

MIDNIGHT BURGER

Chapter 36: 5, 4, 3, 2, 1...

By

Joe Fisher

Midnight Burger

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THE ROOF OF THE DINER. SEVERAL BLOCKS AWAY WE CAN HEAR THE MUNGO LUMBERING THROUGH THE STREETS OF PASADENA. OCCASIONALLY ONE OF LEIF'S DRONES FLIES BY.

GLORIA

Hey.

DAVID

Hey.

GLORIA

How are things up here?

DAVID

... The huge monster has moved into downtown Pasadena and is eating the tops of all the palm trees.

GLORIA

Yeah. They eat all day, that's all they really do.

DAVID

Probably for the best. Palm trees aren't native to this area anyway.

GLORIA

Really?

DAVID

They planted most of them in the 1930s. It was a jobs program during the great depression.

GLORIA

That's interesting.

DAVID

... There's a lot of things not native to the area around here.

GLORIA

... Yeah... David, what was he supposed to say?

DAVID

I don't know, what do you usually say to people?

GLORIA

We try and keep a low profile as long as we can, but then eventually things get so weird that we have to let the cat out of the bag... just like Caspar did with you.

DAVID

... What is all this stuff?

GLORIA

Leif lives up here. He sleeps in that hammock and this is his workshop. He calls it the command center.

DAVID

What does he do with all this?

GLORIA

I've seen him do some pretty amazing stuff, actually. See this here? This is a, let me see if I get this right, a laser interferometer. You use it to detect gravity waves. They have them here on Earth but on Earth they're about four kilometers long. Leif's is the size of a toaster.

DAVID

Why would you need to detect gravity waves?

GLORIA

Um. We were trying to track down an out of control space goddess.

DAVID

... Uh huh... Why?

GLORIA

I'm not sure why they needed it. Ava tells him to build something and he builds it.

DAVID

I mean, what's he doing here? What are any of you doing here?

GLORIA

The same thing as anyone else, David, we're doing the best we can.

DAVID

You left everyone in your life behind.

GLORIA

... It was different with each of us. Leif was on the run, Ava was on a mission. For me, my parents were gone, the only real friends I had were Cesar and his family, but, I was kind of the weird lady who came over to the house every once and a while. The kids would show you how their video games worked, the tiny ones would want you to read a story. It was nice but you're on the outside of it. Kind of a third wheel. All my other friends...

(MORE)

GLORIA (CONT'D)

I started to not understand them when they talked. They would talk about dating apps, and getting married, and moving up in their career at, I don't know, a shipping warehouse?... It was all getting really foreign to me really fast... And then there was this place... I'll admit, I thought I was just going to see some cool stuff and meet some aliens... But I've had to fight an evil empire and slay a space goddess among other things... But, somehow that's not foreign to me. I understand it...

DAVID

How could that not be foreign to you?

GLORIA

Inside you right now there is the purest part of you, the essence of who you are. When you're in touch with that part of you, when you're using it, you can feel it. I hadn't felt that before. I think if you're lucky enough to feel that, you should stick with it, no matter what... But your dad... your dad just came in to use the phone.

DAVID

... How do you know what this gigantic monster is?

GLORIA

Well, it's not a monster, David, it's just a really really big guy. They're harmless for the most part but if they get injured they can get a little rambunctious. When we first saw one, there was a village nearby and one of them had a wound on its back so we had to help out before it trampled the village.

DAVID

Help out how?

GLORIA

We managed to get up on it's back and we put honey on the wound.

DAVID

Honey?

GLORIA

It's nature's antiseptic, David.

DAVID

Jesus fucking Christ.

GLORIA

It was a light day, I cooked for the whole village afterwards... It was kind of normal. Just a wounded animal. See, it's not that bizarre.

WE HEAR THE SOUND OF RUSHING WATER DOWN BELOW.

DAVID

What is happening down on the street?

GLORIA

Um... okay, it looks like the street has become a river?

DAVID

A river.

GLORIA

Yes.

DAVID

Why?

GLORIA

(Calling down below.)  
Is the street a river?

AVA

(In the parking lot.)  
The street is a river.

GLORIA

Okay. The street is a river.

DAVID

Why is the street a river?

GLORIA

This is a new thing. Ava's theory is that, because we've been stuck like this for several months that this particular universe is having a little temper tantrum.

DAVID

What is happening!?

GLORIA

I know.

DAVID

The street is a river, Gloria!

GLORIA

Yes.

DAVID

There's a four-story monster threatening the Pasadena Playhouse!

GLORIA

This is good, let it out.

DAVID

In the span of fifteen minutes the whole damn world has gone on tilt!

GLORIA

Right.

DAVID

And the government's here!?

GLORIA

It happens sometimes.

DAVID

And Leif has a robot helper?!

GLORIA

Peter.

DAVID

I don't care what its name is!

GLORIA

Okay.

DAVID

What the fuck?!

GLORIA

I know...

DAVID

...

GLORIA

... Okay... Take your time. Don't freak out. I mean, freak out. That's fine, but... What's the real thing that's going on? The real thing is... something happened to your dad. And ever since then he's been doing the best he can. Sometimes failing, sometimes succeeding. That's all he was trying to do with you... Just stay up here, okay? Right now I have to go downstairs and somehow prevent a war between Leif and the United States Government.

DOWN IN THE PARKING LOT. A RIVER IS RUSHING BY CAUSING CHAOS AMONG THE TEAM OF GOVERNMENT AGENTS SURROUNDING THE BUILDING.

LEIF

Agent Parrino, how're you doing over there? Looks like the street is a river now, did you bring your trunks?

KYLE PARRINO FROM D.A.R.P.A.

What the fuck is this Leif? Where is this water coming from and what the fuck is that monster?

LEIF

Hey, easy with the "M" word there, buddy. The Mungo isn't a monster, it's just a plant eating megafauna going about its day. I'm sure you look like a monster to it.

KYLE PARRINO FROM D.A.R.P.A.

Oh, really?!

LEIF

No, not really. In fact it probably doesn't notice you at all.

KYLE PARRINO FROM D.A.R.P.A.

I don't know what all this is, Leif, but I know you've got something to do with it!

LEIF

Hey, I'm an impressive guy, but I can't suddenly make a river appear.

CASPAR

Actually, uh-

LEIF

Right, okay, yes, I did do that once, I did flood a city to rob a bank but that was a long time ago, I don't do that sort of thing anymore.

KYLE PARRINO FROM D.A.R.P.A.

What?

GLORIA

Leif.

LEIF

Hey.

GLORIA

A word.

LEIF

What's up?

GLORIA

"What's up?"

LEIF

... Look, I didn't have a choice.

GLORIA

Leif, considering our current situation, maybe just giving him the robot would've been the best choice.

LEIF

I'm not giving him the robot.

GLORIA

You can make another robot.

LEIF

Do you have any idea what they were going to use him for?

GLORIA

Leif, the last time we faced off with the government we had the benefit of knowing we'd be gone in twelve hours. We don't have that benefit anymore.

LEIF

I can get us out of this.

GLORIA

How?

LEIF

I don't know, I just need some time.

GLORIA

Leif, the world is literally unravelling and you've decided to add "grudge match with the US government" to the top of the sundae.

LEIF

Hey, at least you're not arguing with food vendors anymore.

CASPAR

Gloria. How's he doing?

GLORIA

He's doing okay. He's freaked out. He's not sure what to make of most of it.

CASPAR

Okay, but he's not going catatonic or anything?



GLORIA

No. I think he just needs some space.

EFFIE

Gloria, put us in his vicinity, I want to talk at him for a bit.

GLORIA

Some space, Mucklewains.

AVA

The river's gone.

GLORIA

Ava, how much worse is this going to get?

AVA

I don't know, I'm trying to see if it's on a schedule.

KYLE PARRINO FROM D.A.R.P.A.

Your attempt to wash us away didn't work, Leif. We're still here!

LEIF

I'm not doing anything, Agent Jackass.

KYLE PARRINO FROM D.A.R.P.A.

Yeah, right, you really expect me to believe that?

LEIF

I don't care what you believe.

KYLE PARRINO FROM D.A.R.P.A.

We're still doing this the easy way, Leif. You want me to bring out the big guns? It's all fun and games until we bring out the vomit cannon.

LEIF

Go fuck yourself.

CASPAR

Vomit cannon?

LEIF

They've got a cannon that can induce vomiting in a large group of people.

CASPAR

Why would someone make that?

LEIF

I don't know, hey, Agent Patrick Bateman, why would someone make a vomit cannon?

(MORE)

LEIF (CONT'D)

Could it be because your entire agency is full of kids who couldn't stop torturing their action figures?

KYLE PARRINO FROM D.A.R.P.A.

This phone right here, Leif. I make one call and everyone's going to start barfing like the fountain at the goddamn Bellagio!

LEIF

Mucklewains.

STATIC. EFFIE ZAPS HERSELF INTO AGENT PARRINO'S PHONE.

EFFIE

(Talking through Agent Parrino's phone.)  
Oh? Is that right? Are you talking about this particular telephonic whizz-bang?

KYLE PARRINO FROM D.A.R.P.A.

What the fuck?

EFFIE

You poked a bear, Mr. US Government!

KYLE PARRINO FROM D.A.R.P.A.

OW!

AGENT PARRINO DROPS HIS PHONE. STATIC. EFFIE IS BACK IN THE RADIO.

ZEBULON

You're getting very good at that, Dear.

EFFIE

Thanks, husband, I think I set his phone on fire.

KYLE PARRINO FROM D.A.R.P.A.

Why is my phone on fire, Leif?

LEIF

You were ankle deep in a river a second ago, you're asking about your phone?

KYLE PARRINO FROM D.A.R.P.A.

Somebody get me another phone!

LEIF

Do you want to borrow mine?

KYLE PARRINO FROM D.A.R.P.A.

Very funny.

LEIF

Just step inside the parking lot, I'll hand it to you.

KYLE PARRINO FROM D.A.R.P.A.

I'm not going anywhere near you until you call off your flying monkeys.

LEIF

It's a great phone, though. Nokia 9300.

KYLE PARRINO FROM D.A.R.P.A.

No.

LEIF

It'll erase all your public records as soon as you touch it but it's a great phone.

KYLE PARRINO FROM D.A.R.P.A.

Oh, I see. You think you can out-crazy me? Is that it? You really think you can get weirder than DARPA?

AVA

4, 3, 2, 1...

A BRAZILIAN CARNIVAL PARADE BEGINS TO CAREEN DOWN THE STREET WITH PEOPLE DANCING AND MUSIC PLAYING.

KYLE PARRINO FROM D.A.R.P.A.

What the... What the fuck is this?

LEIF

Looks like a Brazilian Carnival Parade. How's your samba Agent Parrino?

KYLE PARRINO FROM D.A.R.P.A.

How the fuck are you doing this?

LEIF

What can I say? The party follows me wherever I go.

KYLE PARRINO FROM D.A.R.P.A.

Somebody get me a phone!!

GLORIA

That's how we do it.

CASPAR

How we do what?

GLORIA

Ava, are these things on a regular schedule?

AVA  
Yeah, I think so.

GLORIA  
Leif, get over here.

LEIF  
C'mon, Agent, move to the music.

GLORIA  
Leif!

LEIF  
What? What is it?

GLORIA  
Ava says the weirdness is on a predictable schedule.

LEIF  
Okay.

GLORIA  
How can we make it worse?

AVA  
...Worse?

GLORIA  
Yes.

CASPAR  
Why in the world would we want to make it worse?

GLORIA  
Can we make it worse?

LEIF  
I mean. I don't know.

AVA  
Don't get me wrong, I love the idea, but why would we do that?

CASPAR  
Yes, why would we do that?

ZEBULON  
Oh, I think I know where she's headed with this one.

EFFIE  
Do tell.

ZEBULON

Gloria wants to see who can stay on the horse the longest.

GLORIA

That's right. I don't know where we end up with all this but I know we need the G-men out there off our back. The only thing we've got going for us right now is our ability to tolerate the most bizarre shit imaginable. I want the two of you to figure out a way to crank up the crazy around here. Seriously. Like, make it fucking nuts.

LEIF

We can't just crank the knobs on the universe like it's jacuzzi jets.

AVA

No, no, wait. I actually have some ideas, Leif come on!

LEIF

Jesus. Get ready everybody.

LEIF AND AVA WALK BACK INTO THE DINER, DAVID EXITS.

CASPAR

Hey, David how're you doing?

DAVID

What the fuck is that?

CASPAR

That's uh... well that's, that's Brazilian Carnival is what that is.

DAVID

Why?

CASPAR

"Why" is going to be a tough question around here for a minute.

DAVID WALKS BACK INSIDE.

CASPAR (CONT'D)

David-

GLORIA

Just give him some time.

CASPAR

This is a fucking nightmare. You want to make this worse?

GLORIA

Caspar, if we get thrown in a government black site, you're never going to see him again.

CASPAR

Fucking goddamnit, Gloria.

GLORIA

I know, Caspar.

KYLE PARRINO FROM D.A.R.P.A.

Leif? Leif, where are you going, we're not done talking!

GLORIA

Come on, let's go talk to this guy.

CASPAR

Okay.

GLORIA

Leif's got some things to do, you're going to have to talk to me for now.

KYLE PARRINO FROM D.A.R.P.A.

Who the fuck are you?

GLORIA

I'm fucking Gloria who the fuck are you?

KYLE PARRINO FROM D.A.R.P.A.

Bring Leif back out here, this has gone on long enough.

GLORIA

Look, I'm going to give you one warning.

KYLE PARRINO FROM D.A.R.P.A.

Oh? A warning? Listen, whoever you are, I'm not interested in making a reservation at your little restaurant, okay? There's very important things going on right now, if you haven't noticed.

GLORIA

You and your team need to get out of here right now.

KYLE PARRINO FROM D.A.R.P.A.

Oh? We do? What are you going to do, Gloria? Spit in our food? Bring it out!

THE AGENTS BEGIN WHEELING OUT THE B.A.R.F. CANNON.

CASPAR

Oh Jesus, is that what I think it is?

KYLE PARRINO FROM D.A.R.P.A.

I hope everybody in there enjoyed their lunch because they're about to see it again.

UP ON THE ROOF.

LEIF

I'm dying to know how you plan to pull off this plan.

AVA

Okay, it's a little nutty-fruitcakes but keep in mind I've been up for almost forty-eight hours now.

LEIF

I can't wait.

AVA

You said the diner has a pre-print right? A particular energy signature that shows up a few days before the diner?

LEIF

Yeah.

AVA

Any way you can broadcast that particular energy cocktail?

LEIF

Uh, I think so? But it wouldn't be exact and it wouldn't be near the intensity that the diner sends out.

AVA

That's okay. I don't need you to feed the sharks. I just need you to chum the water.

LEIF

Sharks, Ava?

AVA

Sharks, Leif.

CASPAR

(In the parking lot.)  
Leif!

LEIF

What?

CASPAR

I think they're bringing out the puke gun.

LEIF

Jesus Christ. You're a sick fuck, Kyle.

KYLE PARRINO FROM D.A.R.P.A.

(In the street.)

Fuck you, Leif!

LEIF GETS TO WORK AT THE COMMAND CENTER.

AVA

Does that thing actually work?

LEIF

It works. He's just not telling us that it takes an hour to warm up, we've got time.

AVA

Okay. Of course the scientist in me wants to see it work. Does it really make everyone vomit?

LEIF

Oh yeah. These guys are the worst. They've all got framed pictures of Dr. Moreau in their offices. Okay, let's see, pretending we're the diner... a little bit of gamma, some UV, and pinch of synchrotron...

AN EMITTER BEGINS TO SPIN UP IN THE COMMAND CENTER.

LEIF (CONT'D)

Okay, there we go. It's not perfect but it's in the neighborhood. We are broadcasting kind of like the diner. What's this supposed to do?

AVA

We're acting like we're open for business.

LEIF

Okay? I don't see how that's going to do anything.

WE BEGIN TO HEAR AN IMMINENT RUMBLING.

LEIF (CONT'D)

What is that sound?

AVA

Ooooooh boy.

THE "RIVER" ON COLORADO BOULEVARD COMES BACK WITH A VENGEANCE. IT IS NOW HUGE FLASH FLOOD HEADED RIGHT FOR THE FEDERAL AGENTS.



KYLE PARRINO FROM D.A.R.P.A.  
Oh SHIIIIIIIIIIIT!

THE RAGING RIVER RISES UP AND WASHES AWAY THE FEDERAL AGENTS.

LEIF  
The river came back!

AVA  
Sharks!

LEIF  
Let's get down there.

IN THE PARKING LOT. THE RIVER IS RAGING.

CASPAR  
The river is... back.

GLORIA  
Uh huh.

CASPAR  
The federal agents are... gone.

GLORIA  
I think I need to be more careful about the things  
I tell Ava to do.

CASPAR  
Might be wise.

ZEBULON  
Shall we wait here patiently for the other nine  
plagues?

DOOR CHIME.

AVA  
I'm calling that a success.

CASPAR  
What the fuck did you do?

AVA  
I just did what Gloria told me.

CASPAR  
But what the fuck did you do, Ava?

LEIF  
I broadcasted an energy signal that imitated a  
functioning diner.

AVA

And the floodgates opened. I apologize for the incredibly accurate metaphor.

GLORIA

Where did you wash them away to?

AVA

Y'know... downriver.

CASPAR

Shit.

LEIF

I was not expecting that to happen but it's hard to argue with the results.

GLORIA

Okay, but, shut it off now.

LEIF

Okay.

AVA

We can't.

GLORIA

What?

LEIF

What?

AVA

We already put out the signal.

GLORIA

What do you mean we already put out the signal?

AVA

I mean, the wheels are in motion, all that fucked up energy out there, it's got a target now. Shutting it off won't matter.

GLORIA

But it matters to me, Ava.

AVA

Hey, you gave me an order, I followed the order. Things are about to get reeeeeal weird.

GLORIA

That's not what I asked for!

EFFIE

Gloria I believe that's exactly what you asked for.

GLORIA

Is it?

LEIF

Yep.

GLORIA

... Okay... well... everyone buckle up, I guess?

CASPAR

Fuck... I've got to go talk to David.

CASPAR WALKS INSIDE THE DINER.

CASPAR (CONT'D)

David?

THERE'S NO ANSWER. HE WALKS THROUGH THE BACK DOOR.

CASPAR (CONT'D)

David?...

WE HEAR THE SOUND OF A CITY BUS SPEEDING DOWN THE STREET.  
WEAR DAVID TYPING ON HIS PHONE. HE PULLS UP A VIDEO. WE HEAR  
THE SOUND OF THE MUNGO IN THE BACKGROUND.

MAD MADDOX

(In David's Phone.)

This is Mad Maddox. I am on the roof of the Target in downtown Pasadena... And there is a fucking Kaiju attacking the city! But listen, I've been watching it. I think it's just eating the palm trees!

DAVID

Fuck.

DAVID SWIPES UP ON HIS PHONE. ANOTHER VIDEO. WE HEAR A RIVER  
IN THE BACKGROUND.

JAMES SPILLER-ROSA

(In David's Phone.)

This is James Spiller-Rosa, I am outside the Cheesecake Factory... Colorado Boulevard just turned into a river... what is happening?

DAVID

Fuck.

DAVID SWIPES UP AGAIN.

CRYSTAL DELIGHTFUL

(In David's Phone.)

Hey y'all, it's Crystal Delightful again. Welcome back to my channel. I'm sure you're sick of the videos of my garden by now but you've got to see this... I came out here to plant these dahlia bulbs and look... there is a goat in my backyard... What is this goat doing here?... It's really cute... Hi little buddy.

GOAT

(In David's Phone.)

Hi there.

CRYSTAL DELIGHTFUL SCREAMS. DAVID CLOSES HIS PHONE.

DAVID

What the fuck...

THE BUS LURCHES TO A HALT.

DAVID (CONT'D)

Oh come on, what is the hold up?

WE HEAR SHOCK AMONG THE PEOPLE ON THE BUS. A MILITARY MARCHING BAND CROSSES RIGHT IN FRONT OF THE BUS.

DAVID (CONT'D)

A marching band. A fucking marching band. Okay... okay... Drive the fucking bus!

THE BUS BEGINS DRIVING AGAIN. DAVID'S PHONE VIBRATES.

DAVID (CONT'D)

What?... No, I'm not there anymore... I'm on a bus... yeah, the busses are still working everybody's trying to get the fuck out of Pasadena, of course the busses are still working... yeah... yeah I saw it... it's fucking real... I have no idea... Look, I don't know what to tell you, I just know that I'm glad to be out of Pasadena, and I'm never going back... I'll call you later, I'm on my way to barricade myself in my apartment.

THE BUS STOPS AND THE DOORS SWING OPEN. DAVID WALKS OUT ONTO THE STREET. HE PASSES A CORNER STORE THAT'S PLAYING THE NEWS ON THE RADIO.

RADIO REPORTER

... Again the news coming out of Pasadena is very confusing right now, local officials are starting to chime in and are urging people to stay in their homes, if you're at work stay at work, they do NOT want people out on the street right now-

DAVID

FUCK-

RIGHT AS DAVID IS ABOUT TO TURN A CORNER A STAMPEDE OF ZEBRAS EXPLODES PAST HIM. CARS SWERVE AND PEOPLE SCREAM.

RADIO REPORTER

-We are also getting strange reports across the city, not just Pasadena, so we recommend staying where you are, if you're out in the street, get inside as soon as you can.

DAVID

Fucking Zebras?

DAVID CONTINUES DOWN THE STREET. HE ROUNDS ANOTHER CORNER AND IS HIT BY A BLIZZARD.

DAVID (CONT'D)

AND a fucking blizzard?!

DAVID OPENS THE FRONT DOOR OF HIS APARTMENT BUILDING AND WALKS INSIDE. HE THEN STOPS AND OPENS THE FRONT DOOR AGAIN. THE BLIZZARD IS GONE.

DAVID (CONT'D)

Jesus Christ.

DAVID SHUTS THE DOOR AGAIN AND WALKS DOWN THE HALL OF HIS APARTMENT BUILDING. HE UNLOCKS THE DOOR, WALKS INSIDE, AND LOCKS EVERY LOCK ON HIS DOOR BEHIND HIM.

DAVID (CONT'D)

You're fine... you're fine...

DAVID PUTS DOWN HIS BAG AND PICKS UP THE REMOTE CONTROL. BEFORE HE TURNS ON THE TV HE BEGINS TO HEAR SOMETHING OUTSIDE. HE CROSSES TO THE WINDOW AND OPENS IT. A GROUP OF GREGORIAN MONKS ARE SINGING AS THEY WALK DOWN THE STREET. HE SHUTS THE WINDOW AND TURNS ON THE NEWS.

JAY SPARK

Okay, we're back, this is Jay Spark, I'm here with Jacqueline Snyder and we are trying our best to make sense of the news coming out of Pasadena and now spreading across the Los Angeles area. We're told the airspace above the area is about to be restricted but we've still got our eye in the sky chopper up there, Jacqueline, what are we seeing right now?

JACQUELINE SNYDER

Well, Jay, we're seeing a great big monster aren't we?

JAY SPARK

Yes we are.

JACQUELINE SNYDER

It is four stories tall, and it is currently traveling very slowly south down Lake Boulevard towards my favorite Trader Joe's.

JAY SPARK

We should note at this point that there have not been any casualties.

JACQUELINE SNYDER

And thank God.

JAY SPARK

Some light injuries from people fleeing the scene but this guy does not appear to be Godzilla, does he, Jacqi?

JACQUELINE SNYDER

Well he is if you're a palm tree. This big boy seems to be focused entirely on eating the tops of palm trees.

JAY SPARK

Bad news if you're a palm tree, good news if you're my Land Rover. Lost an entire windshield to a falling palm frond last year, remember that?

JACQUELINE SNYDER

Ooh, that was a bad day in the studio for everyone, wasn't it?

JAY SPARK

But this parade float come to life is not the only thing going on in the City of Roses, is it, Jacqi?

JACQUELINE SNYDER

No, it is not, Jay. We were jokingly calling it the Colorado river, here in the studio. Colorado Boulevard in Pasadena has now become a raging river. We don't know how, we don't know why, but we did manage to capture the moment it happened with our eye in the sky chopper, let's roll that footage.

JAY SPARK

Okay, we see here a restaurant in Pasadena called Midnight Burger. Now, I'm no expert but there appears to be some sort of government standoff going on around this restaurant.

(MORE)

JAY SPARK (CONT'D)

There you see the black suburbans, you've got men with guns and what looks like a squadron of drones in the sky right above the restaurant. Now, that raises enough questions, but watch this footage here... all of a sudden there is a raging river, and you can watch as these government vehicles, all of them, are completely swept away by this sudden river. Look at that.

JACQUELINE SNYDER

I mean, that's one way to end a government standoff.

JAY SPARK

It sure is. I'm not sure where those government agents got washed away to, but I hope they brought their water weenies.

JACQUELINE SNYDER

Yikes, me too. Okay, so like we said these strange incidents are now spreading across the city so let's go to the San Fernando Valley Buddhism Center where we are getting word that the Buddhists are levitating-

THE TV SUDDENLY CUTS OUT. WE HEAR GLORIA'S VOICE.

GLORIA

(On Television.)  
... Are we on?

LEIF

We're live.

GLORIA

Okay, hello Los Angeles. I'm Gloria. You have no idea who I am, I know. I'm cutting into your local news right now because I'm sure a lot of you out there are scared and confused about the things going on in the city. Without going into it too much, because I don't know how much time we have, I'll say this: the world you live in is trying to fix itself. Fixing yourself can get really messy. It's going to be messy. All that I, a strange woman who has just appeared on your television, want to say is: what's the real thing that's going on? Check on your neighbors, are they okay? Check in on the people in your life. There may be someone in your life who needs to hear the words "we're going to be okay." You should say that to them. You may not believe it, but trust me, when you say "it's going to be okay" to someone, you're always talking to two people.

(MORE)

GLORIA (CONT'D)

Stick together, and hang on, nothing in the history of the universe has ever been permanent... Are we still going?

LEIF

Yeah, we're still up.

GLORIA

Okay, I'm going to go again... ¡Hola Los Angeles!  
Soy Gloria-

DAVID TURNS OFF THE TELEVISION. AFTER A MOMENT, DAVID OPENS A WINDOW. TWO WORLD WAR I ERA PLANES BUZZ HIS APARTMENT BUILDING SHOOTING MACHINE GUNS AT EACH OTHER. DAVID QUICKLY SHUTS THE WINDOW AGAIN. HE TURNS THE TV BACK ON.

JACQUELINE SNYDER

-Now, I know the traffic is bad right now, but it's especially bad around Sunset and Doheny where apparently the street is now doing a full loop-de-loop like a Hot Wheels track.

HE TURNS OFF THE TV AGAIN. WE SIT IN SILENCE FOR A MOMENT. WE BEING TO HEAR SOMETHING OUTSIDE. IT'S THE SOUND OF SOMEONE RUNNING IN HEELS, THEN A STRANGE SOUND. WE HEAR THE RUNNING AGAIN, AND THE STRANGE SOUND AGAIN. THE SOUND KEEPS REPEATING. DAVID'S CURIOSITY WINS OUT AND HE OPENS THE WINDOW. OVER AND OVER AGAIN, A WOMAN RUNS AND THEN WE HEAR A STRANGE SOUND.

DAVID

Oh, what the fuck?

HE CLOSES THE WINDOW AGAIN. HE TYPES BRIEFLY ON HIS PHONE AND LOUD MUSIC STARTS PLAYING IN HIS APARTMENT. AS THE MUSIC PLAYS WE CAN STILL FAINTLY HEAR THE REPEATING SOUND OUTSIDE, AND SO CAN DAVID. HE SHUTS OFF THE MUSIC. AFTER A MOMENT HE OPENS THE DOOR TO HIS APARTMENT, WALKS DOWN THE HALL AND WALKS OUTSIDE. HE SLOWLY APPROACHES THE REPEATING NOISE AND WE BEGIN TO HEAR A WOMAN'S VOICE. THE WOMAN APPEARS TO BE RUNNING DOWN THE SIDEWALK, DISAPPEARING, THEN REAPPEARING AGAIN ONE HUNDRED YARDS UP THE STREET. THE WOMAN TRIES AGAIN AND AGAIN TO CONTINUE DOWN THE STREET BUT SHE KEEPS DISAPPEARING AND REAPPEARING.

CHRISTINA

Goddamn it.

SHE RUNS AGAIN, DISAPPEARS AND REAPPEARS AGAIN.

CHRISTINA (CONT'D)

What the hell is happening?

SHE RUNS AGAIN, DISAPPEARS AND REAPPEARS AGAIN.



DAVID

Hey.

CHRISTINA

What?

DAVID

What are you doing?

CHRISTINA

I'm trying to walk down the street.

DAVID

It's not working.

CHRISTINA

I know!

DAVID

Maybe you should stop for a second.

CHRISTINA

Why?

DAVID

Because it's freaking me out.

CHRISTINA

Every time I try to pass that blue Lexus I disappear and reappear back up here again. It's freaking YOU out?

DAVID

Well, doing it over and over again doesn't seem to be doing anything.

CHRISTINA

Have you got any better ideas?

SHE RUNS AGAIN, SHE DISAPPEARS AND REAPPEARS AGAIN.

CHRISTINA (CONT'D)

Fuck!

DAVID

Just stop, okay?

CHRISTINA

... What is happening?

DAVID

I don't know. I've been asking myself that all day.

CHRISTINA

... Is it true that there's a monster in Pasadena right now?

DAVID

... Yeah... Yeah there is.

CHRISTINA

And Colorado Boulevard is a river?

DAVID

Yes.

CHRISTINA

And there was a blizzard for a second?

DAVID

Uh huh.

CHRISTINA

... These documents in my hand, I was running these from our offices to a meeting room three blocks away and... the street starting filling up with white stuff... I think it was shaving cream... so I turned down this street and then this started happening.

DAVID

Maybe just email the documents next time.

CHRISTINA

Very funny... Here I go again.

DAVID

Good luck.

SHE RUNS, DISAPPEARS, AND REAPPEARS AGAIN.

CHRISTINA

Great.

DAVID

Have you tried going in a different direction?

CHRISTINA

I need to go that way.

DAVID

Going that way doesn't seem to be in the cards.

CHRISTINA

What if... what if I go another direction and something even worse happens? What if I don't reappear?

DAVID

Okay, well I hope you enjoy spending the rest of your life standing on this sidewalk.

CHRISTINA

... Well, which way do I go?

DAVID

I'm standing here on the other side of the street. Pretty nice over here.

CHRISTINA

... Can you do me a favor?

DAVID

Sure.

CHRISTINA

My name's Christina Sinnott. I work at Ted Wassanassan and Associates.

DAVID

... Okay, what's the favor?

CHRISTINA

No, I just... I just moved to town for this job. I don't really know anyone at work... and there's a possibility that I'm going to walk across the street and disappear forever, so I needed someone to know...

DAVID

Know what?

CHRISTINA

That I existed.

DAVID

...Alright. I know. It's nice to meet you Christina. I'm David.

CHRISTINA

Hi David. Here I go.

DAVID

See you on the other side.

CHRISTINA VERY SLOWLY MAKES HER WAY ACROSS THE STREET UNTIL SHE FINALLY REACHES DAVID.

CHRISTINA

Okay, I'm-

SHE DISAPPEARS AND REAPPEARS BACK WHERE SHE STARTED.

CHRISTINA (CONT'D)  
...Fucking bullshit.

DAVID  
Better than disappearing for good.

CHRISTINA  
Sure... bright side... well now what do I do?

DAVID  
... I have no idea.

BACK AT THE DINER. WE HEAR THE SOUND OF A FORMULA ONE RACE.

CASPAR  
What is this now?

GLORIA  
Well, Caspar, this is looking like some race cars.

CASPAR  
What happened to the river?

GLORIA  
I don't know.

LEIF  
(From the roof.)  
Okay, this is looking like it's all over LA County now. There's reports of a World War I dog fight over Hollywood and something about a stampede of Zebras and an intersection filled with shaving cream.

GLORIA  
Great.

LEIF  
What is this?

CASPAR  
Looks like Formula One.

LEIF  
Cool.

GLORIA  
Anything from Ava?

AVA  
(On the roof.)  
So, I'm calling them "intrusions."

GLORIA

Okay, anything else?

AVA

Sometimes one intrusion will supersede the other. Like right now, this race car thing superseded the river on Colorado Boulevard. Then, sometimes they can co-exist. So we've got the race cars and also the Mungo is still loose in downtown Pasadena eating all the palm trees.

GLORIA

Where is all this headed, Ava?

AVA

Too early to tell right now, but my guess is total atomic breakdown.

CASPAR

Total atomic breakdown sounds bad.

AVA

We may be seeing an injection of antimatter into the universe causing a slow annihilation. Try and imagine rust on a ship. I think that's the universe right now.

CASPAR

I don't want to try and imagine that, thank you.

GLORIA

Any way we can get out ahead of this?

AVA

Effie?

EFFIE

Gloria, every time one of these oddities rears its head I'm getting a particular feeling in my knees.

GLORIA

Your knees.

EFFIE

I'm feeling it in my joints when one of these, Ava what are we calling them?

AVA

Intrusions.

EFFIE

Every time one of them intrusions comes around I've got it in my knees and sometimes my right elbow just before it makes itself known.

GLORIA

That sounds painful.

ZEBULON

I have cold compresses and a hot water bottle and I am alternating between them.

EFFIE

Don't you worry about us, Gloria.

AVA

I think with Effie's help I can at least work out a schedule for when the intrusions are going to happen.

CASPAR

The race is over.

WE BEGIN TO HEAR THE "COLORADO RIVER" AGAIN.

CASPAR (CONT'D)

Annd we're back to the river.

AVA

Okay, good. It looks like Colorado Boulevard is a kind of nexus point. A soft spot where the intrusions are going to manifest, if anything happens it'll probably happen there, but it looks like with the reports that Leif's getting, there are fissures opening all over the city.

GLORIA

Fucking great. Okay, let me know when you know anything.

CASPAR

Hey, at least we're not in a standoff with the US Government anymore.

GLORIA

So, David left, huh?

CASPAR

Yeah, he did. I'm glad. He needed to get out of here, I'm sure he's safer wherever he went.

GLORIA

I'm sorry, Caspar.

CASPAR

You know, when I first started talking to him again, I had one rule: It may be awkward, he may hate you, but whatever you do, Caspar, just don't make it worse... So... I made it worse.

GLORIA

You didn't make it worse, Caspar, whoever put us here made it worse.

CASPAR

Well, regardless, it's worse. Because of my presence here, the universe where he makes his home is now headed for... what was it?

GLORIA

Total atomic breakdown.

CASPAR

Yeah, total atomic breakdown, I'm going to call that worse. Fucking disaster.

A FOOD DELIVERY DRONE COMES ROLLING DOWN THE STREET.

DRONE

Delicious food coming through... Delicious food coming through... Delicious food coming through...

GLORIA

Well, look at this brave little soldier.

CASPAR

Jesus christ. This whole universe is going to break down and this guy is still going to be trying to deliver a poke bowl to someone.

DOOR CHIME, AVA WALKS OUT INTO THE PARKING LOT WITH THE MUCKLEWAINS.

AVA

Okay, I think we've got it. Here comes another intrusion. 5, 4, 3, 2, 1...

DRONE

Delicious food coming through... Delicious food coming th-

GLORIA

Nothing's happening.

CASPAR

The food delivery bot stopped.

GLORIA

Is that all that's going to happen?

EFFIE

That doesn't feel like much.

THE FOOD DELIVERY DRONE BEGINS TO TRANSFORM INTO SOMETHING MUCH BIGGER.

ZEBULON  
Oh dear.

THE DRONE SPROUTS TO HUGE ARMS AND A HEAD.

ZEBULON (CONT'D)  
Oh my!

CASPAR  
Jesus Christ he's a fucking Decepticon!

DRONE  
DELICIOUS FOOD COMING THROUGH!

THE DRONE LURCHES TOWARD THEM.

ZEBULON  
For heaven's sake, someone take the food from it!

GLORIA  
Leif!

LEIF  
What? Holy shit!

CASPAR  
Leif, do something!

LEIF  
Peter!

PETER SPRINGS TO LIFE AND HEROICALLY LEAPS FROM THE ROOF. HE RUSHES IN, QUICKLY AND METHODICALLY GOING TO TOWN ON THE DELIVERY DRONE, CUTTING IT TO PIECES WITH HIS LASER.

DRONE  
DELICIOUS FOOD COMING THROUGH!!

THE DRONE FIGHTS BACK BUT PETER IS TOO FAST.

GLORIA  
Everybody back up!

THE DRONE FALLS TO THE GROUND IN PIECES AFTER BEING DICED UP.

DRONE  
Please... enjoy... your... ceasar... salad...  
wraaaaaaaap...

LEIF  
Nice work, Peter.



CASPAR

Leif, how have you not made one hundred peters?!

LEIF

I know, right?

BACK AT DAVID'S APARTMENT. CHRISTINA IS SLOWLY WALKING DOWN THE SIDEWALK.

DAVID

Now, what are you doing?

CHRISTINA

I was thinking, maybe I need to sneak up on it.  
Maybe I was walking too fast, like, maybe there's a speed limit.

DAVID

A speed limit?

CHRISTINA

Yeah, I think I'm getting a little further that I usually-

CHRISTINA TELEPORTS AGAIN. SHE'S BACK WHERE SHE STARTED.

CHRISTINA (CONT'D)

Oh god damn it.

DAVID

It doesn't seem like the type of thing you can sneak past.

CHRISTINA

How do you know?

DAVID

I don't.

CHRISTINA

What is that sound?

A GROUP OF GREGORIAN MONKS ARE WALKING DOWN THE MIDDLE OF THE STREET SINGING THEIR GHOSTLY SONG AGAIN.

CHRISTINA (CONT'D)

Are these Gregorian Monks?

DAVID

I don't know, I don't know much about monks.

CHRISTINA

Hello?

DAVID

I don't think they can see us.

CHRISTINA

Is it possible that the City of Los Angeles is having one big mass hallucination?

DAVID

I doubt it, but I'm sure that'll be everyone's explanation after this is over.

CHRISTINA

What if it's never over? What if this is the world now?

DAVID

... I don't know... I'll tell you what...

DAVID GETS OUT HIS PHONE AND STARTS TYPING.

DAVID (CONT'D)

... I've got a friend, he lives in Austria... I am texting him right now and we're going to see how things are going half way around the world.

CHRISTINA

Why?

DAVID

I don't know, uh... I went through a period in my life when I would get a little scared from time to time... and whenever I would feel that way I would... I would try and widen the lens, you know?

CHRISTINA

No.

DAVID

My life felt like the entire universe. It felt like the only thing that was happening in the universe was whatever bad shit was happening to me... But you widen the lens. Zoom out. The world is wide, right? The world is a billion things. Not just you... it helped to know that there were plenty of places out there where my particular bullshit didn't exist.

DAVID'S PHONE VIBRATES.

DAVID (CONT'D)

Okay... I told him that there is some crazy shit going down in LA right now and he thinks I'm talking about a party. He is...

(MORE)

DAVID (CONT'D)

he is on vacation right now with his boyfriend, who is terrible by the way, we don't like him, Christina, and they are somewhere called Hallstatt. (HALL-shtaht)

CHRISTINA

Where is that?

DAVID

I don't know.

(Typing.)

Send... pics... It's entirely possible that it's not the end of the world... maybe we shouldn't have freaked out and ran.

CHRISTINA

Ran?

DAVID'S PHONE BUZZES AGAIN.

DAVID

Okay... we have pictures of Hallstatt. Well, look at that, that is lovely.

CHRISTINA

Wow, that's beautiful.

DAVID

That is an adorable mountain lake town. No bad shit happening. A nice quiet place... Okay, now, did his boyfriend have to have his shirt off in this pic? No, he did not. This is what I'm talking about Christina, we hate him.

CHRISTINA

We really do.

DAVID

So... not the end of the world.

THE ZEBRA STAMPEDE IS SUDDENLY RUNNING PAST THEM. IT IS VERY LOUD. THEY THEN ROUND THE CORNER AND ARE GONE.

DAVID (CONT'D)

Maybe that wasn't the best moment for the Zebra stampede to come by, but my point still stands, okay?

CHRISTINA

... Why are you doing this?

DAVID

What?

CHRISTINA

Helping me.

DAVID

I think the jury's still out on whether or not I'm helping you.

CHRISTINA

It's kind of dangerous out here, there was just a stampede, and I think an aerial dogfight earlier?

DAVID

Uh... I don't know... I had just made it to my apartment, and the whole time I was trying to get there I was convinced that, if I made it back home, everything was going to be okay. So I got in and locked all the doors and... somehow I got more scared in my safe apartment than I am out here... maybe I needed something to do.

CHRISTINA

... So, should I try again?

DAVID

Do you want to try again?

CHRISTINA

No.

DAVID

Then let's talk about something else.

CHRISTINA

Great, ok.

DAVID

How come you're the only person in America not sending documents through the internet?

CHRISTINA

Oh. Right. God, I totally forgot I was even holding these. They're from an old case. 1983? They haven't been digitized yet so I had to run back to the office and get them... I think I'm going to be a little late for the arbitration.

DAVID

I'll write you a note.

CHRISTINA

Great.

DAVID

Dear lawyers, this lady was teleporting up and down Argyle Avenue so she had to miss your big fancy meeting.

CHRISTINA

That'll work... Jesus is my job even going to exist? I mean... what if everything keeps getting crazier?

DAVID

I imagine even if society gets ground down to nothing there'll still be that desire for people to sue each other.

CHRISTINA

Oh, good... So, what do you do? Or *did* you do, depending on how things play out?

DAVID

I'm a street artist.

CHRISTINA

Really?

DAVID

We exist.

CHRISTINA

That's fun. Have I seen any of your stuff?

DAVID

I don't know, what's your commute like?

CHRISTINA

I live in Valley Village so I take Laurel Canyon.

DAVID

Ah. On a wall for a while I had a thing: it was Charleton Heston in the Ten Commandments-

CHRISTINA

-But instead of carrying the ten commandments he was carrying two bass woofers?

DAVID

That's me.

CHRISTINA

I loved that one! That's you?

DAVID

It is.

CHRISTINA

Wait, I remember the signature... you're Cosmic Shrug!

DAVID

I am.

CHRISTINA

Oh my God, you're a legend!

DAVID

No, I'm not.

CHRISTINA

You are to me. You're the first cool person I've met in Los Angeles.

DAVID

Well, that's what you get for living in Valley Village.

CHRISTINA

That must be so great. Is it great?

DAVID

I like it.

CHRISTINA

You've got this thing out there for everyone to see. They drive past and it makes their day a little weirder, y'know? I wish I had something like that.

DAVID

Christina, you have definitely made my day a little weirder.

CHRISTINA

Yeah. Yeah I guess I have... Maybe that's why all this is happening. Maybe people need to be weirded out more.

DAVID

Yeah... you know what? Let's try again.

CHRISTINA

Oh god.

DAVID

Come on. Let's change it up, though.

CHRISTINA

What do you mean?

DAVID

Give me the file.

CHRISTINA

Okay. It's kind of become my security blanket, though.

DAVID

Don't worry, I'm going to put it right here on top of this car.

CHRISTINA

Okay.

DAVID

Now give me your hand.

CHRISTINA

No, I don't think that's a good idea.

DAVID

We've got to do something. Let's try this. You may be stuck, but I'm not. Let's see what happens.

CHRISTINA

Okay. Are you sure?

DAVID

I'm sure.

CHRISTINA

What if you get stuck in this loop with me?

DAVID

Then at least we've learned something.

CHRISTINA

Okay... Okay, oh God... I'm taking your hand.

DAVID

Good. Now let's walk.

THEY START TO WALK DOWN THE STREET.

CHRISTINA

I promise if you get stuck with me for all eternity that I'm a great conversationalist when I'm not freaking out.

DAVID

That's good to know.

CHRISTINA

And I talk in my sleep.

DAVID  
Okay.

CHRISTINA  
Oh God, here it comes...

THEY KEEP WALKING.

CHRISTINA (CONT'D)  
... We made it to the corner.

DAVID  
We made it to the corner.

CHRISTINA  
We did it.

DAVID  
We did it.

CHRISTINA  
Did we do it?

DAVID  
I think so.

CHRISTINA  
Is the spell broken?

DAVID  
You're on the street corner.

CHRISTINA  
I'm on the street corner!

DAVID  
I guess you just needed some company.

CHRISTINA  
That's fucking incredible!

CHRISTINA TELEPORTS AGAIN.

DAVID  
Whoa.

CHRISTINA  
Shit!... Wait.

DAVID  
You're across the street now.



CHRISTINA

I'm across the street now. Why am I across the street now?

DAVID

I don't know, but it's still progress.

CHRISTINA

Hang on.... Wait... stay there...

CHRISTINA TELEPORTS BACK TO DAVID.

DAVID

Oh, shit!

CHRISTINA

I'm back. I came back.

DAVID

How?

CHRISTINA

I don't know.

DAVID

Do it again.

CHRISTINA

Okay.

SHE TELEPORTS BACK ACROSS THE STREET.

CHRISTINA (CONT'D)

I'm over here again!

DAVID

Confirmed.

CHRISTINA

I think... I think I can control it.

DAVID

Shit... Okay, go bigger this time.

CHRISTINA

What do you mean?

DAVID

That balcony up there.

CHRISTINA

The one with the cactus?

DAVID

Yeah. Go for it.

CHRISTINA

Okay, okay, oh god, okay...

CHRISTINA TELEPORTS THREE STORIES UP TO A BALCONY.

CHRISTINA (CONT'D)

(On the balcony.)

Holy shit I'm on the balcony!

DAVID

Goddamn. Okay, don't freak people out. Come back down.

SHE REAPPEARS NEXT TO DAVID.

CHRISTINA

I'm back down... What the hell is happening?...

DAVID

Christina, I have no idea.

CHRISTINA

... Give me your hand again.

DAVID

What are you doing?

CHRISTINA

C'mon... give me your hand.

DAVID

Oh, lord.

THEY BOTH DISAPPEAR AND REAPPEAR INSIDE A 7-11.

DAVID (CONT'D)

Yo... Hello, new experiences.

CHRISTINA STARTS LAUGHING.

DAVID (CONT'D)

Why are you laughing?

CHRISTINA

We're at 7-11!

DAVID

I know.

CHRISTINA

I teleported us to a 7-11.

DAVID

Which one?

CHRISTINA

The one on Highland.

DAVID

Christina that is several blocks away!

CHRISTINA

I know!

DAVID

You could've teleported me inside the slushie machine!

CHRISTINA

I don't know, I just knew I wouldn't. I knew it was going to be okay. Looks like it's been abandoned. Want a hot dog?

DAVID

... How far can you go?

CHRISTINA

I don't know... Are we going to test it?

DAVID

Okay... okay... Go get a pair of sunglasses from Venice Beach.

CHRISTINA

Venice Beach... yeah okay... fuck it.

CHRISTINA DISAPPEARS.

DAVID

... Goodbye normal life.

CHRISTINA REAPPEARS.

CHRISTINA

What do we think?

DAVID

It's a look.

CHRISTINA

They're tiger print.

DAVID

Bold.

CHRISTINA

So... I can just do this now?

DAVID

Christina, I have no idea. But I know you're not stuck outside my apartment anymore.

CHRISTINA

So, I'm Christina the teleporting lawyer now?

DAVID

You'll never be late for court.

CHRISTINA

... David, why did you do this? Why did you help me?

DAVID

I told you, I needed something to do.

CHRISTINA

Seriously.

DAVID

... I uh... I run from things.

CHRISTINA

What do you mean?

DAVID

I mean... Usually in my life, when people tell me the world has to be a certain way I just... leave. I don't like being told what to do, even if it's the whole world telling me. All these things that are happening: the craziness in Pasadena, the monks, the zebras... I didn't want it. I tried to run from it, shut it out... everything's fun and games when I can control it but when things aren't in my control... time to hit the road... I think it's time to stop that now.

CHRISTINA

... I'm glad you did.

DAVID

Me too.

CHRISTINA

So what now?

DAVID

... Shit.

CHRISTINA  
What?

DAVID  
... I need you to give me a ride.

BACK AT THE DINER.

AVA  
5,4,3,2,1...

THUNDER RUMBLES IN THE SKY ABOVE THEIR HEADS.

CASPAR  
It's going to rain now?

GLORIA  
That seems kind of normal.

LEIF  
I'm suspicious.

EFFIE  
Oh, Leif, hush up, we don't need your nay-saying  
when we're just trying to get to the end of the  
day.

ZEBULON  
Little bit of rain might be nice.

SOMETHING HITS CASPAR ON THE HEAD.

CASPAR  
Ow!

A PING PONG BALL BOUNCES AWAY.

CASPAR (CONT'D)  
What the hell was that?

AVA  
A ping pong ball.

CASPAR  
C'mon.

ANOTHER PING PONG BALL LANDS IN THE PARKING LOT. THEN ANOTHER  
AND ANOTHER.

GLORIA  
Goddamnit.

IT BEGINS TO RAIN PING PONG BALLS.

LEIF

So sorry for the nay-saying!

EFFIE

You, shut it!

GLORIA

Everybody inside!

THEY ALL RUSH INSIDE THE DINER.

CASPAR

Those things hurt way more than you would expect.

GLORIA

I am officially sick of this, Ava is there anything we can do?

AVA

Sadly, we're just like everyone else now. With the diner powered down, we don't have much to work with.

GLORIA

So this is what happens? When the diner stops working the whole universe collapses in on itself?

AVA

We're seeing it right now. It's happening just like it would with an organism. One system breaks down and that failure cascades throughout.

GLORIA

It can't be that simple.

AVA

Well, it's not that simple. When any universe is created, the initial rush of energy and expansion takes literally microseconds, but this universe has had billions of years to develop and mature and gain complexity. That could take a long time to unravel.

GLORIA

And all that time it's going to look like this? Ping pong balls falling from the sky?

AVA

Oh, no, it's going to get much worse than that.

CASPAR

I can't believe we're supposed to just sit here and watch everything turn to soup.

AVA

As powerful as we all may have felt while were were bopping around the cosmos, in the end we're still mostly observers. Trying to stop it would be like trying to stop a storm front by blowing at it really hard.

GLORIA

So this is it.

ZEBULON

Y'all, I must say, I disagree.

EFFIE

What's that now, dear?

ZEBULON

Well, we all seem to be drifting toward a rather apocalyptic view of things. We're beginning to sound consigned to oblivion.

GLORIA

Zebulon, everything's gone haywire and we've been stripped of our power to do anything.

ZEBULON

And I believe it is always a mistake for one to convince themself that they have any power at all. I have witnessed all of you do incredible things. Heroic things. And you have done those things not because of your immense power but because of your... Lord help me, for I am about to step right in it... because of your faith. Faith in yourselves, in each other, faith in your belief that to act from the purest part of yourself will lead you to victory. That is not power. That is trust. And perhaps what we need right now is a little more of that.

AVA

Maybe this is the lack of sleep talking, but Zebulon's right. I'm sitting here saying that the universe is unravelling, but that's only going with the information that I have. There could be a lot of information out there that I don't have. It's entirely possible that a universe evolves to a point where it has a, kind of a back up plan. Something we don't know about yet.

CASPAR

So we just sit here and hope for the best?

AVA

I think so.

LEIF

I hate that, but I get it.

CASPAR

Hang on.

GLORIA

What?

CASPAR

David's in the parking lot.

CASPAR WALKS OUTSIDE.

CASPAR (CONT'D)

Welcome to Midnight Burger.

DAVID

... Sorry.

CASPAR

It's okay.

DAVID

It's a lot.

CASPAR

It is, in fact, so much.

DAVID

I still don't know what to do with all this.

CASPAR

David, I told you so much nuclear-grade insane bullshit earlier. The only difference between me and a severely mentally-ill person is that everything I said is true. But it still feels like insanity. It was, for real, raining ping pong balls a second ago, but it still doesn't feel real. Like there's no room for it in your brain, y'know?

DAVID

... I hitched a ride here from a teleporting lawyer.

CASPAR

Oh really?

DAVID

I would've introduced you but she had to go check on her neighbor. She was out on the street next to my apartment. She was trapped in this weird loop, she couldn't escape the sidewalk, so I had to help her out.



CASPAR

What'd you do?

DAVID

I held her hand and walked her to the end of the block. Somehow that did it.

CASPAR

... Well I'm glad that you're making friends.

DAVID

Why did that work?

CASPAR

Ava and Leif will tell you one reason why it worked, Effie and Zebulon will give you another. And then Gloria and me would say, it worked because something had to.

DAVID

... I can't talk to anyone else about that.

CASPAR

Yeah.

DAVID

That makes me mad.

CASPAR

I know.

DAVID

I'm sorry that it makes me mad.

CASPAR

David it's... Parents are tough... you may want to have a good relationship with them, but you can never really pull off having the relationship you want to. Also, you both go through life and you both change but when you get back together you revert to these old roles like no time has passed, it's weird. Parents are weird, home is weird. Look at Leif. He's grown a lot from the angry dude he used to be, but you put him back on Earth. Back home? And he's just mad all the time, like no time has passed... it never works the way you want it to... This doesn't work the way that I want it to. It never will. It doesn't stop me from trying.

DAVID

Helping that Lawyer out felt good.

CASPAR

Oh yeah?

DAVID

I don't know that I've ever felt that way before.

CASPAR

Yeah.

DAVID

It's weird.

CASPAR

I know. It's weird that it's weird. "I helped someone?" "I changed things?" That's not how the world is supposed to work, it's supposed to be intractable. It's supposed to be out of my control. And trust me it is intractable, it is out of your control, but every once and a while... Every once and a while you move the needle. And that gets confusing, because what are you supposed to do now? Try? That's not what you've been told to do by the world you live in. You've been told to shrug your shoulders and keep walking. Now you've got to try all the time? That sounds exhausting.

DAVID

... Is the world ending?

CASPAR

The world's always ending, David. Maybe today, maybe tomorrow, maybe in a billion years. But Zebulon has given us his usual spiel, which means that we're not allowed to say it's the end of the world until it is the literal end of the world.

DOOR CHIME.

AVA

Sorry to interrupt, but I've got another countdown.

GLORIA

Hey David.

DAVID

Hey.

LEIF

What's going on?

DAVID

Ah. The Space Pirate.

LEIF

That was a long time ago.

ZEBULON

Afternoon to you, young man.

EFFIE

It's good to see your face again, David.

DAVID

Do they ever stop freaking you out?

GLORIA

Not really.

DAVID

What's "The countdown?"

CASPAR

Ava figured out how to predict when something's going to happen.

DAVID

Oh, great.

AVA

5,4,3,2,1...

CASPAR

...

DAVID

...

AVA

...

CASPAR

Anything?

GLORIA

I don't see anything.

LEIF

Maybe we're getting a break.

ZEBULON

Or perhaps, as I said, things are not so grim after all?

AVA

I'm not sure about that.

CASPAR

Continuons d'attendre et voyons si quelque chose se passe. (*Let's keep waiting and see if something happens.*)

AVA

...

LEIF

...

GLORIA

... Caspar, tu viens de dire quelque chose en français ? (*Caspar, did you just say something in French?*)

CASPAR

Je ne parle pas français, tu parles français. (*I'm not speaking French, you're speaking French.*)

LEIF

Vous parlez tous les deux français. Merde! (*You're both speaking French. Shit!*)

AVA

Vous parlez tous les trois français. (*All three of you are speaking French.*)

LEIF

Maintenant, vous parlez français! (*Now you're speaking French!*)

AVA

Non, je ne suis pas. Oh mon Dieu! Je suis! (*No, I'm not. Oh my God! I am!*)

DAVID

Qu'est-ce qui se passe, bordel? (*What the Fuck is happening?*)

GLORIA

Maintenant, David parle français. (*Now David is speaking French.*)

ZEBULON

Je crois qu'on peut affirmer sans se tromper que vous parlez désormais tous les cinq français! (*I believe it's safe to say that all five of you are now speaking French!*)

EFFIE

Mon mari, tu parles aussi français. Oh Seigneur, moi aussi. (*Husband, you are also speaking French. Oh Lord, so am I.*)

AVA

C'est un joli changement de rythme. (*It's a nice change of pace.*)

CASPAR

Ava, est-ce temporaire ou permanent? (*Ava, is this temporary or permanent?*)

AVA

Je ne sais pas. (*I don't know.*)

EFFIE

Zoot alors! (*Gol Durn!*)

DAVID

Tu veux dire qu'on pourrait tous parler français pour toujours? (*You mean we could all be speaking French forever?*)

AVA

Peut être. (*Maybe.*)

CASPAR

Quoi?! (*Hwat?!*)

AVA

Le géant Mungo est toujours là, nous parlerons peut-être français pendant un moment. (*The giant Mungo is still here, we might be speaking French for a while.*)

ZEBULON

Ava, je n'ai pas l'intention de parler français pendant un certain temps! (*Ava, I have no intention of speaking French for any length of time!*)

EFFIE

C'est peut-être votre intention, mon cher, mais vos intentions se manifestent en français. (*That may be your intention, Dear, but your intentions are coming out French.*)

ZEBULON

Oh, les escargots! (*Aw, snails!*)

LEIF

Je me sens plus sexy, quelqu'un d'autre se sent-il plus sexy? (*I feel sexier, any one else feel sexier?*)

AVA

Je me sens plus distant. (*I feel more aloof.*)

GLORIA

Est-ce que c'est possible? (*Is that even possible?*)

AVA

Fameusement gonflé! (*How dare you!*)

DAVID

Si cela est permanent, je déménage en Europe. (*If this is permanent, I'm moving to Europe.*)

GLORIA

Je suis avec David. (*I'm with David.*)

CASPAR

Personne ne déménage en Europe! (*Nobody is moving to Europe!*)

ZEBULON

C'est très énervant de voir mes mots anglais sortir de ma bouche comme des mots français! (*It is very unnerving to have my English words come out of my mouth as French words!*)

EFFIE

Je m'y habitue, tout le monde. (*I'm getting used to it, y'all.*)

AVA

Je le suis aussi (*I am too.*)

EFFIE

Je veux un de ces chapeaux. (*I want one of those hats.*)

AVA

Un instant, tout cela me donne envie de fumer une cigarette. (*Hang on, this is all making me want to smoke a cigarette.*)

DAVID

Je me sens mieux maintenant. La version française de moi est-elle une meilleure version de moi? Ai-je raté quelque chose? (*I'm feeling better about it now. Is the French version of me a better version of me? Have I been missing out?*)

GLORIA

Je me demande si je suis meilleur en pâtisserie maintenant. (*I wonder if I'm better at making pastries now.*)

LEIF

Je me demande si je suis meilleur pour conquérir l'Europe occidentale. (*I wonder if I'm better at conquering western Europe.*)

AVA

Attendez, je vais dire le nom du restaurant et voir à quoi ça ressemble: Burger de minuit.

(MORE)

AVA (CONT'D)

*(Wait, I'm going to say the name of the diner and see how it sounds: Midnight Burger.)*

EFFIE

Oh j'aime ça. *(Oh, I like it.)*

DAVID

Est-ce que Gloria doit porter un de ces hauts chapeaux dans la cuisine maintenant? *(Does Gloria have to wear one of those tall hats in the kitchen now?)*

GLORIA

Je ne détesterais pas ça. *(I wouldn't hate it.)*

CASPAR

C'est la plus stupide absurdité qui soit jamais arrivée. *(This is the stupidest nonsense that has ever happened.)*

GLORIA

I guess I need to brush up on my sauces. Oh!

CASPAR

Oh, thank God.

LEIF

That was fucking weird, man.

DAVID

Am I bilingual now?

AVA

Hang on.

EFFIE

Well that was a little trip around the world for me.

ZEBULON

Yes, and I am glad to be back.

EFFIE

Oh nonsense, Husband. You were adorable speaking your little French words.

AVA

Wait.

LEIF

What is it?

CASPAR

My biggest fear was that I was going to like it and I'd be stuck being French for the rest of my life. I don't have that kind of fashion sense.

LEIF

Y'all. Ava, what is it?

AVA

The schedule changed.

LEIF

What do you mean?

AVA

We stopped speaking French so it had to be superseded by something. Does anyone see anything different?

CASPAR

I don't see anything.

GLORIA

Me neither.

ZEBULON

Perhaps this is it? Perhaps we've reached the end of it.

DAVID

What is that?

CASPAR

What?

DAVID

There.

CASPAR

That's... what? That's the moon.

DAVID

Is it?

CASPAR

Yes.

DAVID

Then what... is that?

CASPAR

... Oh shit.



GLORIA

There's two moons.

LEIF

Oh no...

AVA

That's not great.

ZEBULON

My goodness, like we're all seeing double.

EFFIE

And they're the spitting image of each other.

DAVID'S PHONE IS REPEATEDLY VIBRATING.

DAVID

Uh, everyone in my contacts appears to be freaking out.

AVA

Are you doing the math on this?

LEIF

I don't need to do the math on this.

CASPAR

Please tell me this is only bad news for werewolves.

LEIF

This is it.

GLORIA

This is what?

AVA

A whole other moon has popped into existence, Gloria. Planetary systems are fragile. One wrong nudge and it's game over.

GLORIA

Are they going to crash into each other?

LEIF

Maybe. But even if they don't, there's about a million different systems on the planet that depend on the balance between the Earth and the moon. Tides, weather patterns, seasons, animal migrations.

AVA

You can't add a third party to a planetary system without massive repercussions at the very least.

LEIF

... This is the end... Best case scenario: floods, tsunamis, ocean currents collapse and restructure. But honestly...

AVA

They're going to hit each other. It's just a matter of time.

ZEBULON

Now, let us not go down a dark-

EFFIE

Dear. I think we need to start taking the world for what it is.

ZEBULON

... I suppose you're right.

DAVID

Now what the fuck do we do?

CASPAR

They're saying there's nothing to do, David.

GLORIA

I shouldn't have told you to make it worse, Ava.

AVA

It wouldn't have mattered. It was all headed this way eventually.

GLORIA

Does anybody have any options?

LEIF

Yeah.

GLORIA

What?

LEIF

...We leave. I'll get up on the roof, put out a call, see if I can call in some favors. If we can hitch a ride off of this Earth we can at least get to a safer place.

GLORIA

Leave the diner?

LEIF

Yeah. Yeah, I'm sorry... Look I know this seems like me just wanting to run away from my problems... but sometimes you do, legitimately, need to get the fuck out... I think this may be one of those times.

GLORIA

I can't leave.

ZEBULON

Gloria, all that time when Effie and I were out there roaming the land, we were not looking for a place. We were looking for all of you.

EFFIE

This place may have brought us all together, Gloria, but, we are now together. And if we can stay that way, regardless of the ground beneath our feet, I believe we can still thrive as the Lord meant us to.

GLORIA

Ava said this was happening to the whole universe, though.

DAVID

I have friends overseas. I texted them earlier, nothing like this is happening over there. Although, I guess two moons means it's happening everywhere now.

AVA

We're at ground zero right now. And the kind of deterioration I was talking about could take generations. If Leif can find us a nice shady spot, we probably wouldn't see anything like this in our lifetime.

GLORIA

... So we're done.

CASPAR

This place is done. We're still here, Gloria.

GLORIA

... Make the call, Leif.

LEIF

I'm on it.

CASPAR

... Gloria, look-

GLORIA

It's the last supper... Who's hungry?

LATER. GLORIA COOKS IN THE KITCHEN, THE MUCKLEWAINS PLAY SOME MUSIC AND AVA IS PASSED OUT ON CASPAR'S SHOULDER. DAVID SITS WITH THEM.

CASPAR

Hey, where were you?

DAVID

I was on the roof. Leif was trying to explain to me what he was doing and it just sounded like nonsense.

CASPAR

Yeah, I'd avoid that if I were you. I just call everything he does magic and it makes it much easier to accept.

AVA

Mmm... quarks...

DAVID

How can she sleep right now?

CASPAR

She hasn't slept in about 48 hours. Also she... I don't know she has a different way of looking at things. "It's all fermions and bosons." Whatever that means.

DAVID

... I thought about calling mom. Then I realized she wouldn't believe a word I had to say.

CASPAR

Yeah, probably not.

DAVID

... So you're telling me Leif is calling a space ship right now?

CASPAR

Yeah... Yeah, he is.

DAVID

Where are we going to go?

CASPAR

I don't know, David. But it looks like we can't stay here.

DAVID

... What a fucking day.

CASPAR

I know. I'm so sorry.

DAVID

... My biggest worry was that you were going to be some depressed old dude with a Facebook page.

CASPAR

... Surprise.

AVA SUDDENLY WAKES UP WITH A SHARP EXHALE.

CASPAR (CONT'D)

Jesus Christ, Ava.

AVA

...

CASPAR

Ava?

AVA

It's not a small business.

DAVID

... What?

AVA

It's not... a small... business...

DAVID

Is she having a night terror?

CASPAR

Maybe?

EFFIE

Ava.

AVA

Do you feel it?

EFFIE

I do.

AVA

Wait for it...

CASPAR

Wait for what?

AVA  
It's not a small business.

CASPAR  
Ava, what in the goddamn hell are you talking about?

AVA  
The finely-tuned universe, David.

DAVID  
What about it...

OUTSIDE WE BEGIN TO HEAR A VERY FAMILIAR SOUND. LEIF ENTERS FROM THE BACK DOOR.

LEIF  
Y'all. I'm getting some crazy readings up there.

GLORIA  
What do you mean?

AVA  
Everybody outside!

EVERYONE RUSHES INTO THE PARKING LOT.

CASPAR  
Ava, what are we doing?

GLORIA  
I can't handle another disaster, y'all.

AVA  
Wait for it...

ZEBULON  
Dear, what it is we're waiting for?

EFFIE  
I don't even know how to describe it?

GLORIA  
Leif, what kind of reading were you getting?

LEIF  
The only way I can describe it is-

SOMETHING APPEARS ACROSS THE STREET, MAKING THE SAME CRACK IN THE AIR AS THE DINER.

LEIF (CONT'D)  
What the fuck?

CASPAR

What is that?

ZEBULON

My Lord...

GLORIA

It's a movie theater...

CASPAR

"The Paradise?"

AVA

It's not a small business... It's a franchise...

THE DOOR TO THE PARADISE THEATER SWINGS OPEN AND A MAN,  
JEREMIAH FRANCO COMES TROTting OUT.

JEREMIAH

Don't panic, everyone, don't panic, everything's just fine.

GLORIA

What is happening?

JEREMIAH

I know you must all be asking yourself "What is happening?", but let me assure you, we're here to help and everything is going to be just fine. My name's Jeremiah Franco, and I am the manager of The Paradise, now I know what you're... Leif?

LEIF

Excuse me?

THE DOOR TO THE PARADISE OPENS AGAIN.

PARADISE LEIF

Holy shit, the news feeds on this Earth are insane, I've never seen anything like it.

DAVID

Oh my God.

LEIF

Aw fuck. Here we go again...

PARADISE LEIF

I'll tell you one thing, this is NOT a localized problem we're going to have to... What the fuck?

LEIF

... Hello, Leif.

PARADISE LEIF  
Hello... Leif?

THE DOOR TO THE PARADISE OPENS YET AGAIN.

MARGUERITE  
Baby, come on, let's go, we're going to meet the  
new people they look really...

AVA  
Oh my God.

MARGUERITE  
Ava?

AVA  
Marguerite?

CASPAR  
... What.

JEREMIAH  
Well then... It's looking like a very interesting  
day for all parties, doesn't it?... Alright  
everyone... Who wants popcorn?

THE END.