

EART(h) FM

"Pilot: Twelve Celsius"

An Audio Drama by

Some Strangers On The Internet

EART(h) FM

"Pilot"

CAST

MIRIAM ORTIZ On the verge of dying, cynical optimist. They are very lonely.

XÓCHITL FUENTES Working on a way to save the earth, optimistic cynic.

NOTE:

The characters are genderless. They'll be referred to by they/them pronouns throughout the script; however, the actors may change their gender identity if they want to feel more comfortable.

SCENE 1 - INT. EART(H) FM STUDIO, PREVIOUSLY BORINKÉ'S PUBLIC RADIO- AROUND MIDNIGHT.

MIRIAM Ortiz realized the day of crisis was here; they were down to her last set of supplies. With this realization, she resorted to drinking the last of the rum and wax poetically on the radio. They had also uncovered their papi's Puertorican Music collection and are in the middle of working through it, reliving the good times.

MIRIAM: (DESPERATION) How does a tree feel when the birds and squirrels leave the embrace of their branches? Is it frustrated that it is tied to the earth, or is it resigned? Maybe it's at peace... it has helped... and now awaits...

MUSIC: LAMENTO BORINCANO. ESTABLISH. FADE UNDER.

LYRIC: SALE, LOCO DE CONTENTO, CON SU CARGAMENTO PARA LA CIUDAD, SÍ, PARA LA CIUDAD. (THEY LEAVE, DELIRIOUSLY HAPPY WITH THEIR CARGO, TO THE CITY, YES, TO THE CITY).

MIRIAM: I am a tree that has laid its roots under the sand of the Boricua shore. Even after it flooded (MAD), I still did not leave like the rest of the people did.

LYRIC: LLEVA EN SU PENSAMIENTO TODO UN MUNDO LLENO DE NECESIDAD, SÍ, DE NECESIDAD. (HE CARRIES IN HIS MIND, A WHOLE WORLD IN NEED, YES, IN NEED)

MIRIAM: For the stars, it is a place where a tree will never survive. To uproot a tree with such strong roots is to kill it, which is why it is better to die on Earth than the unforgiving void.

LYRIC: PIENSA REMEDIAR LA SITUACIÓN, DEL HOGAR QUE ES TODA SU ILUSIÓN. (THEY HOPE TO REMEDY THE SITUATION OF THEIR HOME, THAT'S ALL THEIR DREAM).

SFX: MIRIAM BANGS THEIR HEAD AGAINST THE DESK IN FRUSTRATION.

MIRIAM: For years, I have been broadcasting into the void, hoping and praying that I am not the only one left on this godforsaken planet. But after five years of silence, maybe it's time to recognize that I may be it, a planet of one. And once I'm dead (PAUSE), there won't be anyone.

LYRIC: TODO, TODO ESTÁ DESIERTO, EL MUNDO ESTÁ MUERTO DE NECESIDAD, AY, DE NECESIDAD. (EVERYTHING IS BARE, THE WORLD IS DEAD, OF NEED, AY, OF NEED.)

MIRIAM: It's ironic, really; my friends used to ask me about staying in Borinké instead of moving to the mainland: "Why do you stay in this unforgiving home? Why do you stay when you know that the only way to survive is to move away?"

LYRIC: SE OYEN LOS LAMENTOS POR DOQUIER, EN MI DESDICHADA BORINÉ. (LAMENTS CAN BE HEARD EVERYWHERE, IN MY UNFORTUNATE BORINKÉ)

MIRIAM: Alright, listen up. If you are here, with me, on this earth, please call the number 123-456-7890. Can you hear me? Can anyone hear me, one two three, four five six, seven eight nine zero?

SFX: SILENCE

MUSIC: LAMENTO BORINCANO FADES IN, AS MIRIAM LAUGHS THE DRUMS BECOME QUICKER AND QUICKER.

MIRIAM: There is no one listening. (CONTINUES TO LAUGH MANIACALLY, THEN SLOWLY TURNS IT INTO A CRY) There's no one listening, is there? I'm- I'm the only one left, aren't I? I am alone.

LYRIC: AHORA QUE TE MUERES CON TUS PESARES, DÉJAME QUE TE CANTE, QUE TE CANTE YO TAMBIÉN. (NOW THAT YOU ARE DYING WITH YOUR SORROWS, LET ME SING YOU AGAIN).

MUSIC: THEME OF THE SHOW.

SCENE 2 - INT. CUETZALÁN- XOCHITL'S HUT. MORNING

Xóchitl Fuentes comes back from a long hour of working at the Milpa. They pour themselves a cup of strong black coffee, turn on their recorder, and turn on a lot of ecologist equipment and the radio tune into the Music of Earth channel.

AMB: XÓCHITL'S HUT

SFX: START OF TAPE.

MIRIAM [THROUGH THE RADIO]: (DEAD INSIDE) You are listening to Music of Earth, 100.3 FM, the last radio station on Earth. Broadcasting all the terrestrial hits, or at least the ones that I have access to, So the good stuff, 'till the end of the world.

MUSIC: DITTY FOR THE END [LONG]-FADE UNDER.

XÓCHITL: Log number 11 eleven thousand 2 hundred and fifty-three of ecologist Xóchitl Tierra Fuentes. (YAWNS) It is six o'clock in the

morning, on Cuetzalan. The date is October 4th, 2072, and the weather is mildly sunny and hot. Relative Humidity is 35% inside and 55% outside A surprisingly good level for once. The temperature is at(FIDDLES WITH THE MACHINE) 12°C...12°C? Wait, hold up, let me check that again. (FIDDLES WITH THE MACHINE) Wow, that's incredible.

XÓCHITL: Like how it was, how it is supposed to be in the mountains after... Marvelous. We haven't had readings like this since (THEY CHECK AROUND IN THEIR NOTEBOOK), 97 years, almost a whole century (CHUCKLE) Take that, Nova Assholes, the earth is healing.

XÓCHITL: After the migration, well, life became silent. Life was already silent here in the mountains, but it isn't the same now. The first Big Succession that humanity caused... created silence.

XÓCHITL: Or, well, not exactly the first succession. We can blame the melting of the poles on capitalist and imperialist human activity, but this is the first time that it is this simple. People left Earth for the stars, and today, the weather is perfect in the mountains. (PAUSE) Marvelous.

MIRIAM [THROUGH THE RADIO]: (APATHETIC) And we are back; you are listening to MUSIC OF EARTH 100.3 FM. and if there is a living, breathing soul please call 123-456-7890, again that is, 123-456-7890.

XÓCHITL: I have an idea.

SFX: END OF TAPE.

SCENE 3 - INT- PONCÉ BORINKÉ- EART(H) FM STUDIO, PREVIOUSLY  
BORINKÉ'S PUBLIC RADIO-NOON.

MIRIAM Ortiz has finally accepted the fact that they are going to die, that they are alone; in other words, they are resigned and significantly calmer than how we heard them before.

MIRIAM: When I was little, I would spend entire days listening to music, dancing, and drinking. Whenever there was any news about how much the poles were melting, how the government wouldn't do anything about another hurricane we had faced, or how people were dying of hunger and thirst in the desert. I would open a sweet cherry-flavored cooler and let myself forget it all for a little while.

MIRIAM: I would plug in my headphones and have the sweet, sweet voice of Mitski take me far, far away, which was funny because I ended up being the last person on this freaking planet. While I drank all my alcohol last night, I still have music to hold me.

**MIRIAM:** Just like my mom, the internet went out for cigarettes one day and never returned, After that, the way I interacted with music changed.

**MIRIAM:** I, like everyone else, had grown up in the virtual world. Waking up without it was honestly terrifying, especially because it was how I came across music. I think I went into a sort of panic when it all went away. But to be honest, I can't remember that last week I had access to the internet; just the memory of it reminds me of the taste of cherries.

**MIRIAM:** Luckily for me, my dad was one of those people who hated all streaming and subscription services. They were full-on analogic- heck, I think they were the only guy in 2068 that still used cassettes. So, after I calmed down from my panic attack, they gave me their old IPOD, plus their CDs, cassettes, and Vinyl Records, and two players, one that allowed for CDS, cassettes, the radio, and another for Vinyl.

**MIRIAM:** They taught me how to burn CD's of music I had downloaded, which were just sitting around on my computer. They taught me how to archive by author, performer, year, place, and mood; there was never a genre label; they used to say that genre was commercially constructed and fake. (PAUSE) Without them, this show probably wouldn't exist. Papi, if

you are in the stars and listening to this,  
thank you.

SFX: SILENCE. MIRIAM IS OVERCOME WITH EMOTION.

8. MIRIAM: Sorry for the sentimentality, listeners.  
(WIPES AWAY THEIR TEARS) The following song  
is in my papi's CD collection, under the  
title "Berceuse." They used to put it on  
when I had trouble sleeping.

MUSIC: BERCURSE-UNDER.

MIRIAM: It is twelve twenty-two on a Wednesday of  
all days. You are listening to Music of  
Earth on Earth FM 100.3. Have good dreams,  
listeners, see you in the other life.

MUSIC: BERCURSE- ESTABLISH- LET IT PLAY FROM  
BEGINNING TO END.

LYRIC: BE STILL MA CHERIE, THE LIGHT OF DAY IS GONE.

SFX: MIRIAM SLOSHES THEIR GLASS OF RUM.

MIRIAM: Cheers to another life, far away from this  
hell!

SFX: MIRIAM DRINKS.

LYRIC: BUT STILL MA CHERIE, I'M HERE, TO SING YOU THIS SONG.

WHILE THE NIGHT MAY BE STORMY AND DARK, YOU DIDN'T BE AFRAID, TAKE WITH YOU THE SONG OF  
THE LOST? SLEEP AWAY. (MUSIC) CE SOIR MA CHERIE, CE ? TON NUIT? JE SUIS LAPETÉ? TOI  
MA CHERIE

SFX: THE PHONE STARTS TO RING AFTER THE MUSIC  
ENDS.

SFX: MIRIAM SPITS OUT THE RUM.

SFX: WHEN MIRIAM HEARS IT, THEY ALMOST CAN'T BELIEVE IT; THEY THROW THEMSELVES AT THE PHONE, IN THEIR HASTE, THEY DROP IT.

SFX: THEY PICK THE PHONE FROM THE FLOOR.

SCENE 4 - INT- BETWEEN PONCÉ BORINKE AND CUETZALÁN,  
IZZTACCIHUATL- AFTERNOON.

MIRIAM: Oh Fuck! Alo'? Alo'? Is there anyone there?

SFX: FEEDBACK CUTS THROUGH OUR EARS

XÓCHITL [BREAKING-UP]: Bueno...Bueno...Do you...Do you hear me?

MIRIAM: Yes! Yes, I hear you. Hello?

XÓCHITL [THROUGH THE PHONE]: Hello.

SFX: SILENCE.

MIRIAM: Um, hi... I... uh, so... it's Nice to meet you. My name is Miriam Ortiz, and you?

XÓCHITL [THROUGH THE PHONE]: I am Xóchitl Fuentes, an ecologist based around the skirt of the Iztaccihuatl. Today. I want to tell the world that, on

October 4th of 2072, it is 12°C in the skirt of our white lady, the Iztaccihuatl.

MIRIAM: (STILL CAN'T WRAP THEIR HEAD AROUND A HUMAN TALKING TO THEM, LESS OF ALL THE NEWS)  
What!?

XÓCHITL [THROUGH THE PHONE]: The earth is cooling off. I repeat, The. Earth. Is. Cooling. Off. If we think of climate change as a fever, this would mean that the earth is healing, although at an extremely slow pace, but nonetheless, it is healing.

MIRIAM: (Laughs in disbelief) Is this a joke? Am I dead, or is this shit a lot stronger than I thought?

XÓCHITL [THROUGH THE PHONE]: Why would I have dialed in the radio station if I was joking? (PAUSE) I can assure you, you are not dead.

MIRIAM: (FINDING THE SITUATION A BIT RIDICULOUS)  
Listen, I have not heard another human soul in the past five years, and the first one who calls after years of desperate pleading calls just to tell me about the weather.

XÓCHITL [THROUGH THE PHONE]: I just wanted to tell your listeners the good news.

MIRIAM: Wait, Listeners? (PAUSE) Do you really think there is anyone left?

XÓCHITL [THROUGH THE PHONE]: Of course? I mean, the news really made a big show of humans going to the stars. I still remember the jingles they used to play on the radio and TV.

MIRIAM: No, I don't mean the stars. I mean that you really think there's anyone here, on earth, apart from you and I.

XÓCHITL [THROUGH THE PHONE]: Obviously.

MIRIAM: I've been looking... I've been trying to contact anyone left on this planet for a long time, and you are the first person I've talked to.

XÓCHITL [THROUGH THE PHONE]: So you haven't.

MIRIAM: After everything, I wanted to go back to a simpler time and just move on. I figured if anyone were left, they would have found me.

XÓCHITL [THROUGH THE PHONE]: You thought you were alone? (PAUSE) You did know everyone did not have the means to get a ticket on those ships?

MIRIAM: They didn't?

XÓCHITL [THROUGH THE PHONE]: There were still millions of communities that were still uncontacted before the great migration. Hell, people from small towns like mine were lucky enough to get a ticket, but ... even then, there were some who left, and there were some who stayed.

MIRIAM: Sorry.

XÓCHITL [THROUGH THE PHONE]: Where in the world are you?

MIRIAM: Uhm, I'm in the South's Pearl of Borinké, Ponce.

XÓCHITL [THROUGH THE PHONE]: I remember hearing about an anti-space colonialism movement around there. Some

people must have stayed to try to build something better.

MIRIAM: The last time I went outside, the streets were not even like a desert; they were a parking lot. I mean it, bare, bare, there was no life around.

XÓCHITL [THROUGH THE PHONE]: When was that?

MIRIAM: Eh, ... five years ago.

XÓCHITL [THROUGH THE PHONE]: (DRY) You haven't been outside in five years.

MIRIAM: Yep.

XÓCHITL [THROUGH THE PHONE]: (DRY) How have you survived?

MIRIAM: Bit of engineering but mostly rations. Before everyone left, I purchased a bunch of rations, and after everyone left, I added whatever I could find to my collection. After five years, it all but ran out.

XÓCHITL [THROUGH THE PHONE]: Shit, that sucks.

MIRIAM: Yeah, I know.

XÓCHITL [THROUGH THE PHONE]: Wait, that was 2067. You said you haven't been outside since the day the ships left? You said you bought food before everyone left, but during that year, we were experiencing one of the biggest food crises in the western hemisphere. How the hell did you manage to get your hands on enough money to buy all that food to last you for five freaking years?

MIRIAM: I...eh...I worked for Nova Tech. They paid well.

XÓCHITL [THROUGH THE PHONE]: (INTERRUPTS AT "Nova Tech") Oh fuck  
you.

MIRIAM: Excuse me, I don't care if you are the only  
person left in the world; I don't like being  
insulted.

XÓCHITL [THROUGH THE PHONE]: No, no excuses. we were so close to  
actually reconfiguring the way society was.  
We were taking the steps to finally fix the  
major fuck up we caused. And then there  
comes Bob with Nova-Tech giving a get out of  
your fucking responsibility card to all the  
rich assholes in the world.

XÓCHITL [THROUGH THE PHONE]: Why look inward and see what caused our  
planet to get sick and caused our society to  
collapse. No, no, no, we better get out  
while the iron is hot to this new planet and  
carry on as we were until capitalism  
destroys it, too.

MIRIAM: I don't care about Bob Glenn and his ideas.  
Look, I came in, did my job, and left. I  
don't work for them anymore.

XÓCHITL [THROUGH THE PHONE]: Thank fuck, at least you are more  
intelligent than my stupid brother. As soon  
as Nova came up with the idea of going to  
the stars, the dream never left his eyes.

SFX: SILENCE.

MIRIAM: I have people on those ships, too, you know.

XÓCHITL [THROUGH THE PHONE]: Are you mad that you couldn't follow  
them?

MIRIAM: No, but I wish they could have stayed. But it is nice to know that I am not the last human on earth; I can die happily now.

XÓCHITL [THROUGH THE PHONE]: Oh damn, sorry, I forgot you are starving. You can try to re-grow your rations.

MIRIAM: I don't really know how to take care of plants.

XÓCHITL [THROUGH THE PHONE]: Or you could go outside again. I am confident there must be someone there, but even if there are no humans, there might be other animals. Borinké is an island, right? There might be some fish, birds, and fruit hanging from unsuspecting trees. Our environment heals faster than we give it credit for.

MIRIAM: I don't know. I-I- My house was wrecked, the wind was biting, and the water was unforgiving. I cannot stand thinking... I have holograms on my windows that display the Ponce of old times before any disaster.

XÓCHITL [THROUGH THE PHONE]: Something similar happened to me when my grandma died; I just couldn't go outside; she was the only thing tying me to this town, and without her, I feared it would grow hostile. However, one day, I had to go outside for necessity, and it went well. The Romero Toxqui family, our neighbors, expressed their condolences and then invited me to lunch. Now we see each other every other day.

MIRIAM: How long ago was it?

XÓCHITL [THROUGH THE PHONE]: It was around three years ago. Look, we've been fed apocalyptic stories since we were born; we've been fed lies about how humans only look for number one, and in times of crisis, we will resort to cannibalism. However, what my own experiences have taught me is that most people just want to help each other.

MIRIAM: Okay, I'll try.

XÓCHITL [THROUGH THE PHONE]: Or I can just pass you gardening tips; I've never managed to keep a pet plant alive, but I do work at a milpa.

MIRIAM: Between dying of starvation and going outside... Maybe I can give it another chance.  
(PAUSE) Xóchitl, thanks.

XÓCHITL [THROUGH THE PHONE]: What for?

MIRIAM: Just talking to me.

SCENE 5 - INT- CUETZALÁN- XOCHITL'S HUT

Xóchitl has just woken up in the middle of the night with an epiphany.

SFX: START OF TAPE.

XÓCHITL: Log number 11 eleven thousand 2 hundred and fifty-four of ecologist Xóchitl Tierra Fuentes. (WITH ENTHUSIASM AND NOT AT ALL AS IF THEY JUST WOKE UP): It is three in the morning with twenty-five minutes, on Cuetzalan. The date is October 5th, 2072.

XÓCHITL: After my talk with Miriam Ortiz, I've had an idea. What about establishing a web of international communication and mutual aid? Kind of how we are already doing here with Cuetzalan, but bigger and not reliant on how fast someone can walk with six sheep to another town and lose two in their way. Plus! They have a Nova Tech connection, so if I can just get into their facilities, we

could re-utilize those resources; it isn't like les hijes de su puto padre (*Those sons of a bitch*) are doing anything with it.

XÓCHITL: I might finally be able to do something to actually help the earth.

XÓCHITL: Maybe even hack into those fucking ships in the stars right now and take our loved ones and my stupid brother back to earth. Wouldn't it be nice?

XÓCHITL: I don't know how onboard Miriam would be with all of this, but they don't have to know. They are clearly lonely; they won't stop talking to me.

SFX: END OF TAPE.

**SCENE 6 - EXT- EART(H)FM STUDIO- PONCE'S SHORE**

MIRIAM Ortiz is alive! Reborn from the ashes or something like that. They have weathered the outside world and been met with a hug, they are feeling invincible for good and for bad.

In order for this sequence to be interesting, sound-design-wise, we are going to break the laws of physics and add ambiance and effects of whatever MIRIAM is describing, sort of monologue/audiobook style.

MIRIAM: You are listening to MUSIC OF EARTH 100.3 FM. I am your host, Miriam Ortiz. Today is Friday, October 11th, and I am still alive and no longer starving. (SOFTLY) Xóchitl, I did it; I went outside (NORMAL) I would say thank you if you hadn't practically bullied me into doing it.

SFX: SEAWASH SEASHORE.

MIRIAM: I went to the attic and carried the inflatable boat all the way to the door. Outside, as I expected, there was water for miles, the rooftops of houses were little islands and there was debris flowing around too.

**SFX:** BIRDS CHIRPING.

**MIRIAM:** However, there was also so much greenery. Mangroves of all shapes and sizes have grown on the streets where cars used to be, and with the trees came birds of all colors, even some freaking pigeons. Around the corner of the station, there was a Guanábana tree; there were various Quenepa trees too, and most important of all, there were Algarrobas to make alcohol with.

**MIRIAM:** I traveled from the radio station to my old childhood home, and it wasn't there. I don't know why I did it; maybe it was muscle memory, my body being loyal to a place that had given it refuge for so long, even if it wasn't there anymore.

**MIRIAM:** On my way back to the station, I bumped into an old man. His name is Jorge Plaza; he is big, fat, with a bushy beard- kind of like the stereotypical image of a fisherman. And lo-and-behold, he had come back from trying to fish. Trying because of all the plastic in the sea.

**MIRIAM:** He smiled when he saw me; he greeted me as if I was his long-lost sibling. Listeners: I had never met this man in my life, but I did the same and hugged him as if he were my grand-uncle.

**MIRIAM:** He said: "I hadn't seen anyone around here for years." I smiled and replied, "Eh, me neither." He laughed.

SFX: WARM LAUGH.

MIRIAM: I stay quiet. He saw the fruit I had collected, and he asked me if I was going to eat it all by myself and also asked if I would like to come and eat with his friends instead. I accepted the invitation.

SFX: FIRE PLACE. QUIET CHIT-CHAT. COOKING.

MIRIAM: He took me to the town's center, and Xóchitl was right; there were people there. Around thirty people, all huddling around, sleeping on tents, cooking in make-shift stoves, and playing with whatever they could, laughing and singing, fixing clothes, and building instruments.

MIRIAM: Jorge directed me to one of the makeshift stoves and introduced me to his group of friends. It wasn't like a festín, but it was the best mofongo that I had ever tasted. They didn't have any protein, but I was able to get some vegetables and distilled water to pass it all.

MIRIAM: However, the most delicious thing was the conversation. I am not a very talkative person, but Jorge and his friends were, and it was nice to listen to all the jokes thrown around, that of Ms. Dolores and Mx. Ibarra had been fighting once again over who could make the best dress with potato sacks.

MIRIAM: Listeners, for the first time in all my life, I've believed in the kindness of humanity. Maybe we aren't parasites; maybe

we are just animals, organisms as any other on Earth. Maybe we could try again this game we call society; we already know what not to do.

MIRIAM:

Jorge asked me where I was hiding all this time, and I told him about Borinké's Public Radio station. I told him about my own radio program and my music collection. When he heard that, his eyes lit up, and he took out a battered piece of paper from his pocket. He asked me if it was true that radio waves reached space, and I told him it was. He gave me his letter and asked me if I could read it on air.

MIRIAM:

I didn't have the strength to tell him that it would take years for it to actually reach the ships, let alone for the people in there to wake up and read them.

MIRIAM:

My name is MIRIAM Ortiz, and you are listening to Music of Earth 100.3 FM broadcasting from the South's Pearl Borinké. The following letter is from Jorge Plaza to Enrique Lejedt, wherever you are.

MUSIC:

STELLAR MORTIS- ESTABLISH THEN UNDER.

MIRIAM:

Ricky, do you remember that summer in '24 when I traveled to the mainland to go work at my aunt's shop. How you decided to take us on a date on the beach, and how you cried when the sun rose up. How you fear I will like it there and never come back to you, how I called you over-dramatic.

MIRIAM: I didn't take you on a date, when we realized that my achy bones couldn't support a trip across the universe, and I told you not to worry about me. You cried that last day you were on earth, and I called you dramatic.

MIRIAM: I am sorry, you aren't dramatic. You were right to cry; I wish I had cried. So that you can see how much I miss you and how much I love you.

MIRIAM: Today, my love, there is no human on earth who does not share my pain of having their heart so far away, and still, without you, I can't feel anything but loneliness.

MIRIAM: I don't want you to feel alone, I want you to wake up in Elpis and forget about me, about our story together. For you to be free, never have met love, and never have tasted the lips of another man before. I want you to find someone that is good to you in a way I never could.

MIRIAM: Meanwhile, here on earth, I am going to be selfish. I will keep the memory of the taste of your lips in golden amber, each I love you will be carved in the earth's skin, and our promise to love each other is engraved in my heart.

MIRIAM: I love you so much Ricky, ojalá que te vaya bonito (*Good willing, life will be good to you*).

MUSIC: STELLAR MORTIS- BROUGHT FORTH- THEN UNDER.

**MIRIAM:**

This has been Music of Earth 100.3 FM,  
probably the last radio station on Earth. If  
you are listening, dial 123-456-7890 and  
share how you are weathering the end, or  
maybe the rebirth, of the world.

**MUSIC:** STELLAR MORTIS- BROUGHT FORTH- LET IT  
**FINISH.**

**THE END.**