

# The Armchair Cynic's Guide to the End of the World\*

## (At Least as We Know It)

Pick Your Poison

Nuking

The Eliot Option

With a  
Bang

Roasting

What Does  
Spirit Say?

?

What Comes Next?

MacLeish

Nothing

Poe

Nevermore

Gaia

Reboot

With a  
Whimper

Boiling

Choking

The first two positions are named after a verse in T.S. Eliot's poem "The Hollow Men." They suggest two ways in which things might end. The "Pick Your Poison" column refines those options into four categories of potential demise, both natural and man-made. The "What Does Spirit Say?" position needs no explanation. The 8th and 9th positions are based on the Archibald MacLeish poem "The End of the World" and Poe's "The Raven," respectively. The last position suggests healing, with or without human participation.

\* A sneaky way to get you to read T.S. Eliot, Archibald MacLeish and Edgar Allan Poe.

Use of a majors-only deck without reversals is recommended for this spread.

## **A Sample Reading Using the Tarot of the Golden Serpent.**

The "With a Bang" position came up as The Devil, indicating that we are perfectly capable of doing the deed without scruples.

The "With a Whimper" position held the Magus, suggesting that the decline would be more gradual, subtle and devious.

The Sun in the "Nuking" option could mean nuclear war, an asteroid strike or a Carrington event, any of which could drive humanity back toward the Bronze or Stone Age.

The High Priestess in the "Roasting" position might better be called "Poaching" if sea temperatures rise significantly and the atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> blanket increases dramatically.

The Moon as the "Boiling" influence may mean that we can find even more insidious ways to accomplish this, like the myth of boiling a frog - it would be too late before we notice.

The Hierophant as "Choking" relates to that card's correspondence to the sign Taurus, ruling the throat. The implication here is air pollution.

Justice appeared in the "Spirit" position, and speaks for itself.

The last three cards are more hopeful than their positions would suggest. The Lovers indicates there may be an alternative path to redemption, the Last Judgement that there is no going back, and the Star that Gaia will abide and ultimately take care of herself.

