

FUNCT **ALLY**
DEAD

GIMME WAR



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It's Biden bitch.

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I'M A BILLIONAIRE CEO AND I REALLY DO WORK 50,000 TIMES HARDER THAN A JANITOR

//AUDREY CLARK GUEST CONTRIBUTOR

MY NAME IS AUDREY CLARK, and I'm a billionaire CEO. Without getting too specific, let's just say that I run a multinational retail business named after both a mythical female warrior and a mighty river—I think you know the one I'm talking about;) (EDITOR'S NOTE: Clark is the Chief Executive Officer of Wonder Woman-The Nile Incorporated.)

Wealth inequality is on the rise, and recently, people have been asking me: is it *really* fair that a CEO makes 50,000 times more than a janitor? Do you really think you work 50,000 times harder?

My answer is twofold.

First of all, a CEO's worth isn't measured by how much physical effort they put into their job. It's measured by the added value they bring to the company with their industry connections, experience, and top-down strategy.

Second of all, yep.

Janitors work long hours, doing uncomfortable, difficult work, for very little pay or prestige. It must be the second most thankless job in the world. The only job more thankless is CEO; which, to be fair,

pays substantially better, but is 50,000 times harder.

Don't believe me? Let me walk you through my daily routine.

Every morning, I wake up at the crack of midnight. Midnight is morning to CEOs, because we have too much work to waste a single second sleeping in. I then drive to work in my luxury sedan.

I know what you're thinking—sounds pretty cushy. Janitors are probably taking the bus to work, or perhaps one of those non-luxury sedans. Well, if you've never >>



//AUDREY CLARK GUEST CONTRIBUTOR

>> driven a luxury car, one thing you wouldn't realize is that they have no engine. Both the front and back of the car have been hollowed out to make more room to store important legal documents (written of course by myself). To actually transport the vehicle, I have to hoist it up in my bare hands and run along the road, Fred Flintstone-style. All high-end luxury cars are like this.

When I get to the office, I'm the first one there. I'm not just there before any other employee; I'm there before the office itself. See, at the end of each day, I dismantle the entire office building brick by brick and pack it away into a storage container for safekeeping. My first task every day is to reassemble the building, including re-wiring, plumbing, and furnishing every room. Needless to say, this is a difficult and time-consuming job. The most challenging part is the physical exertion—sure, I can use construction vehicles like cranes, bulldozers and cement mixers. But once again, they have all been hollowed out, requiring me to Fred Flintstone them around the construction site.

Once I'm settled in, I get started on paperwork. On a typical day, I'll fill out anywhere between thirty thousand and one hundred million contracts, forms, and invoices—all of which I write out by hand (our printer's broken). Then it's time for product testing.

At my business, we sell thousands of different products, from food, to electronics, to pets. As CEO, part of my job is to per-

sonally test every single one to make sure it upholds our corporate values. If we're selling a new type of candy bar, I would eat one, making sure it's non-toxic. If we're selling a new games console, like the PS5, I would play a few games, and then eat one, to make sure it's non-toxic. Every single product we have ever sold, I have eaten at least one of, just to make sure it's non-toxic. A lot of the time, they actually are toxic, and I become incredibly ill. All part of a day's work.

Now, you may ask, what if you're selling a priceless, one-of-a-kind work of art? Well, rules are rules. I have to eat the whole thing, usually in one bite, though sometimes I'm allowed two. My next task will be to replicate it perfectly, down to the last brush stroke.

With that done, I also do a full shift of janitorial work.

How is it possible that one person could accomplish all of these tasks in a single day? The answer is simple: Einstein's theory of relativity. By riding in a rocket ship moving at close to the speed of light, I'm

able to slow the relative passing of time to an imperceptible crawl. While time passes normally in the outside world, I am living in a cosmic hell, where each second is stretched out to 50,000 times its usual length. And yep, you guessed it—the rocket boosters have been hollowed out. I am Fred Flintstoning into orbit.

That's a day in my life, as crazy as it may sound. Building the office, testing every single product, and trapping myself in a prison of passing moments so that I can literally work 50,000 times longer than any other employee in my company. That's what I do, and if you ask me, I think it justifies my salary pretty well.

I assume every other CEO does the same thing. If not, yikes. 🤖

Audrey Clark is an actress and comedian from Sydney, Australia. She was elected Prime Minister in 2019 but quit to pursue her dream (opening a hotel for dogs). You can follow her on Twitter @audreynotfunny or IG @audreynotphotos.



CHOOSE YOUR OWN ADVENTURE

AMERICAN
FOREIGN POLICY

Right this way...Mr. President

//MATTHEW BRIAN COHEN

"RIGHT THIS WAY, MR. PRESIDENT," the Secret Service agent says.

You walk into the Situation Room. All your generals and most trusted advisers are there, ready to brief you on the ongoing crisis at the border. No, not the crises at the U.S.'s southern border, which you so deftly handled by quietly continuing and silently increasing the brutal caging of migrant Latino families while loudly denouncing your predecessor for implementing it. This is a border crisis that affects people that matter.

"Give it to me straight," you say. You reach deep into your memory for a phrase you heard in your younger years (age 50 or so), a phrase that important military guys say when it's time to get serious. "What's it like on the ground?"

"Tanks have assembled along the western border," General Sullivan says. Good ol' General Sullivan. He's the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and he never met a war he didn't like. "There's no sugarcoating this. It looks like they're prepared to invade."

"I say we go in there, guns blazing, and show them what America is all about," Freddie Wang, your trusted Chief of Staff and former CEO of Raytheon, says.

"It might be better to hold back and issue some sanctions first." The tiny voice belongs to your Secretary of Energy, Barry McDonald. Barry was always a pussy, but something about his pussy-ass voice makes him seem even more of a pussy than he naturally was.

"Mr. President," your Vice President says, "what do we do?"

A:) Bomb them back to the Stone Age (TURN TO PAGE 6)

B:) Sanction them back to the Stone Age (TURN TO PAGE 10)

C:) Resign, and additionally, piss your pants (TURN TO PAGE 14)

IN EXCHANGE FOR INCREASED OIL PRODUCTION, WHITE HOUSE OFFERS SAUDI ARABIA A "9/11 SEQUEL OF YOUR CHOOSING"

//JAMES DWYER

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The Biden administration is following through on their promise to do everything in their power to tackle rising gas prices, going so far as to offer Saudi Arabia a “9/11 sequel of your choosing” according to White House Press Secretary, Jen Psaki.

“President Biden understands that we must do everything in our power to curb the rising costs of oil and gas, but in the short term, Americans will be feeling the pain, likely in the form of a massive terrorist attack on U.S. soil funded by Saudi Arabia,” Psaki stated at her daily press briefing yesterday morning. “The administration is committed to doing whatever it can to keep gas prices down long-term.”

“Do we want another 9/11? No... at least not in the form of sky-rocketing gas prices!” Speaker Pelosi said this afternoon on Capitol Hill. “If preventing an economic 9/11 means yielding the right-of-way to the next actual 9/11? That’s a sacrifice that I know real Americans are willing to make.” Madame Speaker then introduced Riverdance before exiting to the ladies’ room.



The Biden administration’s posture appears to be a rare opportunity for bipartisanship during a presidency that has been stymied by fierce political divisions. “The administration’s work to curb gas prices is a step in the right direction,” Senator Mitt Romney said to Capitol Hill reporters this evening, “but I want to see concrete action, not just bluster. I won’t be happy until I see planes crashing into skyscrapers.”

The White House has made it clear that “everything is still on the table” in terms of their willingness to negotiate with MBS on this matter. Sources within the White House have told *Functionally Dead* if the Crown Prince finds 9/11 sequel to be insufficient, the Biden administration is ready to abandon clean energy initiatives in favor of “even cleaner, Saudi Arabian oil,” four more WWE events in the kingdom per year, and the head of Anderson Cooper.

Anderson Cooper declined to comment on the negotiations. 🗿

“FULL STEAM AHEAD, BOYS,” you say, with all the confidence of someone who’s never had a child die in war. “Let’s bomb these fuckers back to the Stone Age.”

You sleep easy that night. This isn’t your first ride on the war horse at the war rodeo: during your time as United States Senator, you voted for several American invasions, as well as countless increases to military spending at the expense of frivolous things like clean water and healthcare. But this is your first time making The Decision. It makes you feel like a tough guy, ordering death the way those leftists order an Impossible Burger on Postmates. The American war machine responds seamlessly to your every whim, dishing out destruction the way those leftists dish out Impossible Burgers when they’re driving for Postmates.

You waltz into the Situation Room the next day with an extra spring in your step. “How’d it go, fellas? We minimized civilian casualties, I hope.” You wink so hard that your eyelid gets stuck, forcing you to pry it back open by hand. Everyone but pussy-ass Barry politely looks away.

“Well, Mr. President, we’ve hit a bit of a snag,” General Sullivan says. “It turns out the country we bombed? They’re a nuclear power.”

“But the good news,” your Secretary of Defense says, “is so are we.”

Jeez. Things are escalating pretty quickly. You know in your gut that dropping an atomic bomb is a terrible thing; except when America does it, of course. Which is the only time in human history it’s been done. So wait... maybe it’s not so bad after all?

You feel conflicted. On one hand, you really don’t want America to get nuked. But on the other hand, America has a moral obligation to preemptively defend itself from foreign powers by strategically targeting hospitals and schools. The CIA has made it clear that statistically, schools are where most terrorists learn to read and write, and hospitals are the number one place terrorists are born.

What do you do?

A:) Drop the A-bomb, baby! (TURN TO PAGE 8)

B:) Drop the A-bomb, but insist you ride it as it falls, Dr. Strangelove-style.
(TURN TO PAGE 12)

Eric Adams HORNY FOR EVIL





NEW CIA TORTURE TECHNIQUE JUST 23-YEAR-OLD GOLDMAN SACHS ANALYST LECTURING YOU ABOUT BITCOIN

//OWEN RILEY GUEST CONTRIBUTOR

THIS FRIDAY, AN ANONYMOUS PENTAGON SOURCE leaked footage of a controversial new interrogation technique being deployed by the CIA. Reportedly referred to internally as “The Chet Offensive,” the novel method harnesses the power of the nation’s most debilitating psychological weapons: 23-year-old Goldman Sachs analysts.

While experts say the new technique is among the most brutal to be used in modern times, it is also perhaps one of the most straightforward: an unbearably smug financial analyst employed by the banking giant condescendingly blathers away to interrogation subjects about the merits of investing in cryptocurrency until the prisoner either spills his beans or begs for the sweet release of death. The method employs a rare public-private intelligence collaboration, with Goldman Sachs flying its newest hires

directly from its New York headquarters to blacksites around the world for the bargain rate of \$41,500 per hour (flight times and vape breaks included).

The analyst in the leaked footage, identified only as ‘Brad’, is shown entering the interrogation room and bro-hugging the prisoner before feeling his bicep and telling him he should probably hit the curls a little harder at the gym next week. Remarkably, the footage gets only more horrifying from there.

“Bro, just to be straight up with you, I am very hungover right now, so let’s just keep this chill, alright? And you don’t even want to know how much money I lost last night,” Brad can be heard saying. “My dad knows Derrick Rose’s doctor’s dog walker’s financial advisor, and he told me D-Rose was feeling the best he >>

>> has in years, so I put down, like, a solid 10% of my trust fund on the Knicks. But they choked, bro! My life is a total disaster. I might have to sell my NFT of Kanye West screaming at a reporter that he'll never make an NFT." The video also shows the analyst cursing when he realizes he doesn't have enough Venmo cash to pay his Adderall guy.

After sending the same pickup line to several dozen women on Tinder, Brad is then recorded diving straight into nonsensical ramblings about cryptocurrency—the kind of organic interrogation progression that proponents of the technique hail as its most attractive feature.

As one senior Department of Defense official puts it: "The best thing about this method is that it requires no preparation or training whatsoever on the part of the Goldman analyst. You just put them in a room with someone, and this is what naturally happens 97-98% of the time."

In the clip, once Brad has finished baselessly claiming that Bitcoin will be the only currency to survive "four years of woke socialist fiscal policy," he launches into a completely incoherent but fantastically confident lecture on the nature of cryptocurrencies and why they are valuable: "So the point of it is, right, it's in the cloud on the blockchain, and obviously that's all encrypted behind the firewall, so no one can hack the decentralized cryptochamber and the government can't raise your interest rate on it either or tax you or any of that bullshit. That's why it's guaranteed to make you 40% in, like, one fucking year bro. How are you not seeing this? Do you hate money or something?"

The video ends with the prisoner pleading with guards to make the analyst take off his backwards Vineyard Vines hat and offering all the information he has in exchange for a cyanide pill and a pair of noise-canceling headphones.

At press time, Goldman Sachs analysts employed in the new scheme were putting together a PowerPoint presentation protesting the "inhumane" conditions on their private flights to Guantanamo Bay. 🧟

Owen Riley is a writer and corporate minion based in New York, NY

CHOOSE YOUR OWN ADVENTURE

AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY

"LET'S BOMB THEM BACK TO THE STONE AGE," you say. "But with nukes this time."

You try to remember what President Truman said when he gave the order to wipe out hundreds of thousands of Japanese civilians during World War II. It was one of the hardest decisions a President has ever had to make, requiring both a ravenous thirst for blood and a callous disregard of human life that would make the devil cry.

"Now we are all sons of bitches," you say. This is what Bainbridge said, not Truman, but you were never a particularly smart man. After all, you're dropping nukes!

"The launch codes, Mr. President."

You remember the nuclear launch codes you were given when you were sworn in.

"Three," you say. "Six. Zero."

The code is short, because Presidents have to remember it. The same number of degrees as a perfect circle. An insistence that you're going a different direction than those before you while ending up in the exact same place.

"Thank you, Mr. President." General Sullivan says. "We are now entering nuclear war."

"It's a shame it had to come to this," you say, hoping history will remember you kindly, or at the very least, you get a cool battleship named after you. One with a bunch of anti-aircraft guns. But it's the future, so it can also turn invisible. And maybe even fly.

THE END

“COURSE I VENMO'D SOMEONE SOMEWHERE doing something in or near Ukraine,” area woman Wanda Pubes (pronounced *Pewbs*) told *Functionally Dead* on Friday. “You can’t just invade a sovereign nation unprovoked. That’s a war crime. As the police of the world, Americans have to stand up to those shenanigans.”

When this paper brought up the Iraq... situation, Wanda laughed: “Yeah, cops fuckin’ suck, dude!”

“It just feels good to do my part,” she continued. “I tossed a blue and yellow square up on Insta, too. I’m *pretty* sure that’s their flag.” Ms. Pubes was referring to the cash she sent to someone somewhere in or near Ukraine, and bingo—their flag.

Ms. Pubes is not alone. Recent reports have massive individual funds designated for armaments pumped into the Ukraine by American citizens since the war broke out 41 days ago. This sum doesn’t include the \$13.6 billion coming in hot from President Biden and his trusty fleet of Pentagon hawks. But folks somewhere in or near Ukraine can expect to see donations from people like Ms. Pubes eventually, probably, in some form or another.

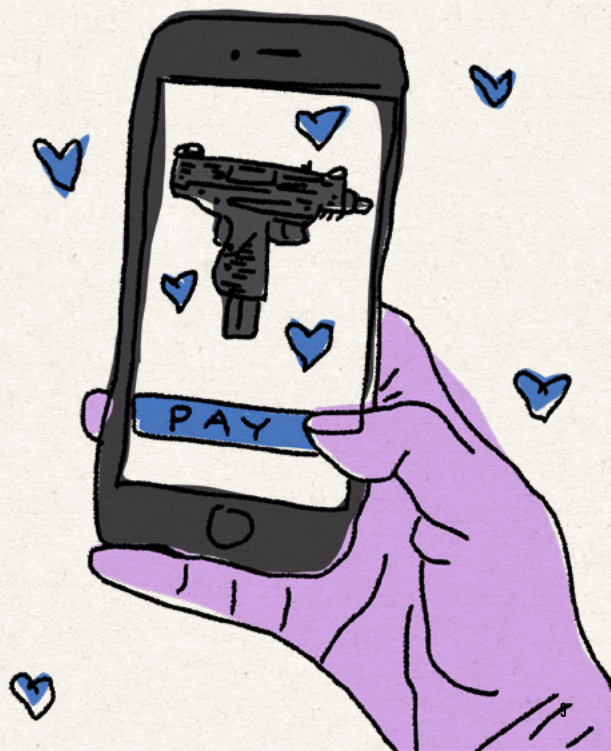
However, some critics remain skeptical that this aide will actually go to the people of Ukraine. With the conspicuous presence of the Asov Battalion—a Nazi branch of the Ukrainian army—and myriad rightwing groups activated throughout the small country, how does one know where their money is actually going?

“I mean, I don’t know for sure. I guess I technically could be arming Nazis, but then again, maybe not!” said Ms. Pubes. “I like to imagine a young Ukrainian boy getting my \$50 Venmo, heading down to the freedom store, and buying a shiny gun to fight those damn Ruskies. Those bastards bleed red!”

Regardless of the lack of transparency and accountability in regard to weapons recipients, we can all agree that the United States arming as many people as possible in the Eastern European state, despite their allegiances and motivations, is the answer. Sure, sometimes this course of action results in destabilization, mass famine, and the rise of rightwing extremists, but that has only ever happened every other time. So, do your part: send an uzi to a Ukrainian civilian... or to someone somewhere doing something nearby. 🧟

WOMAN VENMOS MONEY TO ARM SOMEONE SOMEWHERE DOING SOMETHING IN OR NEAR UKRAINE

//DIANA KOLSKY



“A WISE MOVE, MR. PRESIDENT.” Secretary McDonald says.

The instant you agree to sanctions, you regret it. This guy is such a pussy, and you agreed with his pussified idea like an even bigger pussy. Sanctions?! What did sanctions ever do besides punish and stave innocent civilians? If you’re gonna put the squeeze on civilians, you should at least send in some troops. They made some really cool movies about Vietnam. But Hollywood has never made a movie about some pussy-ass sanctions.

Over the next few weeks, the sanctions have their predictable effect. The people’s wealth plummets, while the autocratic leader and his legion of oligarchs barely feel anything—to meaningfully go after their wealth and power would put you and your billionaire donors at risk, after all. It’s rude to take a shit when you swim in the same pool.

At the daily White House briefing, your Press Secretary tells the world how your administration “isn’t backing down,” but the press, as you could have predicted, isn’t satisfied. The legacy media institutions are run by war hawks and CIA associates, and they want blood.

“Are we just going to sit by and let this right-wing psycho, who was illegitimately elected, invade a foreign nation for its resources under the guise of liberating its people?”

“We’re not taking questions from left-wing media who have time traveled from 2004,” your Press Secretary states. “Next question.”

“A recent poll indicated a majority of Americans strongly support a no-fly zone.”

“Do they know that you are talking about an act of war,” your Press Secretary says, “And not underwear without any dickholes?”

“The poll was conducted by Fruit of the Loom in 2014. So yes, I think they were well aware.”

“I have a question,” a reporter with *Buzzfeed News* shouts. “Can the President commit to personally entering the battlefield à la the end of *Independence Day*, preferably while wearing no-fly zone underwear from Fruit of the Loom? Sorry for the last part, this piece is also sponsored content.”

Sanctions, as you knew in the deep recesses of your non-pussy heart, were just a stop-gap. You have to placate your press and deal with the growing threat. Do you:

- A:) Bomb them back to the Stone Age (TURN TO PAGE 6)
- B:) Send weapons to the resistance fighters (TURN TO PAGE 16)
- C:) Resign, and additionally, piss your pants (TURN TO PAGE 14)



Inspiring! This Woman Believes Other Women Unless the Abuser Is Offering Her Stage Time

//AIR DURNELL GUEST CONTRIBUTOR

MANY BRAVE WOMEN HAVE TAKEN the creative world by storm by outing their abusers to people within their community. Sandra Willows is one such woman who recently outed her abuser to her close group of performer friends. Most responded with empathy and compassion, but one, Josie Porter, made it clear that she "so feels your pain" but could never say no to stage time if he offered it. Very cool of her!

"I'm a huge social justice warrior and really believe women should be heard," said Josie Porter when her bestie explained that a mutual friend has harassed her multiple times. "As long as that woman is me and I am heard through the gift of stage time from a guy who—for some reason—every woman I know hates."

Wow! No abusers will continue their mistreatment with sisterhood like this.

Acquaintances have reported this "being crazy," since performers are often "socialists" that would typically "care about protecting their community."

"Don't get me wrong, Josie's great. But if the only people offering you stage time are sus guys... maybe you should reconsider where you're investing your energy," said Giselle Holter, an ex-friend of everyone because she couldn't handle that drama on top of a pandemic. "I have lots of things going on in my life already like group chats, *Byron Baes* on Netflix, and being a decent human being."

Though Josie isn't going to unfollow the guy who has physically intimidated multiple women, Josie *definitely* believes women when they can offer her a job! So that's pretty neat.

Josie has reportedly forgiven many men for their actions as long as he shares her Insta Reel to his story and clarifies his toxic statements with "it was just a joke!"

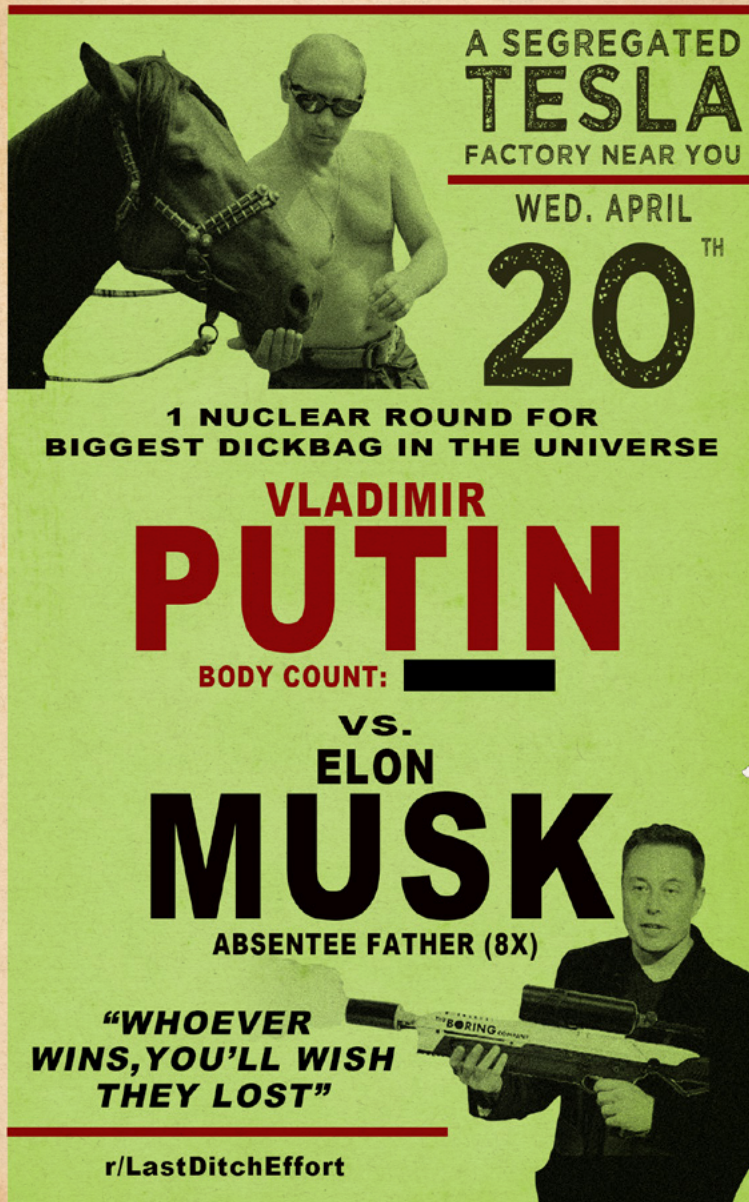
"It's just hard to support EVERY woman when I... get things from shitty men easier, if that makes sense." Sadly, it does.

"Honestly her allyship is just like her comedy career," said completely objective third party observer Jenny Dorango. "Completely theoretical."

Iconique!

Air (they/them) is a New York-based comedian who performs original characters and sketch comedy. Air most recently was a winner of the 2021 Yes And Laughter Lab sponsored by Warner Media, Comedy Central, and NBC with their pilot DevOUT. They previously acted on Maude Night at UCB Theater in NYC as well as hosted a show there called The Witching Hour. Their writing has been published in McSweeney's, Reductress, Women In Comedy Festival Daily, Robot Butt, and The Higgs Weldon.

"THE FIGHT"

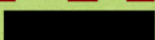


A SEGREGATED
TESLA
FACTORY NEAR YOU

WED. APRIL
20TH

**1 NUCLEAR ROUND FOR
BIGGEST DICKBAG IN THE UNIVERSE**

**VLADIMIR
PUTIN**

BODY COUNT: 

VS.
**ELON
MUSK**

ABSENTEE FATHER (8X)

**"WHOEVER
WINS, YOU'LL WISH
THEY LOST"**

r/LastDitchEffort

CHOOSE YOUR OWN ADVENTURE AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY

"MR. PRESIDENT," General Sullivan says, concerned. "I really think—"

"Buh-buh-buh," you interrupt. "If I'm going to become the Angel of Death, I'm going to do it in style."

"But, and I can't believe I have to say this, it would kill you." Secretary of Energy McDonald says, his pussy-ass voice dripping with condescension.

"But it would be a really cool visual," your Vice President says.

"Bingo," you say, "and this administration has always been about the visual."

As you straddle the bomb, you are suddenly filled with the strangest feeling you've ever felt. It's reminiscent of regret, but different somehow, much more pungent and painful, hitting you in a formerly forgotten part of your soul. When the hatches open up, you can put a name to it at last, and the horror of its true nature sends you into a cold sweat.

"Fuck! I forgot my cowboy hat!" you scream, but it is too late.

THE END

BRADYBOX™

A DIFFERENT DIFFERENT GET-RICH-QUICK
SCHEME SOME IDIOT'S BOUND TO FALL FOR!

//BRADY O'CALLAHAN

This year, I took my taxes to a CPA, in hopes of maximizing my refund and avoiding using TurboTax (the absolute worst company who lobbies Congress to keep the tax system as-is so they can keep charging you for doing a job the government should do for us).

She laughed at me. I don't know what else to say. I could use some more money, and none of you signed up for BradyBox™ or BradyBox™. Apparently, you can't write off every meal you ever eat as a work expense since "the capitalist overlords would collapse without a living workforce."

This got me thinking: everyone's so health conscious these days. It's tough to get motivated to exercise regularly. Because of this, I am *thrilled* to announce the premiere of my new subscription based fitness program: BradyBox™.

■ HOW DOES IT WORK?

For a monthly fee, you'll gain access to an entire library of guided virtual workouts right on your home computer, television, or smartphone! Throw on a VR headset for a fully immersive experience, or follow the steps along the bottom of the screen.

I will have someone wear a camera while beating the everloving shit out of me, and you'll follow along from their perspective.

■ WHAT CAN I EXPECT IN MY BRADYBOX™ FITNESS EXPERIENCE?

You'll get one of the best workouts of your entire life. This person is NOT going to hold back, no matter how much I beg or plead.

The plan is to add new workouts every once in a while to keep things fresh, but if you could try to remain satisfied with the original offerings for as long as possible, I'd deeply appreciate it. I'm scared of this whole "getting my ass kicked" deal, but it can't be worse than the enduring dread of barely scraping by in our capitalist nightmare.

■ HOW EXCLUSIVE IS IT?

This one is not going to be exclusive at all. The gains you receive from the workouts can be exclusive to you, but if I'm going to have the shit kicked out of me and publicly humiliated like this, it's going to need to get me in the black (not just the black and blue!). I anticipate a few ER visits as a result.

■ WHAT IS THE MONTHLY COST?

\$35 per month. I'll need at least 100 people to sign up for this for me to consider it even remotely worth it. You're locked in for a year. I don't think that's too much to ask, as I'd like to go into the black if I'm going to become black and blue (with your financial support, I can hire a copywriter to come up with additional witty turns of phrases).

■ My information is all over the Internet. I am not a very safe or secure Internet user. Please just contact me in any way you know how. 🙄

RESIGNATION. It was the only thing a President who wasn't slavishly committed to the American war machine could do. Well, either that or take a motorcade ride down Dealey Plaza.

You attach several American flag pins to your suit jacket lapel and address the nation.

"My fellow Americans. We are all aware of the ongoing crisis, and we are all aware that to remain anti-war in the face of global conflict feels disgustingly Communist. Yet something inside me, whether it's a fear of death or the last shred of morality I possess, is hesitant to involve Americans in an armed conflict. Therefore, I resign the Presidency, effective immediately. Well, not immediately. After I've pardoned some key guys who have done a bunch of fraud. Also, I have pissed myself. Not sure if I needed to announce that, but what can you do? I'm senile."

It's not the first time you pissed yourself on national television—remember last year's State of the Union?—but sadly, it will be the last. And unlike the State of the Union, you aren't wearing your adult diapers. Whereas that piss was the warm piss of hope for the American imperial project, this is the warm piss of cowardice and shame.

But as you have only just found out, no matter the cause or the feeling, all piss still stinks.

THE END



THE TIME I MET DENNIS PRAGER: *A 100% True Horror Story*

// ROHIT LAKSHMAN GUEST CONTRIBUTOR

Long before I met him, Dennis Prager slimed from the primordial womb 14 billion years ago, and when he saw the emerging universe, he decided in his infinite wisdom he didn't like it. Yes... I shall destroy. I shall destroy it all, said Prager, in a voice beyond time and reason. Prager then chose the human form, and furthermore, he chose an auspicious time to be born: the late 1940s in Brooklyn, New York, New York. Many decades and millions of dollars of Koch brother money later, Dennis created PragerU, a pseudo-educational website and Youtube channel that quickly became the easiest punching bag for leftists everywhere.

This is how most young people know Dennis Prager—a homophobic hack-fraud boomer with a strange penchant for making everyone hate him. >>

>> But most of them have never met him. Unfortunately, I have.

Here's the scene of how I meet this Prager being: my father, my brother Arjun, and 11-year-old me all head out for a nice dinner at Taylor's Steakhouse. Taylor's is an old rich mahogany building, with real low light and really good bread. It's the kind of steakhouse where you can feel like you're a member of high society while still dolloping way too much sour cream on your baked potato. I haven't been back in a long time, but I always remember Taylor's as the molten bourgeois core of Pasadena, outlined in the red light of its neon name, the sounds of old money ringing out from the inside like a black hole for rich white people, attracting all of them inward to its spiraling, steak vortex.

In short, you can understand why Dennis Prager would be there.

We sit down and let the atmosphere slowly consume us. It's easy to make fun of the place, but when you're in there, listening to music from the '40s, smelling the fragrance of fresh bread in the air, and eavesdropping on all the nice old ladies chattering amongst themselves—it's nice. The wine in the air makes my father feel



Mmmm, bread.

sophisticated, and honestly, I feel pretty damn sophisticated too, so we begin the evening with a conversation about Albert Einstein.

The details of the conversation are fairly irrelevant—something to do with relativity and the beauty of mathematics. The important detail in this leg of the story is that over my father's shoulder lurks a strange figure. It is large, tall, and dense, like a roadblock. It has two sunken brown eyes set in an equally sunken collection of xenophobic jowls. It skulks menacingly, watching with the eyes of a hunter, its food barely touched, its wife totally ignored... it watches. And it waits.

My plate has been cleaned, and it is time to go. Having sensed its cue, the ghoul of fracking's future thunks over. My dad utters those words that, at the time, are meaningless to my innocent mind: "Rohit! Holy shit, that's Dennis Prager."

At the time, Prager seemed to be 10,000 feet tall. Not only tall, but wide, which makes him a physical barrier to leaving the steakhouse. You cannot simply disengage when Emperor Dennis M. Prager chooses you—you must answer the call. He walks over to my dad first: "Well, I, uh, I just wanted to say that you're raising some fine young men here." So that's bomb number one, which my father miraculously defuses by saying, "Oh, thank you! Thank you so much!" I can sense that his mere presence is making everyone—even my brother, who would normally just tune out of a conversation as weird and awkward as this—uncomfortable. Next, Prager smiles, chuckles, and goes, "*Mind if I say something to your kids?*"

So now, clearly, we're veering away from antiquated and into creepy real fast. How do I know? Well, when you feel the deep spiritual desire to speak to a complete stranger's child, there is something wrong with you. When you then proceed to kneel down, revealing your terrifying smile to said child, and talk politics to them, you are subhuman. But that's what Denny did. He got down on my level, looked into my precious little eyes, and said, "Don't ever let feelings get in the way." >>

>> And now, 4 years later, I still think about what Dennis said. Not because of what I think of it, but because of what it said about him. One of the constant anxieties of Prager-types is the idea that feelings are having too great an effect on their politicking. You hear it in the groans and grunts of alt-righters like everyone's favorite Ben Shapiro and his creepy uncle Jordan Peterson, and in the neverending whines of every failed comedian who thinks he's being "canceled" for being unfunny. However, this idea that feelings are a hindrance to politics doesn't hold up for even a moment if you inspect the life's work of Dennis Prager and people like him. For 40 years, Prager has fought on a platform of feeling. He is anger, contempt, and tradition. He is pessimism, myopia, and money. He gives those raw emotions and human concepts a froggy baritone voice, and then walks away with millions from the pockets of angry white folks. Thinking back on Prager's words, his words to a child, seriously pisses me off. Who was this guy, this man who has spent his whole life formatting feelings into language, to tell me about feelings getting in the way of my life?

11-year-old Rohit didn't know half of what I know now. He simply nodded and walked away, allowing that memory to simplify into, "funky old dude got wayyyy too close to my face."

But now? I can't stop thinking about that moment. Mostly because I was mere steps away from Dennis Prager and didn't throttle him, but also because Prager summed up his life's work in just that one sentence. The meaning is reversed, of course, because Denny wasn't trying to say "Don't ever let feelings get in the way." He was saying, "Please, please, please... feel the way I do." And he was saying it with sour cream on his chin. 🍷

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CHOOSE YOUR OWN ADVENTURE AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY

"HEY GUYS! I'VE GOT A BRILLIANT IDEA!"
Your Situation Room looks at you, awaiting your latest brilliance.

"What if we send the resistance fighters some weapons and body armor and all the crazy crap our local police departments have? Since the BLM protests died down, it seems like our boys in blue hardly have a chance to use their toys at all."

"That's a great idea, Mr. President," General Sullivan says. "Very tactical."

"It's a genius compromise," you say. "We get to do all the fighting without doing any of the actual fighting!"

"That's what we call in the war business a 'win-win,'" your Chief of Staff says.

And for you, it's a huge win. Your approval rating skyrockets. Weapons manufacturer stocks soar. You are making the right people a shit ton of money—the best way to measure the success of a U.S. President.

Sure, there will be some blow back. The newly-armed militia will eventually, like all militias, become extremely right wing and carry out terror attacks on U.S. soil. But that's for the next administration to worry about. You've gotten your way out of this crisis unscathed. And nobody* got hurt.

**Foreigners and civilians don't count as people*

THE END

READ AGAINST THE MACHINE

//DAN LOPRETO

ONE CANNOT HELP BUT BE PLEASANTLY SURPRISED when a slug like Ted Cruz inadvertently undergoes a metamorphosis from an Idiot to Useful Idiot, albeit fleeting. The already [well-documented](#) transformation occurred on Tuesday, March 22nd, during the [stomach-churning, brain-cell killing](#) conservative questioning of Supreme Court nominee Ketanji Brown Jackson about the American Right's [latest](#) moral panic: [critical race theory](#). While CRT may be primarily a figment of the reactionary [imagination](#), the very real [dangers](#) of this fiasco are all too [clear](#). The one (thin) silver lining is that both [anecdotes](#) and [data](#) seem to confirm that the books Cruz mentioned have seen a substantial [boost](#) in [sales](#). One of these books includes [The End of Policing](#) by Alex Vitale, the cover of which now has the unfortunate honor of being in a [viral photo](#) that also happens to include Ted Cruz. [Vitale](#) hopes that “the Senator’s misguided efforts to suppress this history will backfire and inspire a generation of young people to seek out these ideas that are all too often absent in American schools.” You can read Vitale’s full [response](#) to this strange turn of events.

In the meantime, for [grifters](#) who are eager to follow in Cruz’s [well-funded](#) footsteps and be part of an unvenerable Republican [tradition](#), here is a list of books that they should whine about next:

MAKING ALL BLACK LIVES MATTER: REIMAGINING FREEDOM IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY by Barbara Ransby

ON RACE: 34 CONVERSATIONS IN A TIME OF CRISIS by George Yancy

ALIEN CAPITAL: ASIAN RACIALIZATION AND THE LOGIC OF SETTLER COLONIAL CAPITALISM by Iyko Day

WHITE WORLD ORDER, BLACK POWER POLITICS: THE BIRTH OF AMERICAN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS by Robert Vitalis

CHANGE EVERYTHING: RACIAL CAPITALISM AND THE CASE FOR ABOLITION by Ruth Wilson Gilmore (forthcoming)

Happy reading, trolls.

Peruse more issues of Functionally Dead [here](#) and if you're interested in contributing, [check this out](#).

IN THE NEXT ISSUE: BA.2 TIPS, TRICKS, AND HIDDEN FEATURES



You're dead to me, Toto.

FOLKS TO BLOCK:

//ANDY BUSTILLOS//MATTHEW BRIAN COHEN//JAMES DWYER//PATRICK KEENE//MAX KNOBLAUCH//DIANA KOLSKY//DAN LOPRETO//
//TIM MAHONEY//CATHRYN MUDON//BRADY O'CALLAHAN//SEAN O'REILLY//PRIYA PATEL//ROSIE WHALEN//LIZ WIEST//