

"It's the end of the world as we know it (and I feel fine)" by R.E.M.

This song was used by Donald Trump during his 2016 election campaign, against the group's wishes. It is apocalyptic, with the video showing the destruction of a house after an earthquake or other violent event, like a tornado. The video ends with a boy finding his skateboard and doing some acrobatics in the destroyed house... he is alone and feeling fine... perhaps enjoying destructiveness as some *men* do.

The song's lyrics are chaotic, like the video... a [stream of consciousness](#) with no clear reason. R.E.M.'s lead singer Michael Stipe has said "[the words came from everywhere](#)". The group has also said it was influenced by Bob Dylan's [Subterranean Homesick Blues](#) ([Emily Bick, FT, March 30, 2020](#)). The song was released in 1987, but has had recent success with the Trump candidacy and then the Covid pandemic.

That's great, it starts with an earthquake Birds and snakes, and aeroplanes And Lenny Bruce is not afraid Eye of a hurricane, listen to yourself churn World serves its own needs Don't mis-serve your own needs Speed it up a notch, speed, grunt, no, strength The ladder starts to clatter With a fear of height, down, height Wire in a fire, represent the seven games And a government for hire and a combat site Left her, wasn't coming in a hurry With the Furies breathing down your neck Team by team, reporters baffled, trumped, tethered, cropped Look at that low plane, fine, then Uh oh, overflow, population, common group But it'll do, save yourself, serve yourself World serves its own needs, listen to your heart bleed Tell me with the Rapture and the reverent in the right, right You vitriolic, patriotic, slam fight, bright light Feeling pretty psyched It's the end of the world as we know it It's the end of the world as we know it It's the end of the world as we know it and I feel fine Six o'clock, T.V. hour, don't get caught in foreign tower Slash and burn, return, listen to yourself churn Lock him in uniform, book burning, bloodletting Every motive escalate, automotive incinerate Light a candle, light a motive, step down, step down Watch your heel crush, crush, uh oh This means no fear, cavalier, renegade and steering clear A tournament, a tournament, a tournament of lies Offer me solutions, offer me alternatives and I decline It's the end of the world as we know it (I had some time alone)... I feel fine (I feel fine) It's the end of the world as we know it (time I had some time alone)... The other night I drifted nice continental drift divide Mountains sit in a line, Leonard Bernstein Leonid Brezhnev, Lenny Bruce and Lester Bangs Birthday party, cheesecake, jellybean, boom You symbiotic, patriotic, slam but neck, right, right It's the end of the world as we know it...	Earthquake = a violent shaking of the ground, often causing destruction Lenny Bruce (1925-1966) = an American stand-up comedian, social critic, and satirist Hurricane = a big tropical storm in the mid-Atlantic and Caribbean Churn = to turn or shake (violently, when making butter from milk) Notch = a v-shaped cut (in the landscape), can be used on an object (stick) as a measure To grunt = to make a deep sound from the gut – the stomach Clatter = a rapid, rattling sound To breath down someone's neck = to follow someone closely To be baffled = to be confused To tether = to attach, to tie To crop = to cut, to harvest (a crop = a plant grown for food or sale) Rapture = excitement To feel psyched = to feel prepared, to be excited in anticipation of something Slash and burn = to clear ground (forest) by cutting vegetation and burning it Heel = the back of the foot To steer clear = to avoid To drift = to be carried slowly by a current Continental drift divide = the separation of continents Leonard Bernstein, etc. Singer Stipe said he had a dream in which he was surrounded with people whose names began with L and B. Lester Bangs (1948-1982) was an American journalist and music critic.
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