

2021 International Essay Contest for Young People

[Children's Category – Honorable Mention]

Timeline

(Original)

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In the beginning, the earth was full
The sun shone bright, the sky a perfect blue
Green vegetation covered the earth
A land with no dearth
We were complete and strong
Our people, so tender and young
Love, peace and harmony
That was all we knew
We never tore ourselves apart
No matter how old we grew
Our lives were simple and straightforward
But we remained satisfied
Our earnings were humble, I agree
But was our freedom ever denied?
The little we had
We shared it with one other
Together we strived
To keep our heads above the water
We were one with nature
And nature was one with us
Our children will have it better
The future would be brighter
We hoped and we waited
This was life.

Then came a subtle wave
When we no longer cared
We modernized life for our benefit
We monetized life to satisfy our pride
The arising consequences?
We weren't so prepared.
To release everyday tension and pressure
We seek reckless thrills, excitement, and pleasure
Anything to take our minds far away
To push today's problems to another day

Me comes before **others**

As long as we are happy, why bother?
Our personal satisfaction is a priority
Who cares about the minority?
The more we have
The more we want to acquire
Pampering and feeding our hearts
With all of its wicked desires
Our soul set ablaze with corruption and greed
Whatever it takes
We'll do to "succeed"
All along, we've been wrong.
Deceived, for far too long.

We are who society says we are.
In silent acquiescence
We succumb to her merciless demands
Craving public acceptance
Desperate for approval
We live our lives in deceit and pretense
Never fully learning how to live freely,
And for ourselves.

Penetrating through the tender heart of the forests
Slashing our way to make cities and towns

Oblivious to the numerous species that call this their home
Not bothered by the mass destruction we cause all around
The skies are filled with acrid smoke
The air, thick and stale
Thick smog pervades throughout the land
Our ozone layer, now weak and frail
This chaos and strife
All in the name of a better life.

The earth screams,
"ENOUGH!"
From the four corners of the world
She raises her voice
And addresses the human race
"How long will I cater to your every whim?
How I struggle to meet your every demand.
Tell me, What have I ever withdrawn from you?
Must I go on wrapping you in cotton wool?
When will you show me a fraction of this love in return?"

But we choose to ignore,
This is what life has become.

Then behold, I looked into a new world.
A world where we were designed to help one another
Everyone a father, daughter, and brother
Flourishing in diversity,
Bounded In unity,
One big happy family,
We were all the same.
None condemned or put to shame
Discrimination and prejudice we overcame
Yes, the sun smiled again
But even at that,
Life wasn't a perfect game.

There were good times and bad
Glorious triumphs and woeful defeats
Pleasant summer sunshine and dark winter nights
It was all so bittersweet
But, we faced it together.

We cherished the good moments
And learned to dance in the rain
Surpassed boundaries,
Embraced new possibilities,
We smiled and endured
In times of loss and pain.

With every passing day,
We learned to persevere.
To speak up
Not back down.
To stand out
Not blend in.
We stopped searching for happiness
Knowing it had always dwelt within.

Folks,
Life won't always be easy
But I've realized that;
When we learn to make every second count,
To slow down and enjoy the ride
When we cherish those things that matter most to us
And vow solemnly never to let them go
Only then can we truly understand
The true meaning of life.