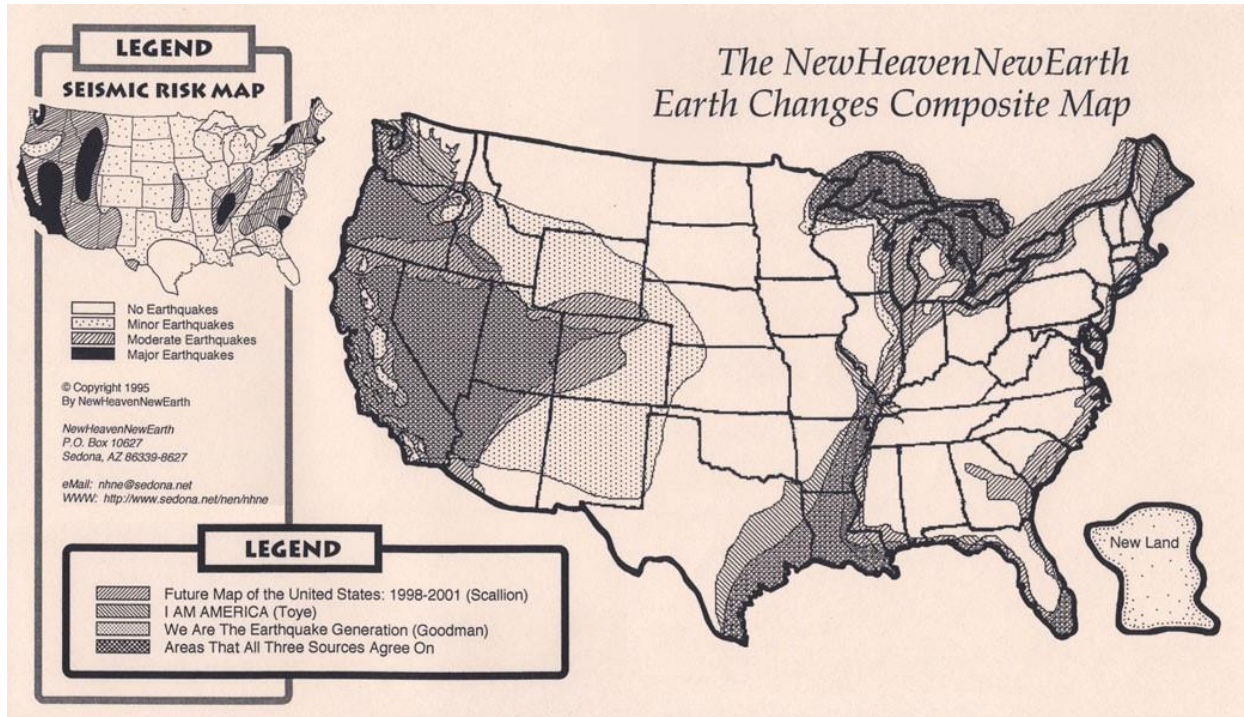


Later, after the Great Earthquake, Cap would make notes on what had happened. She held in her hand one of the prophetic maps. Jeffrey Goodman, who wrote *We are the Earthquake Generation*, had reliably foreseen the waters reaching Kansas and Nebraska.



Cap wrote “In the first part of 2024, the western US began experiencing a ongoing series of earth tremors. Buildings would shake. Windows would rattle. Dishes would clatter across the table. Furniture would vibrate.”

Migration from California.

In the summer, there was an increase in the frequency and intensity of western tremors. Buildings began to deteriorate. Cracks appeared in the streets and sidewalks. Fine fracture lines appeared in the vertical surfaces of buildings. Windows began falling out. Pipes were regularly breaking. People passed from being used to the small tremors to being terrified of the ever-present threat of earthquakes. Unable to cope with the stress, people began migrating out of California. The less fortunate had no place to go.

Coast Inundated.

The coasts both east and west began being swept by larger and larger waves. Recreational boating fell off as boats began to capsize. Some left port and were never seen again. People began moving back from the coasts. Coastal insurance became more expensive. In some

densely populated towns, the landscape was a continuous horizon of broken and shattered buildings.

Fall into the Sea

At about the same time that the first tremors were felt, the waterfront of San Francisco dropped a few inches. And then dropped again and again. Water poured over the waterfront. All along the coast, the land began to subside. At first, the water's edge traveled a foot at a time on its way inland. Then, the sea began rolling into low lying coastal towns. Sometimes a mile a day. Other times a surge would cover several miles in a sudden dash.

Compression had pushed up the mountains. Now the reverse happened. The land separated and the mountains fell. The sea rolled further and further into southern California. It found a gap in the broken mountains and poured into Nevada and then into New Mexico. As the land shook and fell, more gates opened and a torrent pushed its way through, covering large areas of desert. Within days, large areas of the southwest were underwater.

The northern coast of the Gulf of Mexico also began to sink. The coasts of Louisiana and Mississippi began to retreat northward. The dikes of New Orleans failed. Daily, the water's edge traveled across the city. The water area grew. The city got smaller until one day only a few roofs stood amid the waters. It looked like someone had built office buildings in the middle of a lake.

After months of smaller tremors, the frequency and intensity of the tremors began to slowly increase. There was a crescendo of mounting violence, and then suddenly, a great earthquake. America split along the line of the old Mississippi, through southern Illinois and Southern Indiana, through Toledo and the Great Lakes and along the St Lawrence Seaway. The land west of the Mississippi would be called the Western American Plate.

When the Great Earthquake hit, the Western American Plate bolted west a half a mile and bolted half a mile again and again in rapid succession. The western side was ripped away from the eastern. The opposite shore disappeared over the horizon. The waters of the Mississippi were swallowed by the widening crevasse. All the land west of the Mississippi was dragged westward mile by mile. Ten days later a gapping crevasse forty miles wide stood between the two sides. One could only see a canyon of torn and smoking ruins far below which stretched for mile after mile. It looked like the Grand Canyon.

The waters of the gulf began pouring into the gap. Mile after mile, the water of the new wide Mississippi advanced northward in a wedge toward Arkansas and Tennessee, spilling into the bottomlands and spreading across broken farmland. It moved north to reclaim what was once its territory.

There is a place in southern Illinois called Indian Footprint. 30,000 years ago, the northern shore of the Gulf of Mexico reached into Illinois. One day, an Indian walked along the shore. His footprints were covered with sediment and in time they turned to stone. By late 2024 the Gulf had again reached southern Illinois. Hildegard's prophecy had been fulfilled. The great nation had been cut in two.

Sea level.

It took days for the waters of the Gulf to reach St Louis. The new waterline was near sea level. The Mississippi had become an estuary of the Gulf of Mexico. St Louis had become an inland port of the Gulf of Mexico.

When the crust slipped, the Atlantic Ocean was hurled toward the coasts. Millions of cubic miles of ocean were displaced and pushed toward the coasts. Tidal surges piled upon the east coast of America. Miles and miles of ocean water crowded in from behind.

All along the coast, ships were torn from their moorings. They were carried inland on the crest of the first waves. Through the coastal towns and countryside. There it set the boats among the trees and fields as it receded from its high-water mark.

Florida

Beneath Florida sat a honeycomb of eroded limestone. Centuries of underground fresh water flow from the northern highlands had eroded the understructure. Rivers of fresh water had slowly dissolved the limestone. The remaining limestone was filled with smaller and larger caverns. The shaking back and forth had crumbled the limestone and caused it to collapse fifty feet in many areas. Large areas of coastal Florida sank beneath sea level even before the Waves arrived. Florida receded to the coastline of the interglacial period.

Canary Islands

The shock waves caused the collapse of the unstable volcanic slope in the Canary Islands, which in turn sent another tsunami toward the lower US East Coast. The Waves struck coastal Florida again.