KATE JONES

Climate Extinction

A savant from Sweden by name of Arrhenius
About CO_2 made no guesses erroneous.
In eighteen hundred ninety-six he found
How temperature ranges could be bound.

That fascinating Swedish reference
Will challenge mankind's climate preference:
To warm the globe and grow more crops
Or chill it till the temperature drops.

Before the human proliferation
Earth did its own obliteration
With hot and cold and wet and dry
To see what critters would live and die.

Can our bright scientific thinkers
Like Svante who with gases tinkers
Re-engineer the planet's stasis
To be life's permanent oasis?

Evolution copes with change erratic
While comfort craves conditions static.
Yet all that holds our species here
Is this flimsy layer of atmosphere.

The comfort seekers don't deny
That change is happening. They rely
On automatic fixes that don't require
They change any habit or desire.

And should the surface flood or freeze,
Its innards burst and boil its seas,
And space detritus come raining in,
Will our smarter minds learn how to win?

It would be a pity, don't you think,
For humans to vanish in a blink
When a million years of patient gain
Produced nature's triumph, the reasoning brain?

And if we can't manage to stay alive,
At least the microbes will survive
In thermal vents and glacier bands,
In bogs and swamps and desert sands,

Midst noxious fumes, in airless caves,
On gale-force winds and battering waves.
Microorganisms will prevail.
Will they rebuild us? There hangs the tale.

Note: Svante Arrhenius (1859 – 1927), was a Swedish scientist who received the Nobel Prize for Chemistry in 1903, becoming the first Swedish Nobel laureate. Arrhenius was one of the founders of the science of physical chemistry. He was the first to use mathematical equations and principles of physical chemistry to estimate the extent to which increases in the atmospheric carbon dioxide are responsible for the Earth's increasing surface temperature. His work played an important role in the emergence of modern climate science.