

A DEVILISH ADVOCATION

"Mars is more heavenly than Earth because there's no life." Now let's play devil's advocate.

Life is a death sentence. To be born is the promise of suffering. Only through suffering do we recognise bliss. The more we suffer, the more we appreciate bliss. Only through ugliness do we appreciate beauty. And even then, it's in the eye of the beholder. It's not like we all agree on what constitutes it or anything.

Then there's peace. What is peace anyway? Just a respite between the bouts of carnage, the holocausts, plagues, famines and disasters. Take a look at history and you'll see what I mean.

It's a miracle you're here to read these words that I was here to write.

Childbirth is painful. Messy, bloody, violent and dangerous. Welcome to the world you little time-bomb you!

If you subtract teething, growing pains, childhood disease and misadventure, being the victim of crime, injuries, chronic pain, heartbreak, regret, remorse, fear, anger, jealousy, disappointment, hunger, thirst, want and frustration, how much of your life is there left to find bliss? And, we didn't even subtract the time you spent unconscious. At least in that state, we're nearly equal. No wonder they say, "Rest in Peace" when we die!

Ah, the natural world! Nature is beautiful until you're a part of it. Beauty viewed from a distance perhaps. What doesn't eat you, poison you or kill you from exposure, threatens you constantly during your peaceful respites by depending you to hydrogen, oxygen and certain combinations thereof. And if you don't get it, the torment is worse than the death it precedes. Ashes to ashes and dust to dust.

Ah yes, the minerals of the earth. You're dependent on them too and for the bulk of our tenure on earth, we didn't even know it. Scurvy; the easiest disease to avoid. Germs; out of sight, out of mind.... until the plague strikes. Imagine the historic agonies from a bad tooth, a cyst, a rotten appendix, tonsil or untreated wound? Gangrene, septicaemia, toxic shock. What a wonderful cocktail of misery. As a matter of fact, when something really hurts, it's not uncommon to hear the sufferer lament, "Jeez, you know you're alive." Or when a loved one finally succumbs to a horrible disease we say, "well, at least he's at peace" or "she's not suffering anymore." So, in the very least, death just might be a cure for what ails you!

What about nature on nature. Birds of a feather? Natural born racists if you ask me. Why don't leopards mate with cheetahs? They're both cats and even have spots. Or hyena with hunting dogs, crows and magpies, wolves and coyotes? Bigots all.

All herd animals battle each other constantly. We numb the ugliness by calling it "territoriality." There's no motive - only "instinct." Another numbing word. Then there's the pecking order within the herd and don't start me about the violence of rutting; only to produce a new generation of food for predators who do the same in their hierarchies. Watch a documentary entitled, "The last feast of the crocodiles." Tell me then how beautiful nature is.

The cold, the heat, microbes, drought, tectonic upheavals, "mother" nature? You kidding me? What mother could be so cruel? And what of her equally cruel spouse; "Father" Time? Mother Nature creates you, all stinky-smooth, vulnerable, drooling and soiling yourself in a pathetic foetal position. She then hands you over to Father Time who torments you for 80 years or so,

diminishing your body and mind and then hands you back to oblivion in the same position you arrived. The authorities should take their children away.

You might be lucky though. You might get to be born to a good family in a civilised community during an enlightened age perhaps. Yeah, really enlightened.

You're fed food that's an insult to the word; that's price is regulated to keep you and the farmer poor. You're lied to by the people you hope will protect you. You're cannon fodder for wars started illegally and motivated by the greed of munitions manufacturers and their political henchmen. You pay taxes all your life that are fritted away on filthy minorities, or embezzled by the people you trusted.

You're addicted to fiction, mind altering substances and decadence disguised as opulence. You're taught to indulge yourself at the expense of others, to ignore the sacrifices that made your indulgence possible and to tolerate unnatural predilections or endorse them as fashion statements. Then you have to worship 'celebrities' who offer nothing but endorsements of these issues. If you're a parent, even a good one, you then spend years horrified at the thought that your child might become either a victim or a perpetrator of the madness of the twenty first century's popular culture that peddles conflict, pain, murder, conquest, torture, rape, tyranny and greed as entertainment.

And then you die too. Just like every organism that there ever was. *Ever.*

Now consider Mars.

In the billions of years that it has existed, there hasn't been a microsecond of suffering or cruelty. No death.

No pollution.

No lies.

No hierarchies.

No greed.

There're no deadlines, stress, abortion, extinctions, taxes, cruelty, shortages or surpluses. Nothing except a red beauty that looks no less attractive from a distance than our blue beauty. Earth's celestial appearance may actually top Mars' but the closer you get to Earth, the more apparent the ugliness becomes. The urban sprawl, the landfill, the scars of humanity.

On the other hand, would Mars be improved with a 7 Eleven, a Bunnings, a drug cartel or a freeway?

The oblivion it exists in, devoid of life, is the exact state we came from and will return to in an infinitesimally short period of time, compared to the eternity.

So why do we attach such significance to life? The absolute arrogance of us!

Just cut out the middleman I say and avoid the suffering or fear of it.

In the meantime folks, stop worrying, you'll never get out of this world alive.