in Australia led to a die-off of megafauna. Co-author Chris Turney, from the University of New South Wales, says that the rise in the use of caves by our ancestors around this time may be down to the fact that they offered shelter from the harsh conditions outside. "It probably would have seemed like the end of days." *(The Week magazine, March 12, 2021***](http://www.bbc.co.uk/)***)***

**The universe is under no obligation to make sense to you. *(Neil deGrasse Tyson, in Forbes)***

**The meaning of the world lies outside of the world. (David Berman, poet and songwriter)**

**What's the world for if you can't make it up the way you want it? *(Toni Morrison, in Women’s Health)***

**There is only one mystery: the world. *(Rene Magritte)***

**The world has only one purpose – to heal you and bring you joy. (Michael Ryce, in New Thought magazine)**

**In Mongolia, the horses outnumber the humans. *(L. M. Boyd)***

**Parasites make up more than half the species on Earth, and that’s not even counting people. *(L. M. Boyd)***

**In a Perfect World pro baseball players would complain about teachers being paid contracts worth millions of dollars. *(John Gratton)***

**I can picture in my mind a world without war, a world without hate. And I can picture us attacking that world because they'd never expect it. *(Jack Handey, humorist)***

**The world is round and the place which may seem like the end may also be the beginning. *(Ivy Baker Priest)***

**The whole problem with the world is that fools and fanatics are always so certain of themselves, and wiser people so full of doubts. (*Bertrand Russell)***

**We are a way for the cosmos to know itself. *(Carl Sagan)***

**There are books in which the footnotes or comments scrawled by some reader's hand in the margin are more interesting than the text. The world is one of these books. *(George Santayana)***

**Consciousness is the mere surface of our minds, of which, as of the Earth, we do not know the inside, but only the crust. *(Arthur Schopenhauer, philosopher)***

**If we are sensitive to the world – if we are paying attention to how profoundly astonishing the world is – every second would make our hearts burst. *(Lauren Groff, novelist, in The Wall Street Journal)***

**You cannot have a sparse planet any more than you can have half an animal. *(James Lovelock, environmentalist)***

**A swiftly tilting planet: Humans have pumped so much water out of the ground that we have managed to shift the planet slightly off-kilter. That’s the conclusion of a new study into what’s known as “polar shift,” reports New Scientist. Between 1993 and 2010, researchers found, more than 2 million tons of water was taken out of underground reservoirs. That has caused the geographic North Pole to move at an average rate of 4.36 centimeters per year, an impact on polar drift second only to the changes caused by melting glaciers and ice caps. Thankfully, this tiny tilting of the axis doesn’t make the planet less stable – Earth isn’t perfectly spherical, so it already wobbles several meters each year. The only area in which the drift might have practical consequences is the calibration of GPS technology, which needs to know the exact location of the axis. The finding does highlight just how much water we have used in a short time. “The precise number doesn’t matter really,” says co-author Manochehr Shirzaei from Virginia Tech University. “What matters is that the volume is so gigantic that it can impact the polar drift of the Earth.” *(The Week magazine, July 7/July 14, 2023)***

**I’d like to tidy up the entire planet. I would go anywhere if there were something that needs tidying. *(Marie Kondo)***

**Earth is traveling through space at 660,000 miles per hour. (Noel Botham, in The Book of Useless Information, p. 191)**

**The world cannot always understand a person's profession of faith, but it can understand service. *(Ian Maclaren)***

**We look at the world once, in childhood / The rest is memory. *(Louise Gluck, poet, in The Washington Post)***

**I feel that it is healthier to look at the world through a window than through a mirror. Otherwise, all you see is yourself and whatever is behind you. *(Bill Withers)***

**Now for my No. 1 Wonder of the World. It is, quite simply, the place we live in. Of all celestial bodies within view, the most wonderful and mysterious is turning out to be our own planet Earth. It is a living organism, an immense organism, still developing, regulating itself, making its own oxygen, maintaining its own temperature, keeping all its intimate living parts connected and interdependent, including us. It can keep us awake and jubilant with questions for millennia ahead, if we can learn not to meddle and not to destroy. Our great hope is in being such a young species, thinking in language only a short while, still learning, still growing up. *(Lewis Thomas, in Reader's Digest***[***)***](http://www.bbc.co.uk/)

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