Simple Arithmetic: Heavy on Butter, Cream, Wine

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Cover Page Footnote
The author is a retired Unitarian Universalist minister whose first career was teaching mathematics. Her dedicated website is www.PiZine.org.

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Simple Arithmetic:
Heavy on Butter, Cream, Wine

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Synopsis
The language of poetry is one way to offer perspective on ethical issues and social
behavior. The language of mathematics is another. The piece herein combines
both these ways.

Not long ago, the government
of the people for the people
needed 700 billion dollars to help
Freddie Mac and the Mae sisters.

Three hundred million people
lived in the United States then.

If each person put one dollar
into a central pot, the pot
would contain one third
of one billion dollars

not even a pinch of salt
in the bail-out soup.

To fill the pot, each person needed
to contribute $2000, a fantasy
since few have a spare $2000, plus
consider the cost to the 74 million


1The author is a retired Unitarian Universalist minister whose first career was teaching
then under 18 who presumably needn’t think about such obligations, let alone own them. More than 6.7 billion people lived in the Mac and Mae global world. If each person donated $100, the global pot might have saved the floundering Maes and Mac with real rather than virtual money.

but 2.6 billion people lived on less than $730 per year back then and half the world’s adults made less than $2200, so at least half the world’s adults were poor sources for a rescue pot. Still, there’s good news!

The richest 1% own 40% of global assets. High grade butter. Subtracting the world’s 2.2 billion children from the world’s 6.7 billion people leaves about 4.5 billion adults in the world, which is a lot.

Collectively, 1%, 45 million, own 40% of the world’s coins. Cream. Imagine that this thriving 1% donates 40% of the needed dollars.

If the 9% with 45% of global riches also donates 45% of the 700 billion the pot would need just another 105 billion, and if the remaining 90% of the world’s adults split that $105 billion evenly, it’s only a 2.5 cent
contribution per grown-up. Count me in!
Heck, I’ll throw in a whole dollar

and pay for 39 more of the world’s
citizens who won’t, or can’t, contribute
even two cents to a country
whose wealth and mismanagement

are both so blatant. Fine wine
down the drain.