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Disasters

Sarah: Wentworth, how do you deal with this heat wave we've had for ten days?

W: Hardly, I think like anyone else at the moment. But I'm lucky to have air-conditioned in my house. Did you know that heat waves are a silent killer, mostly affecting the elderly, the very young or the chronically ill?

Sarah: I know, it killed fifteen thousand people during the summer of 2003. Actually more than two decades ago climate scientists predicted a greater frequency of "extreme" climate events, and they were right.

W: Indeed. Human activities are changing the natural balance of the Earth. That's why the risks are everywhere now, from the constant risk of coastal flooding, to the earthquakes and tsunamis, millions of people are threatened.

Sarah: Yes, I heard whole villages were wiped out by an earthquake in Nepal recently, and some scientists think we may have entered a new cycle of hurricane activity after relative calm over the previous thirty years.

W: Unfortunately. Apart from anticipating hazards, there is nothing much we can do against the freaks of nature.

Sarah: I do think that most of it is a man-made disaster more than a natural disaster.



GLOSSARY:

Disasters	Earthquakes
To deal with	Tsunamis
To be lucky	Whole villages
To affect	A new cycle
To kill	Hurricane activity
To predict	Relative calm
To change	Hazards
To be threatened	The freaks of nature
To wipe out	A man-made disaster
To enter	A natural disaster
To anticipate	Hardly
The heat wave	Anyone else
Air-conditioned	Mostly
A silent killer	Constant
the elderly	Recently
The very young	The previous thirty years
The chronically ill	Apart from
A decade	Nothing much
Climate scientists	Against
A greater frequency	Most of it
Extreme climat events	More than
Human activities	
The natural balance	
The risks	
Coastal flooding	



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