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Global warming ruins October

By Curtis Seltzer

BLUE GRASS, Va. Rain -- cold rain, wet rain -- has fallen on Blue Grass almost daily since late September.

Gray, dreary, drizzly weather has run off the warm, dry, sunny days that were supposed to show up this month.

We've been robbed of those autumnal moments when the sun slips into the maple leaves and explodes their reds, yellows and golds in a furnace of brilliance.

And nowhere is heard the crunch of snapping into a perfect Northern Spy in our apple-heavy orchard on a loving afternoon.

Instead of apple crunching ringing through our dells and rolling up our dales, we hear the slurp of mud gumming our feet.

October has always been a low-stress, happy time—a needed respite before we are conscripted into the November-December buybuy-buy campaign known as Splendor in the Grass.

What happened to October?

So I wrote to the White House:

Dear President Obama:

Im sick and tired of October mud.

Its terrorizing all of Blue Grass worse than the contagious jihadists who are spreading their beheader virus as fast as they can spit on human rights.

I have no idea why its rained for 40 days and 40 nights, but Im certain it has something to do with Noah marooning two white bears at the North Pole.

Now that global warming has melted their icy home, the bears have been swimming up the Potomac River and hauling out in my back field.

A family of three comes around to our kitchen twice a day asking to gnaw wood in exchange for a fur seal or beached whale.

We need you to change our climate back to the way it used to be PDQ.

We deserve a nice October every year, not a mud bowl.

Restore our old climate and send the polar bears back to where they came from.

I heard nothing for several days.

And then an official-looking black sedan with blackwall tires pulled into the front yard at 9 a.m. sharp. An official-looking fellow dressed in black -- black suit, black tie, black dress shirt, black sun glasses and black galoshes -- approached the front door holding a black umbrella and an official-looking black bag. Black rain dripped off the brim of his black hat.

He knocked. I answered.

Are you the one who asked the President to change the world's climate and bring back a nice October to Blue Grass?

Indeed, I am, I said. I admit that I was now a little full of myself, seeing how influential I was at the White House.

My name is Deepus Black. I'm with the Extra-Secret Secret Service. I'm on an extra-secret mission. The President needs you.

Me? Oh Pshaw! I said with extra humility. (I have to be honest: I was flattered.) Come in, Deepus. Wipe your muddy shoes on the mat. Try not to drip on the kitchen floor.

Do you know what's causing all the rain you're having in Blue Grass? Deepus asked.

Polar bears? House
Republicans? Huh?

I tried again. Climate deniers? Little old ladies from Pasadena? Close enough, Deepus said. Our warming climate has caused all the October rain in Blue Grass. Do you know why our climate is warming?

I answered without raising my hand the way I did in second grade. Greenhouse gasses!

And what are the two worst?

Carbon dioxide and methane, I said, puffing out my chest. Absolutely right. And where do these gasses come from? Human activity, I said, going three for four on the Q&A. Exactly, Deepus said, from people like you. Me?

You! And that's why the President needs you to help your country. Are you a patriot?

You bet. I hate those Ebolas. Vladimir Putin is just using them to get under our skin. I also favor awarding Social Security disability benefits to any American that ISIS beheads...without having to appeal the initial denial of the claim.

Proof enough, Deepus said. Now here's what the President wants you to do. He needs boots-on-the-ground data as to how much carbon dioxide and methane an average American produces each day.

My average boots are always grounded, I boasted.

See the mud?

Yeswell.

Deepus, would you tell the President that I don't produce greenhouse gasses on purpose.

The President knows that you can't help yourself. I'm glad, I said. I don't want to offend him.

So the President wants you to wear these two monitors for the next year, Deepus said as he pulled two contraptions out of

his black bag. One looked like a gas mask. The other also looked like a gas mask, except that it was suspended from a waist belt.

How often do I wear these things? I asked.

The President wants you to keep them on 24/7 for a year. Each monitor will transmit your extra-secret data to the Presidents personal computer...on his desk...in the Oval Office. He will have a record of your every breath and emission.

Gee, I said. A direct line. How many other Americans are in this study?

Just you, he said, because you want change you can believe in. Gee, I said. But how will this study bring back nice weather to Blue Grass?

Once the President knows how much you are contributing to global warming, he'll propose legislation that will offer tax credits to every American who achieves a 10 percent annual reduction in personal emissions for at least 10 years. And you will be the first American eligible for the credit. He promises.

Gee, I said. And what do I do about the polar bears in my back field?

Inform them that the President intends to rebuild the infrastructure of the polar ice cap in the near future. If Congressional Republicans block America from going back to a better climate and a nicer October, he'll recap the globe through an Executive Order. He promises to name the first newly calved iceberg after you.

Gee, I said.

An iceberg—a permanent monument for you, Deepus said.

So the President believes that making the world cooler will stop the rain, dry the mud and bring back the warm Octobers of fond memory? The sunny days? The crunch of apples? The whine of chainsaws?

If you do your part, it's a done deal, Deepus said as he got ready to leave.

Im on board.

And, by the way, you dont need to write to the President again, Deepus said. Youre now linked in. Well keep an eye on you...your concerns...from now on.

I walked him out to his black sedan in the rain.

Oh. Oh, I said. It looks like you have company for the trip home.

The polar bears were sitting calmly in his sedan, one in front, two in back.

I patted Deepus on the shoulder. Theyre perfectly tame as long as you feed them blubber.

As the bears licked his face, Deepus finally confessed that the Extra-Secret Service doesnt know why the secret is secret.

Tomorrow, I will donate two White House gas monitors to the Smithsonian Institution and claim an enormous tax deduction.

Theyre not worth as much as a set of George Washingtons false teeth in mint condition. But theyre the only two of their kind...and I have a black umbrella and a (slightly licked) black hat to establish an impeccable provenance.

When the rain comes down hard enough and long enough, when pleasant October turns into the slop of April, maybe something will change.

