

JACK AND THE BEAN SMACK • BEGIN

Jack walked down the cracked sidewalks past graffiti-littered road signs to the pawnshop after school with his grandmother's diamond earrings snug in the pocket of his jeans. His mother hated asking for him to do this, but they had to pay rent on the one bedroom house they shared on Utah Street. The tips at the diner where she worked double shifts weren't enough this month.

"Excuse me," Jack uttered quietly to the crusty-looking middle aged man behind the counter - who barely acknowledged Jack's existence when he entered the shop.

"How ya doin?"" the man replied, as he wiped his nose with the back of his hand.

"Good, thank you," said Jack, politely. "Um, I have these earrings. Would you like to buy them from me?"

"Hmph." The man behind the counter snorted, "Five bucks."

"Oh, I don't know ..." Jack trailed off. "My mom was probably expeding more than that. They're real diamonds."

"Five bucks."

Jack thought for a moment. He didn't want to come home empty handed, but he also didn't want to get ripped off. "I'm sorry. I can't sell them for that little. Goodbye. Have a good day," Jack smiled sheepishly.

The man behind the counter continued to barely acknowledge Jack's existence, as Jack left through the door with the ringing bell.

Jack solemnly shuffled down the street, toward home, when a skinny teenager - one who Jack didn't recognize from school - ran up behind him. Jack's heart jumped into his throat.

"My girl would like those."

"Uh ... the earrings?" Jack's voice shook as he assumed that this was a robbery.

"Yeah. I saw you at the pawn shop. My girl would like those. I ain't going to take em from you. Don't worry."

"Oh, I wasn't worried," Jack lied. "Do you want to offer me more than five dollars then?"

Yeah," the teen said as he lowered his head and reached into his pocket.

JACK AND THE BEAN SMACK • 2

"These are worth at least twenty, man. Thirty if you know the right people who want them."

"Ohh ..." Jack's heart jumped into his throat again. "Thank you so much for the offer, but I don't think I can accept those ."

"Change your life, man. If you take them. They'll make you rich." The teen took Jack's hand and put the small bag of what-felt-like beans into Jack's hand and dosed it up. "Hurry home with those."

"No, thank you, really ..." Jack was about ready to pee himself at this point "You can keep them. I have to go home now."

"Give me the earrings, man. Lets not make this a thing. You're getting a great deal. Seriously, now," the teen's voice got a little sterner, and Jack felt a bit of urine trickle down his leg.

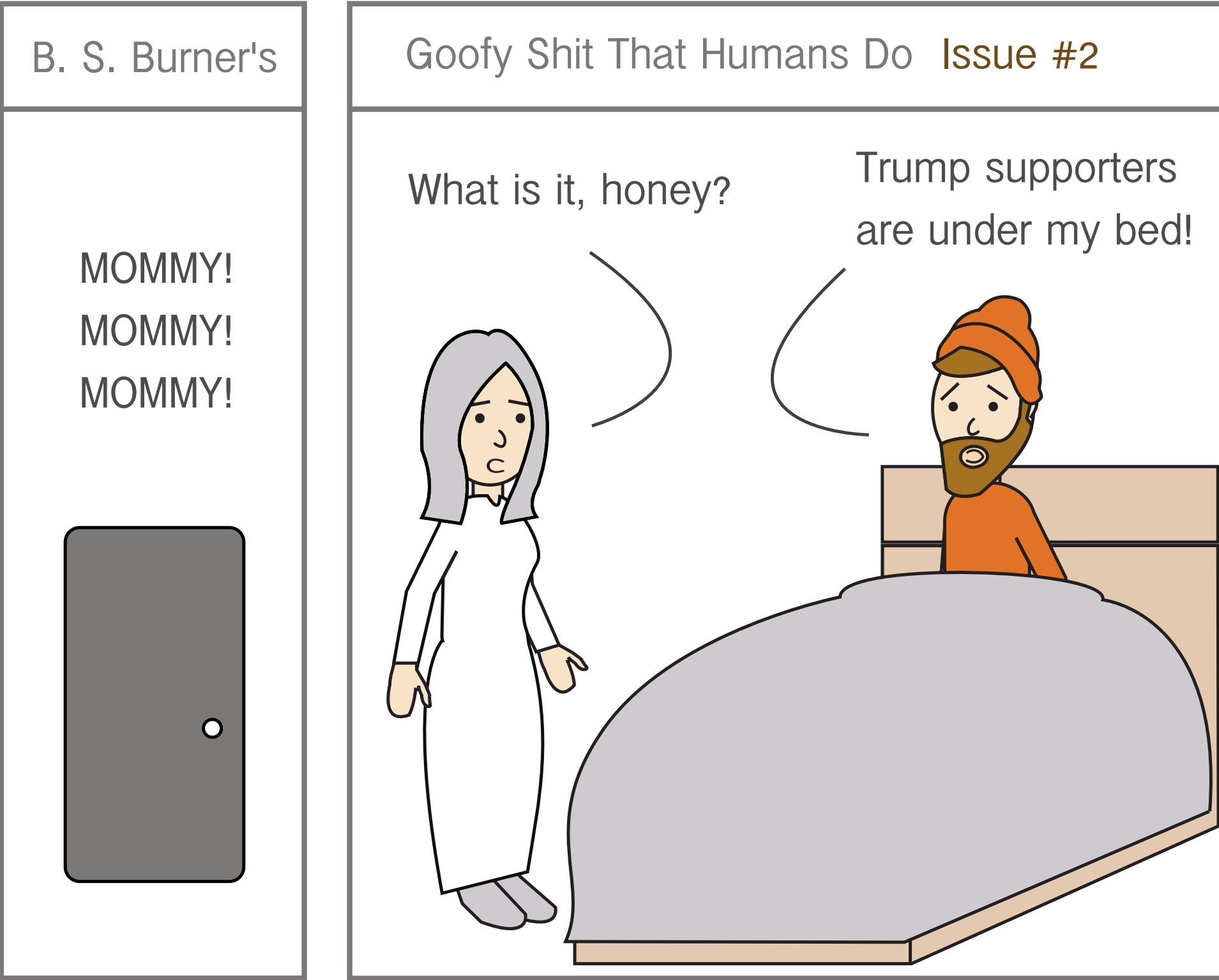
"Okay ..." Jack gave the earrings to the kid, took the bag of beans, and scampered away in a half-run, half-walk to not let the kid know that he was so scared he wanted to run like hell.

It was just starting to get dark by the time Jack got home. His mother wouldn't be home until after 10pm, so he had a little time to ponder how he was going to tell her what had happened. By 9pm, Jack had no plan. He was going to have to tell her the truth. She was going to be mad. And sad. And disappointed. He felt terrible. His stomach was turning and he was sweating. He had never let her down this much. He was so mad at himself for doing such a stupid thing and letting himself be taken advantage of like that. His sick feeling soon turned to anger ... at the kid with the beans. At the pawnshop-guy and at himself. "Fuck it." Jack said out loud. "I guess it's time to change my life." It was then that Jack had done the least calculated thing that he had ever done. He swallowed the beans. "Holy shit, what did I just do?" he whispered to himself, "Think think think." Jack thought, "I'll go to bed. Destroy the evidence. I'll sleep it off, and ... maybe feel sick in the morning ... whatever ... it'll be okay." Jack felt relieved as he laid down on the couch. He dosed his eyes and seemingly fell right asleep.

When Jack's mother got home, she didn't see her son on the couch like he usually was. His backpack was there, so she knew he had made it home. He was nowhere in the house. She was freaking out when she noticed that the back door was open. She ran to it and found Jack in the backyard staring up at the sky.

"Jack, what the hell are you doing?" she yelled at him.

"The fucking beans grew a bean stalk, Mom. Check it out," he grinned.



JACK AND THE BEAN SMACK • 3

"I don't see a beanstalk, honey. What beans?"

"I sold the earrings for some beans! I thought they were drugs, but they were actually seeds that grew a giant fucking stalk in the backyard. Pretty cool, right?"

"You sold the earrings for beans?!" Jack's mother was horrified. "My grandmother's earrings? What were you thinking?"

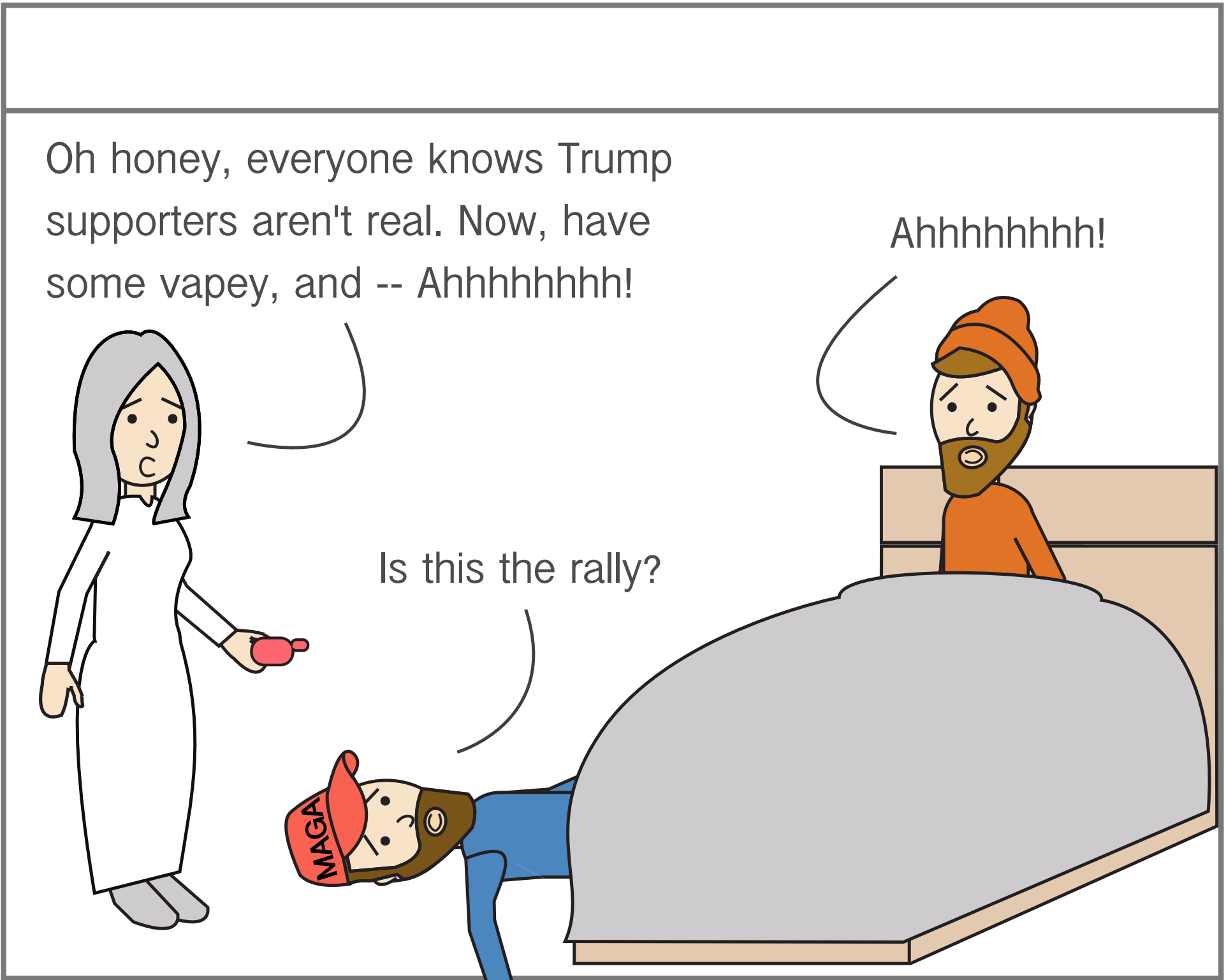
"I didn't mean to," Jack answered. "But look ... a cool fucking beanstalk!"

"There is no beanstalk, Jack. Get your ass inside and go to bed." She was shaking at this point.

"Nah, I'm going up there. I have a feeling I'll get something that's even better than those earrings up the stalk." Jack headed toward the dilapidated, old shed in the back of the yard and started to climb the side of it, like a squirrel. When he reached the top, he was grinning ear to ear. "A golden goose! Shhh." He motioned down to his mother, "I'm going to very-carefully grab it. Stand at the bottom of the stalk and I'll toss it down to you."

"What the fuck are you doing, Jack?!" His mother was in tears, "That thing is going to collapse. There's no goose!"





JACK AND THE BEAN SMACK • 4

"Mom, be quiet. He's coming" Jack put his finger up to his lips.

"Who is coming?"

"It's a giant. He's going to kill me if he sees me stealing his goose. I'm going to go hide." Jack tiptoed across the roof of the shed and crouched down near the ledge.

"Jack ... do I need to call the police? Are you okay?" Jack's mother cried from down below.

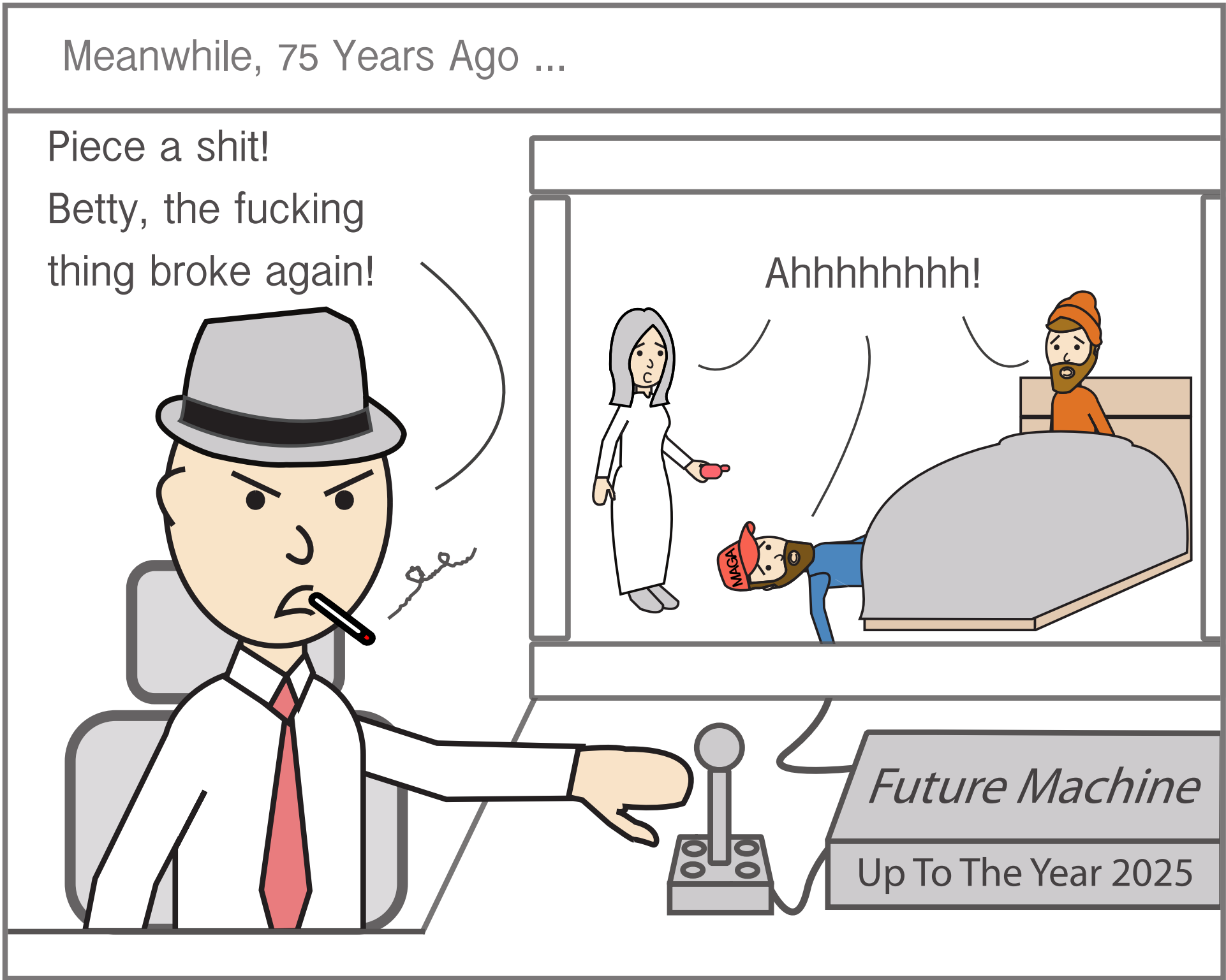
"Mom, shhh ... he's going to hear you." Jack looked down toward her. Then he looked up again "Shit!"

Jack's mom watched in horror as Jack wrestled an imaginary giant on top of a creaking rotting shed with shingles falling off the ledge. He got closer and closer to the edge until he tumbled onto the cold damp ground with a thud.

THE END

SONGS TO LISTEN ON REPEAT THIS WINTER

- Little Tin Heart by The Benjamins
- Bored To Death by Candylion
- Electric Dice by HMDRM
- I Want Candy by MC Chris
- Left And Leaving by The Weakerthans



— AWARD-WINNING VEGETARIAN CHILI FOR 3 or 4 HUMANS —

INGREDIENTS

Get your bottle of cooking oil (avacado oil burns less)
Along with your salt and pepper shakers

- 2 or 3 hefty tablespoons of cumin
- 2 or 3 normal tablespoons of curry powder
- 2 - ish tablespoons of coriander
- 2 tablespoons of chilli powder
- 1 tablespoon of cinnamon

Chop 1 small onion any color
Mince 3 doves of garlic (or more if you want)

- 15 ounce can of black beans
- 15 ounce can of red kidney beans
- 15 ounce can of chickpeas
- 13 ounce can of crushed tomatoes
- 1 and 1/2 cups of vegetable stock
- 2 tablespoons of tomato paste

1 tablespoon of sugar

DIRECTIONS

In a big pot, heat a little oil on medium and toast the spices for 1 minute.
Stir in the onion and let it cook for a 2 minutes.
Add some salt and pepper, stir in the garlic and cook for 1 minute.
Stir in the cans of beans along with another shake of salt and pepper
Stir in the crushed tomatoes and vegetable stock
Bring to a boil for 1 minute, then simmer on low for 20 - 30 minutes
Add the sugar & tomato paste and simmer for another 5 minutes

the
brock street
burner

(now in color)

TOP 5 ST LOUIS SHOWS TO GET THROUGH VALENTINE'S DAY

Sisser
January 11th at The Sinkhole
with ¡Cazadores! • Bagheera • Bruiser Queen

Thoughts On Bowling
January 17th at Moshmellow
with Candylion

The Get Up Kids
January 30th at Delmare Hall
with Hot Rod Circuit

Ian Flsher & Band: Record Release Show
Febrary 7th at Off Broadway
with Meramec • Anna Smyrk

Carmen Lundy
February 14th at Jazz St. Louis

READ A BOOK, YOU IGNORANT FOOL
The Boy Who Never Became a Man



In *The Boy Who Never Became a Man*, a little boy named Josh wants to become a manly man when he grows up. Josh seeks advice from his manly Uncle Teddy on how to do so. Unfortunately for Josh, he continuously runs away from his Uncle Teddy's counseling and never becomes a manly man.