



## **Passivity in the face of the climate emergency**

The movie parodies collective inaction, where scientists desperately try to warn a jaded and deeply compromised world about the imminent arrival of comet that will destroy earth. The comet is obvious to everyone but people choose not to see it. Instead, there is collective obsession with pop culture and celebrities. Ariana Grande plays Riley Bina, a popstar whose relationship dramas are 'must see' television. The scientists are scheduled to speak after her. Nobody cares much about the comet, but as for that good looking scientist!! 'As activists and as climate scientists who truly understand the gravity and the seriousness and the urgency of the climate crisis - and the fact that every day counts - it's almost surreal when you walk around in the world and see people going about their normal lives like everything's completely normal'. (Daniel Bleakley, The Guardian)

"We have this very finite window of 10 years to make this transition. If we are not voting for leaders or supporting everything that has to do with climate mitigation, we are going to have a fate very similar to these characters [in the film]" (Leonardo DiCaprio).

"We have come to assume that we can continue to live in an economy that uses fossil fuels. That it's okay to drive and depend on things that burn them because we have to. We still don't understand just how urgent the situation actually is. We've been born into this assumption that this is all normal and okay and our right. But actually the scientists are screaming at us that we have to cut global emissions by over 65% compared to 2005 by 2030. Cut, not compensate. Yet no country is planning that. And almost every person will tell you why they can't. Why? Because they are unwilling to change. Yet the disasters awaiting are far worse. Like people refusing to leave a house about to be hit by a bushfire because they don't want to give up the comforts of home. Or people refusing to get onto the life rafts from a ship just about to be torn apart by an iceberg in case it doesn't really hit because they are afraid of being adrift in a life raft. We just don't get that we have to take immediate and drastic action that will hurt a lot to save the future. It is real. Like an enemy coming at our city in the night. But no one believes the Scouts' reports". (Peter McBurney Facebook post)

Dr. Randall Mindy during a TV interview: I'm sorry, but not everything needs to sound so goddamn clever or charming or likeable all the time. Sometimes we need to just be able to say things to one another. We need to hear things! Look, let's establish, once again, that there is a huge comet headed towards Earth. And the reason we know that there is a comet is because we saw it. We saw it with our own eyes using a telescope. I mean, for God's sake, we took a fucking picture of it! What other proof do we need? And if we can't all agree at the bare minimum that a giant comet the size of Mount Everest, hurtling its way towards planet Earth is not a fucking good thing, then what the hell happened to us? I mean, my God, how do-- How do we even talk to each other? What've we... What've we done to ourselves? How do we fix it? We should have deflected this comet when we had the fucking chance, but we didn't do it. I don't know why we didn't do it. And now they're actually firing scientists like me for speaking out, for opposing them. And I'm sure many of the people out there aren't even gonna listen to what I just said 'cause they have their own political ideology, but I... I assure you, I am not on one side or the other. I'm just telling you the fucking truth".

*Journalists and TV talk show interviews can be compromised by the priority for 'entertainment', to keep things 'light'. And if that means the 'elephant in the room' doesn't get named, doesn't get talked about, that's ok as long as the ratings are good. How do you think media and journalists are responding to the climate change emergency? How shallow and fickle is social media, and the infotainment programs that masquerade as 'news'. Discuss.*

## **Let's organise a massive concert to show our concern (but we're all going to die anyway!)**

Ariana Grande's character sings a song with the following words (language alert):

Look up, what he's really trying to say/  
Is get your head out of your ass  
Listen to the goddamn qualified scientists/  
We really fucked it up, fucked it up this time  
It's so close, I can feel the heat big time/  
And you can act like everything is alright  
But this is probably happening in real time/  
Celebrate or cry or pray, whatever it takes  
To get you through the mess that we made/'Cause tomorrow may never come.

*We all hope the power of words and actions can influence and effect change. Maybe that's optimistic. Maybe this song itself points towards the futility of efforts to raise awareness and change practices and policies? Will it in the end be the same outcome because we've acted too late? Discuss.*

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