

The Challenge

Six years ago I wrote of changes
 To halt pollution's further spread;
Yet still today its toxic range is
 Endangering life from ocean's bed
To th' upper atmosphere surrounding
Our stricken globe. Though facts abounding
 Are there to warn us what to do,
 The steps we've taken are too few.
It's not for lack of information
 Of what the challenge is we face,
 And of the measures to embrace
To mitigate earth's ruination.
 But sadly still those measures find
 A poor response from humankind.

Five years ago when he was signing
 The Paris Agreement, on his lap
John Kerry's grandchild sat, headlining
 His hope that all would work to cap
Emissions and reduce them, making
A better world and undertaking
 To give young children hope for real
 Sustaining ways by which to heal
The harms that nations had been wreaking
 For generations in the past;
 And sanity might dawn at last
As we give up our blind self-seeking.
 He hoped the challenge might be met,
 And we could save our planet yet.

In Kew Gardens this year more sadly
 John Kerry had a graver tone;
For nations were behaving badly
 And by their deeds they'd clearly shown
No true commitment - just lip service;
And for the future he was nervous
 We'd made a mutual suicide pact
 In frankly failing to react
And meet the targets we'd agreed to.
 'Twas China he did criticize;
 But what he said also applies
To us, his hosts, who really need to
 Define clear policies to meet
 The challenges, or face defeat.

Two years ago a girl from Sweden
Traversed th' Atlantic using nought
But wind and waves and did succeed in
Arriving where world leaders sought
Just how they might reduce emissions
Of greenhouse gases, what conditions
That they might set. There she decried
Their empty words; while species died
And ecosystems were decaying,
And mass extinction had begun,
Just *what* had politicians done?
Their real concern (there's no gainsaying),
Perpetual economic growth,
Is just a myth! It made her wroth.

The Manbaby called Trump derided
Her passion, saying Greta should
Give up her notions so misguided;
And anger management is good -
It's what she needs. "Chill out! Get groovy!
"Go find a friend and watch a movie!
"For climate change is all a hoax!"
He said with stupid ageist jokes.
But all the world saw how he could not
Control his wrath when Biden won;
"The false result must be undone;
"For I've been cheated; people would not
"Reject me," cried the pampered chump
To no avail, so 'Good-bye Trump!'

And what of us? How are we doing?
For we've still got our Manbaby,
Who pouts and scowls, the truth eschewing;
With breath-taking inanity
He blathers as he spreads confusions
With contradictory conclusions.
For turning like a weather vane
He twists and turns and twists again.
A person who is really caring
Does not from London fly by plane
To Cornwall. No, he goes by train.
But Johnson's lack of care is glaring.
How do we meet the targets set?
For indecision's all we get.

But selfish, lazy indecision
Belies the urgent need we face
Oh where is leadership with vision?
For climate change proceeds apace.
In Germany and Belgium flooding
Was devastating; wreckage scudding
Along came like a juggernaut
That death and ruination brought.
In China floods brought devastation;
And in the USA there've been
More deadly heatwaves; and we've seen
Too many serious conflagrations
Within the Amazonian lands,
While global warming still expands.

The challenge facing us is serious.
Shall we wake up and face it now?
What we must do is not mysterious;
For years have scientists told us how.
We must wake up, reduce consumption,
And cut out waste. Have we no gumption,
No guts, no fortitude, no spunk?
Or shall we give up in a funk
And watch the spread of mass extinction,
And watch our earth as it decays?
Or shall we wake up, mend our ways
And face the challenge with distinction?
We must our selfish ways eschew,
For tame half measures will not do!