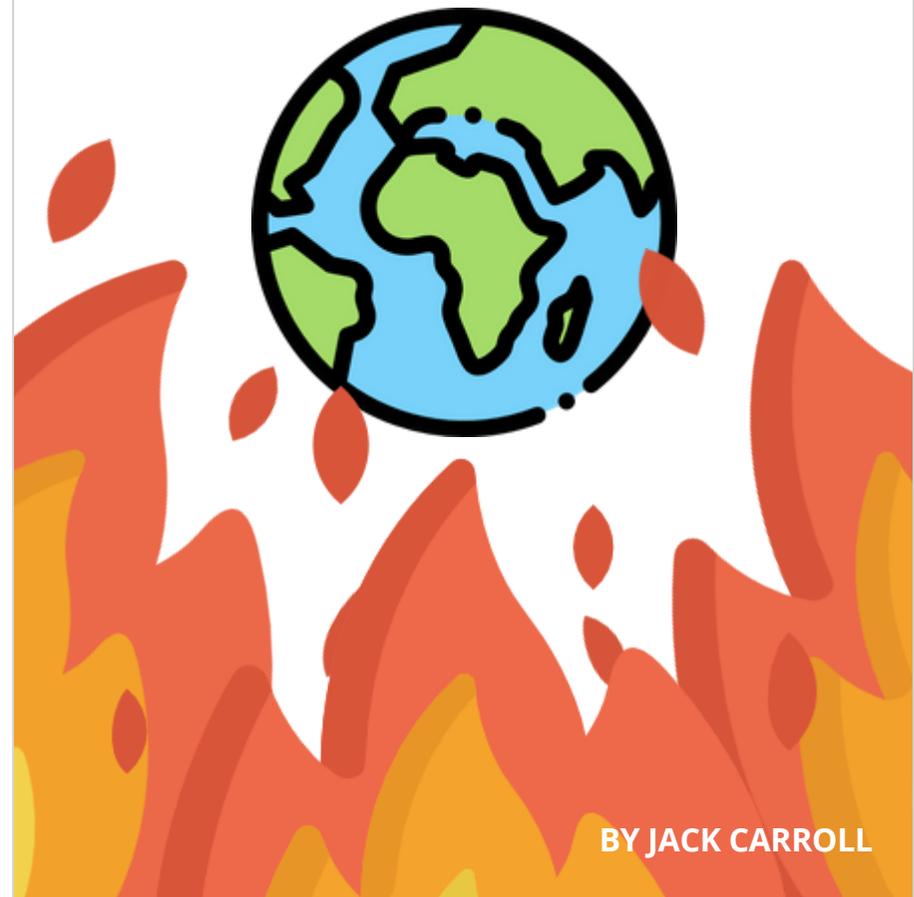
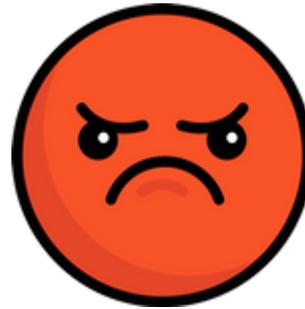


# BURNING WORLD



BY JACK CARROLL

I enjoy the silent moments.  
The calms before the storms. How peaceful it is.  
Space to think. But then people pull you back. Back into the fray. How it *hurts*. How it *pains*. And when you reach out there is only darkness. Only fear. And then a light. A figure and a hand. Safety, family, friendship. They sit down and listen as you talk far into the night. The calms before the storms. The silent ears always there, always waiting, always watching. And as you turn again they start to speak and you wait and listen...



The moon is made of cheese, they proclaim. Let it go, father teaches. But how can you? Such absurdity! Such BLASPHEMY! Any sane person would see its mad. I can see its mad. Am I not sane? They go on to say the Earth is flat. We were crafted from mud by a god and we all live in a simulation anyway. How can one stay SILENT how can one stay STILL! The world is going to hell and we are all ignorant of this very fact!

It is unacceptable that we sit idly as the world burns. Both figuratively AND literally. We watch as forests are ripped up and burned. Centuries of rich history and culture torn from mother Earth and lost to time eternal. Ignorance runs rampant and many continue to fight against what is right in front of them. IMPOSSIBLE to ignore. But... there is hope. All around us it appears. In the form of movements. Protests and demonstrations. Leaders and innovators. This is inspiring. And this is what I like. The human spirit. The endless hope. And the fire that burns forever..



Pen. An instrument for writing or drawing with ink, typically consisting of a metal nib or ball, or a nylon tip, fitted into a metal or plastic holder. Pen. Why would I value a pen of all things? What could be so important about a pen? Well have you felt a cheap pen? Then used a firm metal pen, weighted at the grip with a fine tip that doesn't run ink all over the page as you ponder the next word. Have you never found the one just right? Where you write suddenly smoother. Where you write suddenly faster. That is why a pen is important to me. It sits in my pocket, bag or pouch waiting. It rests lightly against the page never rolling, never complaining. And when I reach for its assistance it sits there obedient and waiting ready to sacrifice everything it has for the cause at hand. Never questioning, never faltering. If only one could have a friend like that.



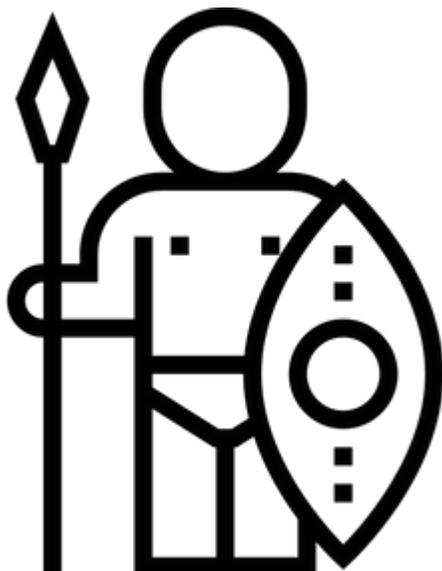
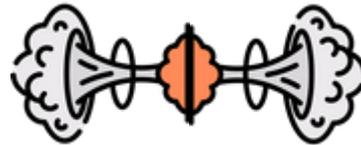
And people often dismiss it. The power of the pen. They ponder and they quote that it may be mightier than the sword. No one ever stops though. No one ever thinks. And the man behind the desk just ticks and ticks and ticks. He signs away lives to end hundreds more. He keeps the men in prisons and the women indoors. He turns a blind eye from the rich and turns them to the poor. Oh silly people, not blind but who ignore. It really is true that the pen be mightier than the sword.

None of us are soldiers, we've barely touched a gun. But we all have our duties and our jobs. My father works everyday to keep the lights turned on and runs off in the morning to the big glass box over you'. My mother stays at home though and keeps quite a tight ship. From the kitchen to the bedroom and running all round town.

You'd think she's being chased by demons, but no just a ticking bomb.

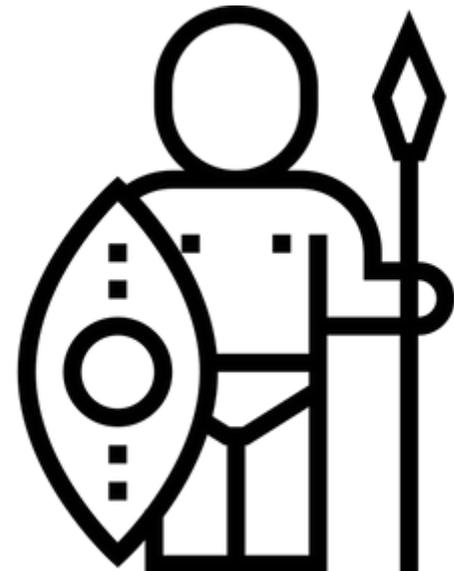


Now what of my brothers, well honestly I don't know. Perhaps they are the rebels, the ones we fight in war. They undo all our hard work and run off just before dawn. Then come back in the afternoon and let off one great bomb. They smell and they stink leaving mud all through the halls and there I sit and there I watch in horror, but discreet.



I myself keep a tidy room and I myself am quiet, but my brothers just simply party on and never is the house quiet. And then I wake and look around, in the toilet and dining room. They've gone it seems and all that's left is the mess they make each and every night.

Poor mother. Dear father.  
What can we even do.



A house is not a home. A house is a building for human habitation. A house is a building usually consisting of one or more floors. A house is made of concrete or bricks or wood or steel. A *house* is not a *home*. A home is a place one can live permanently. A home is with family or friends. A home is somewhere safe, a haven, a sanctuary. This is not a home though anymore. This is place has become something more of a war zone.



We drove up the street that day. We drove slowly and carefully. All was quiet except the howling wind. All was still and waiting. They call it calm, but I worry of the storm, the storm that builds and builds. No one can see it and no one expects it, but I can feel the tension all around. We pull into the driveway, my father and me, we pull into the driveway too far. If we had just stopped, if we had just not, perhaps they would still be ok. And as we got up and as we got out we heard the shouts ring all around. That fateful day, that dreadful day, was the day everything just went wrong.



Perhaps had I spoken. If I'd just stood up to all the injustices and wrongs. If I had just listened and they had just looked maybe they would both still be ok. My mother is saddened and my father disappeared. He'll be back, she mutters away. But they have all gone and we stand here all alone. Perhaps we should just wait one more day.

I can't take it no more.

I don't think I can stay.

This is goodbye for now.

If you're reading this, just leave.

Let me disappear.

It is ok now...

**NOTHING HAPPENED**