

“The Great Stillness”

To the north, there is a great stillness...

The glaciers have returned, the ice is no longer melting at a rate exponentially accelerated by human-created industry. They are in a state of great stillness, moving forward at a rate similar to tens of thousands of years past.

The non-human animal species of the north have returned at full number. The salmon runs have returned to full capacity, the stillness of the natural environment has a comforting quiet to it now.

The flowers and other plant foliage have also evolved and returned. Now, in the quiet of the Great Stillness, they have flourished and are nourishing the animals and the planet as they once were.

To the west, to the east, to the south ... all healing, all returning to normal stasis ... as the Great Stillness continues.

If you could see the Great Stillness, it would be unlike anything you've ever seen with your own eyes. Even in the most serene natural settings available in 2015, you couldn't comprehend the natural beauty of the Great Stillness.

Because everything as we know it now has stopped completely ... industry, noise, pollution, construction, technology etc...

We don't know what that stillness feels like, even in our most still areas on the planet in 2015.

We were given the gifts to hear the stillness, but we had to create noise to drown it out. We stare in awe and wonder out our windows, at the possibility we can “get away” from the very noise we created in the first place.

The paradox of the stillness is we crave it, yet we work really hard (in the name of “progress”) to get away from it.

The Great Stillness is the culmination of a series of balancing events we were too prideful to see coming, because we thought all of “this” was created for “us.”

Here is the rough outline of the events leading up to the Great Stillness (there is some overlap of course):

2015 – 2150

The Great Resource Depletion and World War III

Not just peak oil, but peak “everything” ... water, silicon, metals, all of it. In a fit of corporate greed, noble altruism, environmentalism, alternate energy, technological upheaval, etc... we completely drain the planet of all resources known to humans.

Even solar panels, harnessing the great power of the Sun require energy and resources to create, and we eventually build our last and cannot build any more. The infrastructure for this new energy begins to critically decay close to 2100. All power systems, decentralized homes, etc... cannot persist.

Any sort of fuel (bio or otherwise) is in short supply, because the resources necessary to create fuel (even with cloning technologies we are barely figuring out) begin to run out, permanently.

These processes also prevented us from launching our “missions to Mars” and explorations of other planets to live on. In short, we were limited to what was [here](#).

The changing climate we failed to address because of corporate, political, and some individual greed and ignorance accelerates this resource depletion at an exponential pace we cannot understand.

While this is happening, World War III breaks out. Billions of people (soldiers and civilians) are killed, left starving ... and savage damage to an already damaged planetary ecosystem erupts exponentially. The entire planet is scarred; resources are depleted in the name of endless War.

Mini wars ensue, states and Governments break down, many of our animal species go extinct ... and the human race enters “survival mode” as a whole.

2100 – 2202

World War IV and The Great Realization

In 2108, the last of war-mongering, tyrannical factions has it's way ... and we enter into World War IV.

With limited resources, and in a world similar in appearance to the movie The Road Warrior (from the 1980's), the people who are left after the last World War begin to fight over what is left. Some smart ones survive, even through this tragedy.

Alas, because of our carelessness as a species in the 21st century, the human gene pool was invaded by the advanced chemicals and “food stuffs” we started to create in response to crisis.

The Great Realization, a period of time between 2150 and 2202, is a magical time in our 210,000 or so years on this planet Earth.

We finally realized that our technology can only take us so far, and the lessons learned from the 21st century taught us that our planet has finite resources. The same natural systems we tried to separate ourselves from proved too complex to re-engineer.

After all, we also realized we were given brains, consciousness, and eyes so we could see, adapt to, and contemplate our environment. We realized we couldn't live out of harmony with nature, and ourselves.

We couldn't, until The Great Realization, even begin to understand *ourselves* and our connection to each other as a whole. And we mistakenly thought we could fully understand and dominate, even re-engineer the complex natural systems that gave birth to our species.

We finally realized that this planet, the *only* planet we had to live on, wasn't created "for us." We realized that we were part of something special *already*, but from **1850 – 2150**, we chose instead to create our technological noise in the failed attempts to claim this speck of dust in the vast Cosmos as *ours*.

But for about 50 years, without electrical power, without much technology, we finally lived in such harmony. The 350,000 or so left after all of the Wars, famine, destruction, racism, greed and consumption of previous generations, these remaining survivors lived in peace with each other.

And they didn't end up living as most people in 2015 thought, like primitive savages.

Instead they lived in what was left of the sparse trees and foliage in the North (between what we call Iceland and Alaska in 2015). They foraged, some tried to hunt and farm, some built little homes by the remains of creeks and rivers.

Some even tried to rebuild small fragments of technology's past.

But with limited drinking water and almost no mineral resources to access and build the technology to desalinate the already acidified oceans ... most of our remaining species died in the 30 years between 2150 – 2180.

The last of our species, and some might say the strongest, died peacefully in 2202, their bodies and genetic pools so ravaged by industry and bio-chemical society of centuries past, they could not reproduce.

Homo-sapiens was no more.

2203 – 4014

The Healing and the beginning of The Great Stillness

The two-thousand year period after Homo-sapiens was the beginning of a great healing for the planet.

Robust bacteria, similar to (and perhaps the same as) the type that began life on this planet, survived our time on this planet. So did a few animal species.

Plants, bacteria, animals ... all beginning life anew.

But the scars the planet suffered would probably take tens of thousands, to even hundreds of thousands of years to completely heal, the eco-sphere fully repaired and re-evolved with species new and old.

The Great Stillness has begun.

Obviously this is a fictional account, perhaps a future-historian's record of our species in response to finding my (fictional) [letter to 4014](#).

Fictional, because there is no way to predict the future. There is no way to determine the timeline under which our species will go extinct.

But are you sure it will be fictional overall?

Us humans, we tend to think highly of our abilities, and I personally believe we *can* do amazing things. The problem is, we do horrible things as well.

We create amazing technologies, and then we seemingly forget all the consequences of using those technologies, both the good and the bad. For criticizing the religion of progress, anyone who does so is labeled a "luddite" (while completely misunderstanding what that word really means).

We found out how to convert coal into usable energy, cheaply, and distributed the use of that technology widely. 125 years (or so) later, we are beginning to deal with the consequences of that ambitious use. Endless wars, in the name of "spreading democracy," and creating enemies along the way.

If you spread jelly on bread ... that's good. But if you start to spread it beyond the bread and onto the table, it's just a mess to clean up, no matter how good the jelly tastes (to *some* people).

Enough for now. Will 2202 be a reality, or become fiction? I hope it's the latter.