

Losing Earth Pull Quotes

1. “Almost nothing stood in our way—nothing except ourselves.” (8)
2. “Is it a comfort or a curse, the knowledge that we could have avoided all this?” (8)
3. “If by miracle we are able to limit warming to two degrees, we will only have to negotiate the extinction of the world’s tropical reefs, sea-level rise of several meters and the abandonment of the Persian Gulf.” (8)
4. “Why did we do this to ourselves?” (9)
5. “Their efforts were shrewd, passionate, robust. And they failed.” (9)
6. “He had the tweedy appearance of an undernourished doctoral student emerging at dawn from the stacks.” (11)
7. “Why take on an intractable problem that would not be detected until this generation of employees was safely retired?” (21)
8. “Hours passed in a hell of fruitless negotiation, self-defeating proposals and impulsive speechifying.” (26)
9. “Better to wait and see. Better to bet on American ingenuity to save the day.” (34)
10. “Here the scenario was reversed: Rafe, the loner, was staring down the world’s largest problem while everyone else was distracted by the minutiae of daily life.” (38)
11. “The ozone crisis had its signal, which was also a symbol: a hole.” (38)
12. “It was as if, without warning, the sky opened and the sun burst through in all its irradiating, blinding fury. The mental image was of a pin stuck through a balloon, a chink in an eggshell, a crack in the ceiling — Armageddon descending from above. It was a sudden global emergency: There was a hole in the ozone layer.” (38)
13. “How did you protest when the toxic waste dump was the entire planet or, worse, its invisible atmosphere?” (38)
14. “Winter, Pomerance believed, was part of his soul. When he thought about the future, he worried about the loss of ice, the loss of the spiky Connecticut January mornings. He worried about the loss of some irreplaceable part of himself. (38)

15. “He didn’t see that the answer was at that moment floating over his head, about 10 miles above his West Virginian farmhouse, just above the highest clouds in the sky.” (38)
16. “Most major economic decisions undertaken by nations, it pointed out, were based on the assumption that past climate conditions were a reliable guide to the future. But the future would not look like the past.” (39)
17. “No elected politician desired to come within shouting distance of failure. So when it came to the dangers of despoiling our planet beyond the range of habitability, most politicians didn’t see a problem.” (39)
18. “It was the hottest and driest summer in history. Everywhere you looked, something was bursting into flames.” (46)
19. “New York City’s streets melted, its mosquito population quadrupled and its murder rate reached a record high.” (46)
20. “She knew what he was thinking: He was running out of time. We were running out of time.” (47)
21. “We know that the transformations of our planet, which will come gradually and suddenly, will reconfigure the political world order.” (66)
22. “We know that if we don’t act to reduce emissions, we risk the collapse of civilization.” (66)
23. “We also know that, without a gargantuan intervention, whatever happens will be worse for our children, worse yet for their children and even worse still for their children’s children, whose lives, our actions have demonstrated, mean nothing to us.” (66)
24. “These theories share a common principle: that human beings, whether in global organizations, democracies, industries, political parties or as individuals, are incapable of sacrificing present convenience to forestall a penalty imposed on future generations. (66)
25. “At some point, the fears of young people will overwhelm the fears of the old.” (66)
26. “But in order to become a revolutionary, you need first to suffer.” (66)
27. “Human nature has brought us to this place; perhaps human nature will one day bring us through.” (66)