

## EPISODE THIRTY TWO - GLACIER

*Original transcript edited by Orion*

**INTRO:** Hey guys. I spend a lot of time talking about the WOE.BEGONE Patreon at [patreon.com/woe\\_begone](https://patreon.com/woe_begone) because that's what funds the show, but did you know that there are other WOE.BEGONE communities? Check out our two wonderful subreddits, [/r/dogcatcher](https://www.reddit.com/r/dogcatcher) and [/r/woebegone](https://www.reddit.com/r/woebegone). Check out our twitter [@WOEBEGONEPOD](https://twitter.com/WOEBEGONEPOD). Check out our Discord, link in the description. You never have to stop thinking about WOE.BEGONE. But speaking of the Patreon at [patreon.com/woe\\_begone](https://patreon.com/woe_begone), thanks to our 10 newest patrons: [REDACTED]. Enjoy the show!

*[Opening theme plays]*

*[Beep.]*

**TTS voice:** One way surveillance recording number 0005 regarding recent Tier Three breach in 357A. Subject: Mikey Walters. Potential alias: abridged for relevance.

*[Beep.]*

**MIKE:** Hey, it's Mikey. Oh I guess... you've never heard me call myself Mikey before, no one ever called me that back then uh *[chuckles.]* that's funny. I don't *love* it, but it is what a lot of people are calling me now so I'm trying to lean in. It's cliché, I know, but I'm starting to learn from myself that when people act self-composed, it's because they're leaning in and not because they don't have any negative emotions. Meanwhile I get the urge to just express every negative emotion that comes to me as it comes to me. But I'm getting better about it. I mean, I've always intellectually known that that's the case. The plot of every 90s family film involves it somehow. But I had never internalized it like I do now and now it's a tool I can use to help myself. Which is good because I'm not getting any younger and people aren't going to stop calling me Mikey, even though that's what you call someone younger— you call them Mikey you don't call— but that's the point. *[Pause.]* What? N-no, you cannot start calling me Mikey. Did you not just hear how weird you sounded just now? It felt so wrong. Not even as a joke, 'cause it all started as a joke, that's how I got to where I am now. So not even as a joke, I'm drawing a line right now, right here.

So, I've been working at this... place. Uh, I don't want to tell you much about it, it's very hush-hush top secret. Kind of salacious, right? You know like, some of the best technology that the government ever produced, it's sorta like Area 51 except Area 51 is so basic, so last century. I'm sort of a crate digger, I only found this one because there's a special room that the owner will only let you into if you have good taste, like bespoke confidentiality. Maybe you've never heard of it, that's fine. I could tell you the name of the place, but then I'd have to kill you *[fake laugh.]* Jokes are so funny. But really if I told you the name of the place you'd just type it into Google and you'd find all these stupid conspiracy theories, none of which are even close to true, so don't worry about it. Honestly, I could tell you the truth but it'll just sound contrived. But seriously, there is nothing fruitful to gain from understanding this place and I highly suggest that

you *don't*. Besides I'm not anyone important there, I'm a lowly security guard. So, I don't get to see the juicy stuff, I actually have to keep people from seeing the juicy stuff.

...No, I'm not a cop! [*Playfully:*] How dare you— *me* of all people? A cop? I would *never*. There's a big difference. They don't let us see anything, and it's not like I've ever even kicked anyone out of the place. I'm not talking about kicking skateboarders out of the mall— cause they're cool— I'm talking about like an international espionage effort which is [*scoffs.*] well now that I've said it out loud it's also cool but I've never thwarted that either. I fought a bear once, that's something. Maybe I'll tell you about that sometime. Everyone else in my life has already heard it so many times it'd be nice to get fresh ears on it, I do love to brag. But no, I'm not a cop. If I *were* a cop, I would simply choose not to be. And I mean I'm sort of simply choosing not to be a security guard right now but that's a whole other can of worms. And what I mean by “simply choosing not to” is I'm on leave right now and I think that leave might be permanent? Question mark. They are very generous with vacation time, at least if you're constantly in crisis like I am, and I have been in crisis so I'm taking some time to see how it shakes out for me. They've never pestered me if I've come to them with like both black eyes and a crooked nose or like maybe my back's all torn up and I'm like “Can I go home for a little bit?” They're always like “yeah” so that's a perk in the keeping the job column. I think they're desperate to hold on to people, they had a really bad turn over problem when I showed up and I think that this is an effort to fix it because the turn over hasn't been so bad since I got there, I'm basically still the newest guy there. And I think that it's worked out for them, they've created a workforce that has so much experience that everyone can tell if anything changes in their area, even the smallest blade of grass. If I were to leave, it would cost them way more money to replace me and time because it would take months to train the new guy. And that's much more expensive than letting me hang out for two weeks. I probably could have asked for five weeks and they would've agreed. And not to brag, but I am a professional grassblade-noticer at this point.

But, I was burnt out. Very, *very* burnt out, actually. And I'll talk about the lead that I'm burying in a second— like, what I really want to brag about— but it's been so long there's so much to talk about. I took some time off after the bear attack— I mean the fight with the bear that I-I won, I won the fight with the bear. But I ended up going back earlier than I should have for reasons that are more complicated than I want to talk about. And so I very quickly just got burnt out again because I didn't take my time. That is one lesson learned for sure. And then things hit a tipping point again and I couldn't take it anymore.

And now I'm here with um... with the lead I've been burying. I am on vacation... with... my... boyfriend. I met him at work. Uh, his name is Edgar [*laughs.*] Did you hear how my voice changed just now when I started talking about him? Like a schoolgirl? I mean I should be excited about him, right? I mean, he's the first romantic relationship I've had that made it past a first date since *John* and that was... Was that two years ago? Oh my god was that *three* years ago at this point? That's too long. That means it's been even longer since... nevermind, it's been longer since a lot of things obviously.

You'd be shocked, if you saw him. He's not exactly what you would call my type. What was it that you called my type that one time? *[Pause, then laughs.]* Yeah that's it. "Two lumberjacks at once." Edgar isn't even one lumberjack at once. He's a third of a lumberjack, dripping wet. He kind of looks like what's that guy in that show... Oh, I guess I can just send you a pic, duh. Hold on. Oh... no. Is that the best one I have of us? You've got to uh, ignore how I look in this one. I-I shave my head now just cause it's easier, and I put on some weight- It's been a long time man so just don't be surprised when you see me. Okay, I sent the picture.

Hey! You don't get to say that about me. I mean, I get to say that about me. But I will not allow the straights to start doing reads. It starts with a comment about my nose and then all of a sudden you're snatching wigs and calling guys "Mary." and I will not abide that, Mary. I could have just cropped myself out but then you couldn't be sure I hadn't just stolen some pic from the compendium of perfect boyfriends. But, yeah, Edgar's a little bit of a twink, actually. Shorter than me, skinnier than me, younger than me, smarter than me. You know, I've noticed that a lot of people are younger than us recently. That shouldn't be allowed, right? Being with Edgar reminds me how much more energy I had at 27, and then I remember being 27 and thinking that I had no energy at all.

This is the first time that we've had time together that wasn't work or just outside of work. We got an AirBnB right outside of Glacier National Park for the whole two weeks of our vacation. You wouldn't believe how beautiful it is. Well, I mean, I guess you would because we took that group trip out here, but I never get tired of mountains. It's been years since I've been out here but Edgar's never been out here at all, so I get to show him around like a tour guide. You know how much I like to pretend to be smart. It's basically my favorite thing and I don't ever get to pretend to be smart when Edgar's around unless it's something that he doesn't know anything about. And, it's just me and Edgar out here in this house that's much nicer than anything we could ever afford to live in, with all the privacy that we need. It's quite nice to not have to wonder if we are being secretly surveilled. I mean, I might still be secretly surveilled, but we're not up to no good out here, so it doesn't matter.

Speaking of having energy or pretending to have energy to impress a new boyfriend, we hiked Lake McDonald today. Remember that place? Perhaps unsurprisingly, it still looks like one of those desktop wallpapers where the colors are so bright that you just assume that it's photoshopped, except it's real life. I couldn't take a picture that halfway captured how beautiful it is, and I still got some great pictures. So, we hiked an incredibly long way, got some admittedly aesthetically lacking pictures and now I am incredibly tired. If my job hadn't trained me to walk around all day, I don't think that I would have made it. Edgar, on the other hand, sits at a desk all day, and he just powered through.

So, here I am, spent for the day, just got out of a cold shower, laid up on the couch, calling up an old friend to reminisce. Meanwhile, he's gone out to get popcorn and Moose Drool for tonight. Do you remember Moose Drool? I don't remember if it's good or not, I just remember that that was the beer that we drank when we were here. I mean, it's probably good, right? Isn't the whole point of IPAs that they're really hard to screw up and that's why every brewery has one?

So yeah, movie night tonight. We try to watch a few movies together a week. I mostly pick ones that I love and want to show him and he mostly picks ones he hasn't seen but look interesting. Tonight he's picked the 1997 cult classic *The Sticky Fingers of Time*. Not his normal fare but he saw the description and thought that I might like it. I say "cult classic" but I think we might be the first two people to ever watch this film. I could find very little of it online. I don't know how he found it, he must have either been looking at lists of time-travel films or indie films from the 90s that perplexingly have James Urbaniak in them. I was thinking of starting a Letterboxd to keep track of all of the movies we watch and what I thought of them. Is that too... cute?

I mean, this whole situation is too precious, right? Like, a little off-brand for me? I'm trying to live happily ever after like I'm in a Taylor Swift song, but not one of the songs where she's talking about how terrible of a girlfriend she is. I think 25-year-old me would roll his eyes. I already had my "once upon a time" moment go and it went *horribly* wrong and that's a story for never, you're never going to hear that one. Put that in the shared pile of stories we're never going to tell. I mean, we have a few of those don't we?

But my point is it's not all sunshine and roses. I don't even like roses, way overrated plant. So maybe it actually is some roses but in the metaphor roses are bad. I mean, sunshine is overrated too. We are out here in the mountains not too terribly far from an enormous fire that is the result of the hottest summer on record. So sunshine can go fuck itself, I don't even care. I don't think it's going to affect the park but it still sucks. So yeah, everything is sunshine and roses.

*Anyway*, I might be all about settling down and starting the world's gayest homestead, but Edgar actually likes his job? and isn't super interested in dropping everything? and moving out to the middle of nowhere with a guy he's been dating for I guess it's been two months? No matter how much he loves me. He also has— he calls them friends and family and he wants to see them again? It's truly bizarre. I mean, he already works in the middle of nowhere and only sees those people on home visits, but that's neither here nor there and you can't logic and reason someone into running away with you. And so, I couldn't convince him to run away with me for more than 2 weeks for vacation. So, I guess I'm going back to the real world with him at the end of this. If you call where I work the real world. And also incredibly begrudgingly.

I'm glad that I took the leap and actually went somewhere on vacation. I was tempted to go home and staycation for 2 weeks, but I don't think that Edgar would have come with me. My apartment is a mess. I was not in a good state when I left it last, and I wouldn't want him to see that. Don't get me wrong, I'm dead tired, but I'm still so glad that I'm out here. I needed to do something fun. I was living my life passively for a while. Our trip to Glacier was the last time that I had this sort of thing, and that was... god what year was that? That must have been— yeah it was 2014, because it was the year after we graduated. And of course, 2014 was eight years ago. Talk about the "sticky fingers of time," right? Most major events in my life since then I'd rather forget about or put in the past. I mean, you sort of know what I'm talking about but there's even more than that and I'd like to keep that way.

But, about the past... I uh... God, I'm so conflict-avoidant. It's like: why ruin such a nice conversation between two old friends by bringing up that uh maybe that friendship is a little rockier than we've acknowledged? We could keep talking about how beautiful Glacier National Park is. Edgar and I are going to Two Medicine tomorrow. But uh, I think I've just got to say what I wanted to say... I... forgive you. Great, now it sounds more dramatic than if I hadn't just said all of that about being conflict-avoidant. I mean, I know actual murderers and I made it sound worse than that. Uh, don't worry about that. But uh... I forgive you. No, I think that sounded sarcastic. I really do forgive you. Okay, that sounded more sarcastic. I'm stuck in a feedback loop. I f-forgive you. I forgive you. I forgive you. Did any of those work?

But we just kept putting those things off last time we talked more. And we don't have to talk about them now. I wanted to let you know that I have ruminated on a lot of things from my past and found that it isn't possible to hold onto them anymore. It actually turns out that life is very long compared to the lifetime of moments. And conversely, I hope that you can forgive *me* for everything that I did when I was young. Was "conversely" the right word there? Regardless, just consider this my *mea culpa*. I don't know if that's the right word either. I just think that sometimes when I get nervous I say things just to— *[Gasp.] [Phone buzz.]* Say them... Scared the crap out of me. It's just a text message. People have been sending me messages at the most inappropriate times recently. I'll *[phone buzz.]* get to it *[phone buzz.]* later. Uhh *[phone buzz.]* I'll get to it now, I guess. Someone really wants to get ahold of me. What could be so important? Maybe it's Edgar trying to ask me which bottles of Moose Drool I wanted him to get? Just whichever, man. No, but he would call.

*[Pause.]* Oh... no. It is not that. It is not that. I... um... hold on. Does this... this place Yeah, it does have cable, like it really is 1997. Umm... the remote...yeah. This is uh, not good news. It is news, though. If you turn on the TV, you'll see it too. This is like national news. *[Pause.]* Well, if you don't have cable then go to any news website. It's not going to only be on cable, uh. This is breaking news. Just go to any website and it's the top story, there's like a big red banner there I bet.

Uh huh, yeah that's the one. Uh, I assume that there is a picture at the top of the article. That's what they're showing on the TV right now. Do you see that place that the smoke is rising up out of? That's uh, that's that place that I told you about that I sort of work at. Well, not in that building exactly. I work on the outskirts of that place. It's the same complex but it's so large that I have never been anywhere near the place that is on fire right now. You can sort of see how big everything is from the drone shot they're showing right now, I'm sure that you can find it. That's right in the middle of the facility. It's called O.V.E.R. Oldbrush Valley Energy and Resources. "Energy" and "Resources" being euphemisms for the type of technological shenanigans going on inside. We're talking about the most advanced technology that the United States of America has ever had, and possibly the world. I was being cagey about it because nothing good ever comes out of knowing about that place or any of the things going on inside of it, but uh the cat is out of the bag. And from the looks of it, *something* is out of O.V.E.R. in very dramatic fashion.

So, uh, holy shit! Holy shit. Have you found a video feed yet? Long story short is that I work in Tier 1 and the good stuff is in Tier 3. That building with an enormous crater in it being inside of Tier 3. Whatever caused that explosion had to make it through a ring of schlubby security guards like me, then a whole bunch of armed and dangerous security guards like Hunter who you don't know but that's fine, and then a bunch of what I assume are secret service types in the middle, I've never actually seen any of them. And they have a highly strategic way of making sure that this kind of thing never happens. And if it does happen, then no it didn't. We sure as shit shouldn't be able to see it on our televisions right now.

*[Pause.]* No, of course nothing that they are saying makes any sense. They're just news anchors, they're not even journalists who have spent any amount of time thinking about these sorts of high infosec areas. It would be like me trying to commentate a poker match. The only true thing that any of them are going to be able to figure out is that there has been an explosion inside of Oldbrush Valley which destroyed a building, and the cause of which is unknown. And it will stay unknown. They are going to keep playing this drone shot of the facilities because that's the only image that they have. They are going to speculate wildly, which I appreciate because I love to speculate wildly, but they are not going to get any closer to the truth.

*[Pause.]* I don't know how bad this is, I mean for the average person. For O.V.E.R. it's a catastrophe. It means that someone out there is immensely powerful, is working against them, and has overwhelmingly succeeded. On a scale that we can't really understand. In fact, it should be paradoxical for this kind of thing to happen. The circumstances that it would necessitate are largely impossible. And if you don't understand what that means, then I suggest that you keep it that way.

*[Sigh.]* And of all of the times for this to happen, it was while I was on vacation? While I am relieved that I'm not back there while it's happening, I don't know what to do. Am I supposed to go back there and do what I can do to help? I mean, I'm not a firefighter. Am I supposed to keep my distance and let the head honchos right the ship? Should I enjoy my vacation because I'm a lowly guard and what happens that far up the chain is none of my business or concern?

*[Phone buzz.]* More texts from Tier 1 friends, Marissa and Shadow. Uh, looks like everyone in Tier 1 is safe and accounted for. Tier 3 is not somewhere that anyone I know can accidentally be at the wrong place at the wrong time.

It looks like this event was confined to one building deep inside this enormous facility, so, good. I don't even know anybody from that area of the valley. Unless I... do. There's one person who might be able to get in that far, but I find it hard to feel concern for him. He's sort of a huge dick and not in the good way. He's part of the reason that my uh, how did you put it, that my "nose is more crooked than it used to be," so yeah that's that guy. A fundamentally unsavory character, all said. You know, it's a shame. He used to be a really nice guy but O.V.E.R. sort of fucked his shit up. The methods through which they contain what they have in there are both duplicitous and violent and so the people who are most involved with it are duplicitous and violent, too. But he could have been inside of that building. And no one that I know would be able to confirm or deny that.

[Phone buzz.] Looks like Marissa is swearing revenge on whoever did this on behalf of all the security guards that they made look bad. I think you'd like her. She's a lot. If anyone could actually get revenge on whoever did this uh, she would be a good candidate. Hunter isn't responding. That's normal, sometimes he doesn't. I know that you don't know who any of those people are, but I'm trying to keep you inside of my thought process. That's all we can do right now, is listen to the people who have firsthand information and wait for the news to drop whenever it drops. I hate waiting on bad news. [Sigh.]

[Scoff.] Now they've got a guy on there now talking about aliens. It's not aliens, dude. Imagine thinking that aliens are intelligent enough to build a spaceship that would allow them to travel to Earth— then if they were that smart, why would they even want to come to earth? And if they were so smart, how could they be captured and contained by the United States government? None of that makes any sense as soon as you start picking at it. I promise you that humans are strange enough to do whatever weird shit that they thought that aliens did, including this. Having this idiot on the news makes it seem like a joke. Maybe that's the point, to get everyone to think this isn't serious. I think it would probably be bad for O.V.E.R. if the average person thought that something was going on there. Not that I'm saying this guy is an operative or something, but if I were in charge of managing this shitshow I would want someone like that on TV 24/7 saying stuff exactly like this. He's running cover for them, unwittingly or not.

Personally, for me, it's actually starting to set in, how serious this is. Thinking about what it meant for this to happen. Does this mean that they never catch who did it? I mean, how are they going to be able to catch someone if the system they already had in place wasn't sufficient to stop them? It's one thing to get a *person* inside of Tier 3. I don't think that's impossible. But how do you get a bomb? One big enough to do that? Granted, I don't know how big that would have to be, but it had to be big enough that you'd have to carry it in. And there's no toting it around in there. There is no such thing as free, unsupervised movement inside of Tier 3. I mean, at least that's my understanding. They keep perfectly tight-lipped about everything. And the area directly about O.V.E.R. is a no-fly zone, like Area 51, so there isn't any way that someone could fly a kite into that area, much less get a bomb through. That's why the drone footage is at that angle. They got as close as they could get without getting shot down.

I am truly sorry that this got in the way of our conversation. We were building bridges back. I mean, I guess it did get me to open up about my job, and I wasn't gonna do that, so if there's a silver lining. But I'll have to call you back in a week or two when things start to die down and I'll get you a status update. Shit, I hope that things have died down in the next week or two. If things stay like this I'm just gonna make a run for it. This is the epicenter of this shit hitting the fan.

[Pause.] Really? No, that would be great. Uh, I wasn't expecting you to offer me a place to stay. That's... that's too kind. I mean, I'll keep it in mind, but I can't ever take you up on it. It would have been nice to visit while I was on vacation, and I'm not gonna lie, I thought about it while I was up here, but I can't just invite myself into your life. And now my vacation is coming to an end so it doesn't even matter. Maybe next time, though, if I ever end up out this way again. If

you're ever in the vicinity of O.V.E.R. uh, please don't come visit, it's not a vacation destination. It is a disaster and I'm about to walk right back into it while it's burning. *[Sigh.]* Because of course I am. *[Under breath:]* Oh my god. Oh my god, of course I am.

Thank you for staying on the phone with me. What a wild coincidence that this happened right when I called you. Without you, I would have been stuck here alone, trying to piece all of the bad news together. I've gone through that before and I wouldn't wish it on my worst enemy. Edgar should be home soon and I can talk it out with him, then. I can't tell how scared to be. But I should let you go. It was nice hearing from you. It's been a long time since I've heard your voice, but that's... mostly my fault. I'm sorry. I'll try harder to keep in touch. *[Pause.]* Right. *[Pause.]* Y-you, too. It was really great hearing from you today, Matt. *[Pause.]* Yep, talk to you later. Mm-Bye.

*[Beep.]*

**TTS voice:** This marks the end of surveillance recording number 0005 of subject Mikey Walters.

*[Beep.]*

*[End theme plays.]*

**After-credits (TTS voice):** Mikey Walters. Milky Water. WOE.BEGONE.

*[END Episode 32.]*