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The Earth Won't Die

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Response Activity 8 434: "The Earth Won't Die"

The bridges will be the first to go. Mighty as they were, ferrying so many people where they needed to go. Most are already primed to fall in this idealized age of regular maintenance. Indeed all the things that weren't supposed to be there will go sooner than anyone could have imagined. Homes are not a part of the natural landscape, they are flimsy constructs that humankind builds to be safer from the outside world, but they are not supposed to be there. Within a year most of them will fall apart, held up perhaps by vines or luck, but certainly no safer than the outdoors. Cities were built sturdier, but they are not immune. The volume of buildings can't protect them from the aforementioned truth, none of them are really supposed to be there.

But indeed, what is supposed to be here, on this planet, sharing space with the dirt and sky? The earth isn't going to disappear because the dominant species has suffered a catastrophe. Dinosaurs were killed by a stroke of terrible luck, and mammals saw their opportunity. The earth just watched, patient as ever. In the grand scheme of the planet, nothing is actually intended to last. Humans, however, were excellent at proving that point, no matter how many times they learned their lesson.

Humans saw the destructive power of the weapons they created, the potential to end all life on this planet for good, and they went on making it worse. Humans built cities in places that make no sense. In deserts with no water they established their trillion dollar entertainment industry. In places where there were no islands they built them themselves and bragged about creating new lands, unaware they were already sinking beneath the waves. They built their homes

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inches away from cliffs, fully aware of erosion as a natural process, and dared nature to make the first move. We know though, that nature makes the only move that actually matters.

Even when man vanishes, and all our ticking time bombs left behind are set off, the earth won't die. Everything man, animal, or otherwise has built, can and will die. Bridges will collapse. Skyscrapers will fall over. The most impenetrable and secure emergency bunker on the planet will eventually fill back up with dirt. The Earth could be plunged into fire and poison, but it won't die.

The Earth has come back from multiple asteroids and it's been able to reset itself with enough time. Nothing mankind could ever do will remove that power. The mightiest structures they built will fall. Ozymandias will fade from memory with nobody to remember him. Someday, something new will have the chance to prove that, like the earth, they will last forever, they won't succeed.