

[Percussive beat for a moment, then it stops.]

LEO: This isn't over, Brent. Seattle was just the beginning, barely the beginning, really.

BRENT: This is gonna keep happening?

LEO: This is what is happening, this is the world now. The waves are just gonna keep coming, higher and faster, reaching further and further, until everything we know is gone.

BRENT: Okay, uh, hold on, hold on, just stop for a second, okay?

LEO: Sure, I can stop for a second...

BRENT: Look, look, look, I'm sorry but—it's just not—the, the exact same thing is not gonna happen in a totally different part of the world on the exact same night!

LEO: That's the wrong way to think about it.

BRENT: Excuse me?

LEO: The... the Earth doesn't think of Seattle and South America as different places. They're all just extensions of a single structure. When one part of that structure moves, it pushes on all the other parts. What happened to Seattle, what's happening right now in Argentina, what's about to happen everywhere else? From the Earth's point of view it's all one thing.

BRENT: What do you mean "everywhere else"?

LEO: Somewhere, far below us, for a really long time, I'm talking deep into prehistory, there's been some kind of buildup happening. Some kind of pressure. Two solid pieces of... something, I don't know what, have been aligned against each other in some kind of intolerable adjacency. One of these pieces has always wanted to move, and the other has always wanted to stay still. And today—and I know this because I can feel it deep in my rectum... the moving part won. It pushed hard enough on the unmoving part to snap off the piece that was in its way.

BRENT: Fuuuck...

LEO: So now it's free to move as much as it wants to, and it's not gonna stop moving until it hits something strong enough to make it stop. And until that happens...

BRENT: ...more tsunamis.

LEO: For a start.

BRENT: Uh—"for a start"?

LEO: Of course: new volcanoes, old volcanoes coming back to life, super-heated geysers—

BRENT: And you, you, you can somehow tell, based on which part of your... asshole hurts, where in the world something's gonna...

LEO: Yes. And right now it's everywhere. I'm actually gonna try to grit my teeth and bear it for the rest of the call, 'cause if I yell every time it happens tonight, this conversation's never gonna get where it needs to go.

[Brent shifts in his chair.]

BRENT: Do you know how long ago I would've hung up on you if...

LEO: Probably a lot of calls coming in, right?

BRENT: You think? You think maybe I'm getting' calls?

LEO: You wanna take one of them?

BRENT: No I don't wanna—[Shifts in chair again.] Are you out of your mind? I'm with you for the duration.

LEO: Well that's awfully nice to hear, but I would completely understand if—

BRENT: You think I'm being nice?

LEO: Oh, well—

BRENT: You think I'm still on this call because I'm afraid of bruising your tender heart?

LEO: Oh. Sounds like something happened.

BRENT: While you were monologuing just now, while you were saying all that frou-frou shit about the Earth...

LEO: The news feeds.

BRENT: Argentina. Uruguay. Just the short paragraphs, like you said. No real information.

LEO: Gotcha.

BRENT: So no, I'm not letting you off this fucking phone, Shorty. You think if I had Lee Harvey Oswald, if I had—who, who, uh—Nixon fresh off resigning, if goddam Bin Laden called my show before the second tower fell—

LEO: Well I don't know how I feel about these comparisons—

BRENT: You think if I had any of those assholes on at the moment of their greatest relevance that I would even take a call from my Mom?

LEO: Oh, well, I hope your Mom isn't listening right now—

BRENT: I HOPE SHE IS. I hope she knows she raised her boy not to take his hand off the bridle no matter how hard the beast kicks. My numbers are going up like a filling station under Jimmy Carter because everyone is telling everyone about you. So I hope my Mom is listening in fuckin'; surround-sound when I say I wouldn't kick you out of bed for Tawny Kitaen!

LEO: Well that obviously means a lot to me, Brent, and of course we'll have to start planning soon, but if you actually did feel like calling your Mom—

BRENT: "Planning"?

LEO: ...phone lines in St. Paul should be fine for a while, and I'd be happy to call back.

BRENT: Wait a minute... did I tell you that my Mom...

LEO: ...is in St. Paul? Yeah, a couple minutes ago, you said something like "Thank God she's in St. Paul."

BRENT: Right! And you said...

LEO: It doesn't matter.

BRENT: It doesn't matter that she's thousands of miles away from either coast?

LEO: Well I don't know how in-the-weeds you wanna get—

BRENT: Are you telling me there's a tsunami coming big enough to-

LEO: What, hit the Twin Cities? No come on, that's crazy. It's not like she's gonna die this week.

BRENT: Leo...

LEO: No, uh, your mom's, what, at least 60? Probably more but at least that?

BRENT: What kind of reaction are you trying to get out of me right now?

LEO: I'm just saying that over a certain age it's hard to... thrive without access to hospitals.

BRENT: What's gonna happen to the hospitals in the middle of the fucking continent?

LEO: Basically... uh, okay: after every coastal city in North America is smashed into rubble, the economy's gonna fall apart pretty fast, right?

BRENT: Who says every coastal city is gonna—

LEO: I do. So that means no central authority, governmental or corporate, so there won't be any organizing entity to distribute essential goods.

BRENT: You mean food.

LEO: Well, food, yeah, but also medical supplies, prescription drugs, antibiotics. And when there's a run on the stores... and there's gonna be a run on the stores... that's traditionally the kind of scenario where younger people come out best -

BRENT: "Traditionally"? (Chuckles)

LEO: ...so you have to think about the mentality in the wake of something like that.

BRENT: Whose mentality, my mom's?

LEO: No, doctors. Nurses. Hospital staff. My guess is they'll try to keep working for a while, you know, sense of duty, but if you've got family at home, if the shelves at the stores are all empty... (sighs) Past a certain point you're just gonna raid the supply closet and run. Eventually folks are gonna show up at the hospital and find nobody there. Now, I'm not saying your mom needs any kind of regular medical attention—

BRENT: She does.

[Beat.]

LEO: Seriously, Brent, if you need to call her—

BRENT: So, so, so, so, so we do something, right?

LEO: What?

BRENT: All that shit you just said, we don't let it happen!

[Brent shifts excitedly in his chair.]

LEO: Oh, okay.

BRENT: We've got you!

LEO: Yeah, I figured we'd have to do this part.

BRENT: I've got the platform, you've got the bowels, let's save some lives. [Brent shifts urgently in his chair.] When's the next one?

LEO: It doesn't matter.

BRENT: Of course it matters, if you know where the next one's happening—

LEO: It's the Carolinas next, then Spain—

BRENT: Okay, okay, the Carolinas, we can work with that, even if it's just, uh, half an hour again we can still—

LEO: No, Brent! It's not gonna be in half an hour. The biggest tsunami in Earth history is gonna hit North and South Carolina in a couple minutes. But it's only gonna hold that title for a couple minutes, and then an even bigger one is gonna hit Portugal and Morocco. And then a couple minutes after that—

BRENT: Okay, okay, okay that's enough, Shorty, that's enough! When does it stop?

LEO: I mean... it's not.

BRENT: Of course it's gonna stop, everything stops!

LEO: Okay technically yeah, it's gonna stop, but not in any way that'll be meaningful to...

[Beat.]

BRENT: Fuck you, no trailing off, to what?

LEO: Human life-spans. A couple generations of people is, what, a hundred years? It's not gonna stop in a hundred years. This is the Earth, it's on its own time, it barely knows we're here. Picture a dog circling a its favorite pillow for a thousand years. It's thinking about the nap, not the fleas.

BRENT: Then... (sighs impatiently)

LEO: Yeah...?

BRENT: (exasperated) Then why the fuck did you call me? [Brent shifts agitatedly in his chair.]
(calmer) Shorty? Why'd ya call me? What are we doin' here?

[Beat.]

LEO: I've had two years to think about this moment.

BRENT: What's two years, two years since what?

LEO: Since I started feeling the Earth. And realizing what that meant. How I could use it. What I could offer.

BRENT: What the fuck happened two years ago that you can—w-w-w-what, you got bitten by a magic tectonic plate?

LEO: I already told you. The breathing.

BRENT: The br... (laughs)

LEO: Yeah Brent, I led with this, come on.

BRENT: So you're saying... you're saying that faux-Tibetan bullshit you pulled to get in Michelle Faux-rink's pants—

LEO: Well more specifically, I wanted her to fall in love with me.

BRENT: You're saying that, that somehow caused you to—

LEO (overlapping): But of course it didn't work. It never works. By the time I have something to offer they've always moved on. She got hired somewhere, left the shared office space, and that was that.

BRENT: And you didn't drop the whole schtick immediately?

LEO: Oh, I was way too far down the rabbit hole by then.

BRENT: The rabbit hole of mindful breathing? (laughs derisively)

LEO: No, you laugh, but I bet you're reading about the Carolinas right now.

[Beat.]

BRENT: Fuck you.

LEO: I'm not happy about it. I'm not gloating. It's just What Is.

[Brent clicks, and the sound of a helicopter playing on Brent's speakers comes up under the following.]

BRENT: This aerial footage... it's like there was a war...

LEO: I probably should've worked with a proper breathing coach, you know, somebody who knew what they were doing and would adhere to just one of the traditions, rather than—

[On Brent's speakers someone starts inaudibly describing the aerial footage under the following.]

BRENT: "Traditions" again, the breathing traditions—

LEO: But guru's are expensive, and books are cheap. And websites are free! So I started mixing-and-matching my favorite stuff from various sources, Eastern, New Age, whatever it was. But I kept hitting this wall, you know, like this one level I couldn't get past. And eventually I realized I couldn't advance any further while I was around a whole world of people breathing in short, frantic, workaholic bursts. It's... it's like trying to sing one particular song while everyone around you is singing a different one.

BRENT: How would you even know if you're "advancing" in the field of—

LEO: So I started going into fields, and forests, late at night, anywhere I could think of where I could get other people's rhythms out of my mind and just focus on... breathing in tandem with the Earth.

BRENT: But... Leo...

LEO: You're gonna mock me, I know—

BRENT: No, no Shorty, I'm not, I'm—I'm just asking... the Earth doesn't have lungs, right? How do you breathe in tandem with something that... is not breathing?

LEO: Brent, are you ever alone?

[Brent hits the spacebar to turn off the helicopter footage.]

BRENT: Am I alone?

LEO: Is your life ever quiet?

BRENT: (laughs mockingly) I mean... you're a fan, right, you listen to the show?

LEO: Every episode. Sometimes twice.

BRENT: So you know I'm not married, I have no kids, my mom's in St. Paul...

LEO: Right, but—

BRENT: So any given night... if I'm not fucking somebody... I'm alone.

LEO: Yeah, but, like you said, I'm a fan, so I see the rest of it too.

BRENT: There's no "rest of it."

LEO: I see you up at all hours, answering questions on Twitter, Insta, Discord...

BRENT: Yeah, I'm a brand, I've never denied it.

LEO: Plus you have new ads all the time, new sponsors. So you must be in contact with those people on an ongoing basis.

BRENT: I don't know what point you're—I run a one-man business, of course I talk to—are you asking if I'm busy?

LEO: I'm saying do you ever feel like you're properly alone? Not lonely, but just... with yourself?

BRENT: I mean... oh fuck, there's more news coming up, something about—

LEO: That's just gonna keep happening 'til the internet goes out, can we please stay focused?

BRENT: You're telling me to... wait, wait the internet's gonna—

LEO: Do you ever feel alone?

BRENT: No, okay? I'm by myself, technically, there's no one else in the room, but I feel people there, pressing on me, all their wants or whatever... all their... (sighs with frustration)

LEO: See that's what I thought. Listening to your show, watching you online... and I don't blame you, either. A man like you, with your responsibilities, what else can you do?

BRENT: I... I think sometimes...

[Helicopter footage sound comes up again.]

LEO: Yeah?

BRENT: Sorry, there's some new footage...

LEO: Turn your screens off if you need to.

BRENT: Yeah, not happening.

LEO: Okay.

[Three computer beeps get incrementally quieter as Brent turns down the volume on the helicopter footage until it's muted.]

BRENT: Sometimes I think back to when I was nobody... and how hard I fought to not be nobody... but now...

LEO: Right, being nobody isn't all bad. Like for example if nobody's tweeting at you, or calling you with some offer, if nobody gives a shit about you at all, one thing you can do with all that disregard is go deep into the woods while the sun is setting, and stay there 'til it gets too dark to find your way out.

BRENT: That's one of the plusses?

LEO: That's alone. That's the kind of quiet that makes you realize you never knew what quiet was before. And honestly, Brent, until you've been in that kind of darkness and quiet, night after night... I don't think you can say that the Earth doesn't breathe. It takes a long time, sure... so many hours of silence, terror, wind, loneliness... before you can finally hear it. That breathing. The breathing of the Earth. And then so many hours more, so many nights more, before you can accurately match that breathing with your own.

[Brent abruptly turns off the silenced helicopter footage.]

BRENT: You know what's amazing?

LEO: Tell me, Brent.

BRENT: The whole time you were talking... that whole, uh, lyrical whatever... I was watching a helicopter slowly crash in Lisbon.

LEO: How did they get a camera on it?

BRENT: The camera was inside. Some reporter. They tried to fly above the wave... but it clipped them, just enough to...

LEO: Oh.

BRENT: I just sat here and watched them go down... through the lens of a camera they were holding...

LEO: Like you're dying through their eyes.

BRENT: Yeah.

LEO: Well that's what I'm saying.

BRENT: What?

LEO: Imagine there was a way to watch that video over and over until you reached a point that you could literally feel that crash. The pain, the heat, the metal bending and wrapping around your body... that you could feel it just as much as they did.

BRENT: That's what you have... with the Earth.

LEO: That's right.

BRENT: You're saying that just from going into the woods, night after night—

LEO: Or fields, or meadows—

BRENT: And, and breathing alongside the Earth, you somehow... synced up?

LEO: I mean, I couldn't prove it to a scientist. I only know the two things happened in close succession, one after the other. I breathed with the Earth, and then I felt the Earth. And I've been feeling it ever since. [Long beat of silence.] It's weird hearing just nothing on Brent Free.

[Brent starts laughing, low, building a bit more over subsequent lines.]

BRENT: Well congrats, my constipated friend... (starts laughing under his words) ...you achieved what the FCC couldn't.

LEO: The calls are still coming in, right?

BRENT: (continues laughing under both his and Leo's words) Oh, we've got calls, no fear, we've got calls coming out of our...

LEO: Can you unmute them so I can hear? (Brent keeps laughing.) What? What's funny?

BRENT: It's just... I was thinking...

LEOL: What?

BRENT: “Worst... superpower... EVER.” (laughs some more)

LEO: What do you mean?

BRENT: Foreknowledge of the end of the world... paired with an utter inability to do anything about it. You take the cake, Leo Short (laughs more), truly. (stops laughing)

LEO: The world’s not ending.

BRENT: Excuse me?

LEO: The world’s not ending.

BRENT: You literally just said this isn’t gonna stop.

LEO: I mean obviously many lives are ending, sure, but that’s not the same as—

BRENT: Oh, oh fuck you, fuck you, no-no-no-no, no way, are you about to get going on some “Earth is healing, we are the virus” shit? ‘Cause I’ll tell you right now, buddy: if it’s the end of the human race? I consider that the end of the world.

LEO: It won’t be the end of the human race. At least I don’t think so.

BRENT: So there’s limits to your psychic powers?

LEO: Oh yeah, they’re super limited! I barely know anything! All I know is how the Earth will move, and the immediate natural result. Like for example I know that everyone who lives near any coast in the world will be dead by, best guess, about 10 a.m. tomorrow...

BRENT: ...oh god almighty...

LEO: ...but the people in the middle of the continents? The ones who won’t feel the direct impact, only the results?

BRENT: Like, like us.

LEO: Exactly, the rest of us. With no power, no communications, way less food, way less medicine, all social stability gone. What happens because of that isn’t up to the Earth. So I don’t know how it’s gonna turn out.

BRENT: Y-you’re saying we can survive, just...

LEO: It'll never be easy again. None of us will ever know rest, not for generations. Every meal we eat will have to be grown or hunted or hoarded or taken by force from somebody else. Every time we go to sleep we'll risk someone killing us for the packet of crackers in our pocket.

BRENT: Jesus fuck, I... (laughs bitterly)

LEO: But Brent—

BRENT: I only just got rich... I only just... I-I-I had like a year of it...

LEO: But this is where you come in, Brent! This is where you shine!

BRENT: What? Me?

LEO: All that scary shit I just said, all of it can be mitigated by one thing, right?

BRENT: Suicide?

LEO: Numbers. People. Banding together to combine their food, their medicine, their weapons, taking turns watching while other people sleep.

BRENT: What are you saying right now, Shorty?

LEO: Can you please un-mute the phones? Please, for me? You said I gave you great ratings.

BRENT: Oh, best I ever had. Ever will have.

LEO: I just wanna hear them. It would mean everything to me.

BRENT: Yeah, yeah, o-okay, anything for you, baby, fill your boots, let's party.

[Brent unmutes the phones. Multiple phones ring, and continue to ring under the following dialogue.]

BRENT: Hear that, Shorty? That pack of sonic coyotes?

LEO: It's like hearing a dream come true...

BRENT: Well drink it in, Damien, 'cause it's all for you!

LEO: No, but you know what that is, right?

BRENT: What? What are you saying?

LEO: All those calls... from all over this country... those are our numbers. Those are our people. That's our nation!

BRENT: "Our"... what? What's "our nation"?

LEO: Yours and mine. Think about it, Brent. When it dawns on everyone that this is real, that it's irreversible, that there's no going back? Anyone who doesn't just give up and die is gonna start building their army. (inhales loudly, frightened) Their friends, their neighbors, anyone who can carry a steak knife. And whoever has the biggest one of those? They're the nation. They're the new country.

BRENT: How did this conversation get even more insane?

LEO: And normally that would be whoever has the best leverage—the most guns, the most food, whatever—but today our leverage beats everyone else's.

BRENT: What leverage, what could you possibly be—

LEO: (overlapping) ME! I'M THE LEVERAGE, THE LEVERAGE IS ME! And that beats anything anybody else has to offer. Guns, tanks, missiles, none of it matters, because I'm the only one who knows where it's safe to sleep at night. The Earth's not gonna stop moving, not for a hundred years, and I'm the only person alive who can say, "Go that way if you don't wanna die."

BRENT: Leo... you think you and I are gonna... th-th-th-that we're somehow gonna...

LEO: That's our citizens calling in right now. (laughs exuberantly) They're waiting for you to tell them to grab all their food and all their weapons and get to Denver right now while the roads are still open. You said it yourself, Brent: you've got the show, I've got the bowels.

BRENT: You're completely out of your mind!

LEO: I don't live in Caspar, Wyoming. I'm not here for a convention. I stopped off here on my way to you, Brent. But I'm about to get back on the road, and I'll be with you in a matter of hours.

BRENT: Okay you need to stop, I-I need to think, I need to, uh—

LEO: There's no time to think. Nobody knows that better than me. There's only time to act.

BRENT: Look, look, look, look, look, just, just stay where you are, I-I just need a couple minutes to—

LEO: I've been alone my whole life, Brent. The last person who wanted me around was my mom, and she died years ago. The only thing that's gotten me through those years without blowing my goddam brains out—

BRENT: Oh God, please don't say it—

LEO: ...was your show. [Brent groans.] Your voice, making fun of us, talking shit like a buddy would, like you were right there. And I would sit there, and I would listen to you, and I couldn't help myself, I couldn't help but have my one dear, sweet, shameful, secret wish: "One day he'll need me as much as I need him."

BRENT: Leo... this... you...th-th-this is a fantasy, man, you and I aren't gonna start some, what, nomad utopia, this is a delusion, we're just a couple of assholes!

LEO: Listen to all those rings, man! Does that look like a delusion to you?

BRENT: I just... I just... I... wanna go back...

LEO: The Earth doesn't do that, Brent. Never has. I gotta hang up now. Get off the john, get moving.

BRENT: No no no, Leo, wait—

LEO: I can't talk, drive, and feel the Earth, so I'm gonna focus on the last two. I'll be there soon.

BRENT: Leo, Leo, please don't hang up, please—

LEO: (overlapping) But I have to, Brent. How else can you take all those other calls?

BRENT: Other c—y-y-y-you think I'm about to start recruiting, Leo, like I'm some kind of—LEO PLEASE KEEP TALKING TO ME!

[Faint sound of Leo rising and walking away over the phone line.]

LEO: Oh my God, my legs are so asleep... shoulda seen that coming.

[Three beeps of Leo hanging up.]

BRENT: Leo wait, LEO WAIT, I CAN'T, I CAN'T! LEO! IT'S TOO MUCH I CAN'T! [Brent hits his desk.] Oh fuck... oh fuck... (groans in pain and frustration)

[The phone rings continue.]

BRENT: (pained exhalation) I only just got where I wanted to be. [Beat.] What do I... so fuckin' many of you... what do you seriously expect me to... what do you think I'm gonna... FUCK! [Hits desk again. Beat.] FINE. Fine. Let's do it. Who's first? Uh, who's my first—

[The phone rings all stop.]

BRENT: Wh... what? What's... where did... everybody...

[Brent flips switches.]

BRENT: Where the fuck did everybody... is my connection...?

[Banging sound of Brent climbing under his desk.]

BRENT (muted from under desk): Folks give me a second here, I just need to... everything looks fine, what the hell is...

[Brent gets back in his chair.]

BRENT (voice clearer again): Folks if you're calling in just keep trying, I'm having some kind of—wait... [Flips switches.] Where's—where the fuck is...

[Brent frantically types on his laptop keyboard under the following.]

BRENT: CNN can't just vanish... wait... why isn't anything... why the fuck isn't anything... You're GOOGLE, Google doesn't stop!! [mashes his keyboard.] Nothing's... nothing's... [shuts his laptop] MOM! MOM! [Beat.] (with slight digital warbling on his voice) Leo... Leo if you're listening—

[Brent's broadcast cuts out. Long beat of silence, leading into the same percussive beat from the beginning of the episode. The beat then leads into the jovial, upbeat music from the beginning of the first episode. The music continues under the following voiceover.]

VOICEOVER (Jordana Williams): Gideon Media presents *The Earth Moves* by Mac Rogers, based on an idea by Abe Goldfarb, directed by Jordana Williams. Featuring Abe Goldfarb and Brian Silliman. Sound design by Cara Ehlenfeldt. Produced, edited, and with music by Sean Williams. Special thanks to Steve Alexander, Chris Chapman, Ehren Gresehover, Dan Kois, Kate Kosma, and Seth Shelden.

[The music fades.]

END OF EPISODE 2