

Cry Coyote

Contributed by Raven

Well, the ecological collapse has begun, and you heard it here first. The evidence is mounting too fast, and the cautionary voices have been overridden or ignored.

All you have to do is read the newspapers. Not the editorial pages, just the news that filters through the SCM (state-controlled media - another blog to come).

The Greenland ice mass is melting faster than expected. The amount of CO₂ in the atmosphere is past the point where even if all human activity stopped today, the planet would continue to warm well past any historical norms. The dead zones and algae blooms are increasing in the oceans. Excess CO₂ is manifesting itself in the increasing acidity of the oceans. Weather volatility is increasing. There is more, but that's enough to start.

The impact of our sheer numbers is overwhelming the ability of the planet to cleanse itself. The impact of our sheer numbers is affecting the ability of other life forms to survive and thrive. The elasticity of the delicate balance that is our biosphere is stretched and ready to break.

When it does, the ecological shift will be so rapid, and so severe that most species, including ours, will be unable to adapt. And the truth is, there is nothing we can do about it. Short of mass-suicide, and even that has a less than even chance of working.

I cry wolf, you say. It's not that bad, you say. Technology will save us, our ingenuity will find a way, God or aliens will save us...

I cry wolf, you say. These are just isolated things, there is plenty of time, we can still save the day if we recyle, reduce our emissions, switch to hydrogen, wind, solar....

And you say, where is your evidence? Do I need another scientific study? More data points? What for?

Evidence? I sniff the wind. I taste the water, and the earth. I feel the storm coming, like any wild thing. Because you see, I am enough of a wild thing to know. A wild thing knows, because it lives and feels the fabric of the wild of which it is a part. A wild thing has every sense tuned to threat and profit and it's environment in order to survive.

And WE have lost that, lost that touch with the land and the water and the other wild things. WE have lost our way, and our sense and our bearings.

Just one hundred years ago, we lived close to the land. That land supported us, and we knew its riches and its dangers and its limits. We knew that a piece of land could only support so many cattle, or grow so much corn or wheat.

Just one hundred years ago there were few automobiles, no airplanes, no globe spanning web of oil tankers and pipelines. There were just over a billion and a half people. Now there are 6 billion, soon to be 9 billion.

Just one hundred years ago, most of us could walk outside in the night and look up at the stars and know there was something vast and mysterious above us that made us humble. Now the glare of our lights and our videos keeps us walled in light, trapped in our self-referential hall of mirrors.

Once, there was enough silence that we could hear other voices than our own. We could hear when a wolf howled in the far hills. now all we hear is our own voices, and we think that that is all there is.

Cry wolf? No, I cry coyote. Coyote is here. Now.

Coyote gets into trouble because of his desires. Like coyote, we cannot keep our dicks in our pants, our wombs empty, and our cleverness at bay. It's really that simple. When the collapse comes, it will not be because God is angry with us, or because Satan has worked evil. It will be because this is who we are, clever animals who could not control their appetites.

We are not the crown of creation. We are dependent on a complex web of energy and life forms that has taken millions of years to evolve itself and us together. We exist and survive only because that web supports our complexity. We stand on the shoulders of billions of years and billions of organisms, and we think that we are giants.

The logic is simple. Infinite growth in a closed system is impossible. Growth cannot be sustained in any ecology past the limits of those factors necessary for growth.

In the coyote stories, Coyote usually ends up dead. That's probably how this coyote story will end. That's the way of it. Coyote never learns. Never. That's why he's Coyote.

Some part of me hopes blindly that the collapse will not occur. There is much here that I love: art, movies, friends, the view from the airplane window seat, the ability to drive to the mountains and the sea. The books and the internet. Clean

sheets and hot showers.

And perhaps those things will still exist one hundred years, but they will probably not exist for 9 billion of us. The carrying capacity of the planet is being rapidly degraded, and we'll be lucky to sustain a couple of billion people in one hundred years. Lord, I hope that I am wrong.

But the collapse is coming. I feel it my bones. Any social measures to limit our populations would be antithetical to our nature. And we are too much Coyote to stop being clever and to keep our dicks in our pants. This is who we are.

Perhaps it is disaster that will change us. Perhaps despair and loss will finally snap us out of our self-involvement. Hard to say. I have little hope that religion will steer us from this course, much less science and our supposed rationality. Religion has not gone far enough, and science does not know where to go. And anyway, the juggernaut is unstoppable at this point.

Boy, that was a real bummer of a blog wasn't it? The whole thing has been tearing me up for months. I've been horribly depressed. But you know what? I decided to whistle past the graveyard and not get sucked into that anymore. Nothing I can do about it.

It's just Coyote. It's that way. It's a dream rising and falling. All things are impermanent. We were born to die. After death, we'll see. Maybe something, maybe nothing. Anyone who says they know is a liar.

In the meantime, keep conserving, keep recycling, keep working for change. Maybe we can't stop the collapse, but maybe we can keep the aftermath from being worse. Love the sacred earth. Stay compassionate. Help each other. Love all beings. Teach your children Coyote stories, and what they really mean.

Peace out,

Raven