

Future Visions of Our Planet – Kae Tempest

Once upon a time, in a town much like your town, on a road much like your road, where the people lived and worked and passed their days much like the people that you know, there was a feeling in the air of dread.

It was thick and dark and it got into the mouths and eyes and lungs.

“Our mother is dying” said the Dread.

But wait.

Once upon a time the story changed.

It was not Dread that tugged at people's sleeves, but possibility.

The skies cleared over the city and the sun came through in a blast of golden light, and we saw that we were standing on the crest of a mighty hill. Our view was panoramic and we could see.

This endless exploitation does not make us happy. This violent inequality destroys everybody's freedom.

We know what mining does. We know what deforestation does.

We know what plastic in the ocean does.

We know what humans need. We know what nature needs.

We could live differently.

We could consider our minuteness in the natural scheme of things.

We could fuel our lives in ways that are not harmful.

We could build our cities so they are sustainable.

We could encourage nature not just to survive, but to flourish.

If we made that our priority the animals would begin to multiply. The oceans would recover. The people would remember how to feel simple things.

“It'll never work” said Exhaustion.

“Money makes the world go round” said Dissatisfaction.

“If it doesn't turn a profit it's never going to happen” said Shame.

“Grow up” said Fear. “Put up” said Fear. “Shut up” said Fear.

“Isn't this the very reason we were born into this age?” said Courage, “to make the huge transition that the age demands? Isn't that the weight you feel - the weight of changing ages?”

“Why are you so afraid?” said Resolution.

“This is the only way” said Love.

Even as the cities roared the children could be heard above the noise of the machines.

“I want to live in a world where I can breathe the air and drink the water” they said.

“I don't want the sea to boil or the forest to burn.”

“I want to look at the rising sun with ancient wonder.”

“I want to live in a world where the weather patterns are not deadly, where animals roam wild and are not just farmed for meat.”

“Where people have enough.”

“I want to be a human being, not an agent of consumption.”

“I was not born to spend.”

“I am more than the sum of my data.”

“I want to honour our planet.”

“I want to live on our planet.”

“I want to live.”

The time had come for a brand new story.

Once upon a time we were gifted with a present that was heavy.

It was now.

