

MIDDLEMOST POST

#012 - "BURT! The Musical"

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FIRST DRAFT - 8/14/20
BOARD DRAFT - 8/21/20
REC DRAFT - 10/7/20
RED DRAFT EDIT - 10/23/20
SHIPPING DRAFT - 12/16/20

PARKER, wearing a baseball HAT and MITT, tosses a ball up in the air. His eyes are laser-focused.

Parker winds up and <THROWS> a baseball. It <WHIZZES> right past BURT, who has a BASEBALL BAT taped to his arm. RUSSELL, the catcher, receives the strike.

Russell <DUMPS> a GATORADE BUCKET over the crowd of Parkers in celebration, leaving a single drenched Parker.

Parker and Russell sit on either side of Burt, leaning against him. Both have huge WADS of sunflower SEEDS in their cheeks. They spit seeds back and forth across Burt's face.

Parker gives Burt a hug.

4 ANGUS (O.S.) **4**
 Alright, everybody...

Angus stands before a large SAFETY FIRST poster.

5 ANGUS 5
Today we're gonna talk about a very
important topic: *workplace safety*.

6 ANGUS (CONT'D) 6
First up! How to avoid slips,
trips, sprains, strains...

7 PARKER 7
<GROANS>...

REVEAL Parker and Russell at the table, bored to death.
Russell falls asleep and falls out of her chair. Parker's
head falls onto the table.

Suddenly, Parker <POOFS> into a raised HAND.

8 PARKER (CONT'D) 8
Question.

9 ANGUS 9
Yes, Parker.

10 PARKER 10
Where's Burt?

REVEAL an empty CHAIR next to Parker.

11 PARKER (CONT'D) 11
It's not like him to no-show for a
super boring meeting.

12 ANGUS 12
Last I saw Burt he was right next
to that giant pile of recycling I
threw out this m--OH NO!

INT. S.S. STEADFAST - MAILROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Angus talks to Parker as he feverishly <DIGS> through a
RECYCLING BIN.

13 PARKER 13
Burt! BUUURT!!!

14 ANGUS 14
I'm sorry, Parker! I was recycling
a bunch of boxes, and Burt's a
bunch of boxes. I got box blinded!

Parker appears from inside the recycling bin, sad as heck.

15 PARKER 15
But Burt's not a bunch of boxes.
Burt's my friend.

Angus removes a stray PIECE of recycling from his friend's
head.

16 ANGUS 16
I know he is, buddy, and that's why
we're gonna get him back!

17 PARKER 17
 (weepy)
How...?

18 ANGUS 18
Well simple! All we have to do is
go to the Greenwood Recycling
Center and explain what happened.

Angus points to the box he took off Parker's head, which has
a "GREENWOOD RECYCLING" label on it.

19 PARKER 19
Then they'll give us Burt back?

20 ANGUS 20
Hoho you betcha! I can't think of
one good reason why they wouldn't.

EXT. GREENWOOD RECYCLING CENTER - ENTRANCE - LATER

Angus, Parker, and Russell stand outside the center staring
up a giant POSTER of BURT. A slogan reads: "*Burt: The New
Face of Recycling!*"

21 ANGUS 21
 (concerned)
Okay, they might have one good
reason.

22 PARKER 22
We're still gonna get Burt back
though, right?

23 ANGUS 23
Of course we are. Have I ever let
you down before?

24 PARKER 24
When you threw out my best friend,
Burt.

Angus scowls and <FACE PALMS>.

25 ANGUS 25
Ugh...

Angus spots a little ACORN WORKER (GRINCIDENTAL4) waddling
by, picking up trash.

26 ACORN WORKER 26
 <WHISTLING!>

27 ANGUS 27
 (to Acorn)
 Uh, excuse me, uh, we'd like to
 talk to the person in charge.

28 ACORN WORKER 28
 I believe his majesty is meditating
 in the Temple of Environmental
 Enlightenment.

29 PARKER 29
 (excited)
 <GASPS!> His majesty?

30 ANGUS 30
 (not excited)
 Meditating?

INT. TEMPLE OF ENVIRONMENTAL ENLIGHTENMENT - CONT.

The RECYCLE KING sits crossed legged on a large THRONE, deep in meditation. He's being doted on by several more ACORNS.

31 RECYCLE KING 31
 Ohmmm. Free your mind and the trash
 will follow.

REVEAL the MMP crew watching the Recycle King from the doorway. Parker is impressed. Angus, not so much.

32 PARKER 32
 I've never met a real king before.
 How do we greet one? Do we bow?
 Bend a knee? Beg for mercy?

33 ANGUS 33
 (to RK)
 Hey, there! Fella!

The Recycle King suddenly appears directly behind MMP.

34 RECYCLE KING 34
 (re: MMP Crew)
 Guests! Hello! And welcome,
 friends!

Parker bends the knee.

35 PARKER 35
 Your excellency.

36 RECYCLE KING 36
 Please, call me... The Recycle
 King.

RK scoops Parker up into his hand.

37 ANGUS 37
(super sarcastic)
Yeah, yeah, yeah! No.

38 RECYCLE KING 38
Hey, man, you be you. S'all good in
the recycle hood.

Angus reaches over and takes Parker out of RK's hand.

39 ANGUS 39
Yeah, about that... Uh, I
accidentally threw my little
buddy's cardboard friend in the
weekly recycling--

40 RECYCLE KING 40
<GASP!> Oh, no! You poor, poor
cloud. You must be devastated.

41 PARKER 41
I'm still processing it.

42 ANGUS 42
Sooo, if we could just get Burt
back, that'd be great.

43 RECYCLE KING 43
Burt, you say? I'm afraid I can't
do that.

44 ANGUS 44
Why not?

45 RECYCLE KING 45
Because Burt no longer belongs to
you. Burt belongs... TO THE WORLD!

CUE: "THE WORLD'S BURT" SONG BY CAKE IN SPACE

46 RECYCLE KING 46
*"Every piece of trash is someone
else's treasure. And treasure's
never where you look!"*

47 ANGUS 47
(spoken)
Get the hook!

48 RECYCLE KING 48
*"Just chill out! Relax! While I
reduce and reuse some facts about a
kid who's so much more than just
some boxes ya stacked."*

RK shows Burt off behind a velvet rope.

49 PARKER 49
(spoken)
Aw, we want him back!

50 ANGUS 50
(spoken to himself)
This singing is whack.

MMP Crew follows TRK as he takes his show on the road, walking through the recycling plant and pointing out Burt stuff, etc.

51 RECYCLE KING 51
"Tough trash! He's too smashing to smash! He's a next gen, born again, poster boy of zen, so ya can't have him back, but at the same time, you can... Listen up... now Burty-boy belongs to everyone in the land!"

52 PARKER 52
(spoken)
I don't understaaand!

53 RECYCLE KING 53
"You see BURT... He belongs to the WORLD..."

The acorn minions back-up the King up. The King, Acorns, and MMP all hold hands around a GLOBE.

54 ACORNS 54
"He's a star!"

55 RECYCLE KING 55
"Yeah BURT... He belongs to the WORLD..."

56 ACORNS 56
"Today for no charge!"

MMP is led into the gift shop where the song continues. They see Burt SWAG everywhere, including the BUILD-A-BURT station that RK mentions in the following lyrics.

57 RECYCLE KING 57
"If you really wanna get it, use this coupon, you won't regret it. Have your pick of all the Burts, or build your own with extra quirks! Gotta turn old into new, I'm just so used to using used. Nothin' better in this life than using something twiiiiiiiice!"

58 ACORNS 58
"Ooh wah, ooh wah. Ooh wah, ooh wah."

59 RECYCLE KING 59
"See now, here's the proof! Burt's gonna raise the roof on true recycling awareness."

60 ANGUS 60
(spoken)
Okay, but what about this HERE mess?

Angus points to Parker, who's absolutely losing it while going through several items of BURT MERCH.

61 PARKER 61
(spoken)
BUUUUUUUURT! BUUUUUURT! BUUUUUURT!

Angus looks sadly on at his buddy.

62 RECYCLE KING 62
"Not to fear, you got the coupon... Go build-a-burt, a nice brand new one!"
(spoken, with no music)
Tell them The Recycling King sent ya!

The Recycle King fades out as he dances away with a bunch of acorns in a conga line, leaving the MMP crew shell-shocked in the gift shop.

63 RECYCLE KING (CONT'D) 63
"Burt... He belongs to the world... Burt... He belongs to the world..."

INT. GIFT SHOP - BUILD-A-BURT - LATER

Angus builds a new Burt, pulling parts from a bin at the gift shop's BUILD-A-BURT station. It's a bummer. Doesn't help that some DAD (ORINCIDENTAL4) & SON (BLINCIDENTAL9) are making a Burt too and are having a blast.

64 BLINCIDENTAL9 64
I can't believe I'm getting my very own Burt!

65 ORINCIDENTAL4 65
I know one thing's for sure. We'll never throw him out, son. Never.

66 BLINCIDENTAL9 66
I love you dad!

The two hug.

67 ANGUS 67
<GRUMBLES!>

Angus puts his Burt together.

68 ANGUS (CONT'D) 68
 (re: New Burt)
It's not bad. Looks almost like the
real thing! What do you think,
Parker?

Angus turns to Parker, who longingly squishes his face to a window.

69 PARKER 69
I wonder if Burt knows we're here?
I wonder if he's looking out the
same window, right now, thinking of
me like I'm thinking of him.

This is agony for Angus. Outside the window, ANOTHER ACORN WORKER (GRINCIDENTAL4) pulls up in a TRAM CAR and hops out. Angus notices.

70 ANGUS **70**

Hmm . . .

Angus sets the newly built Burt down.

71 ANGUS (CONT'D) 71
Parker. Russell. Follow me.

Angus stomps off. Parker and Russell follow. Russell <GULPS>
down the new Burt on the way out.

EXT. GIFT SHOP - CONT.

Angus <HOPS> into the driver seat of the TRAM CAR.

72 ANGUS 72
Get in you two! Quick!

Parker and Russell <JUMP> into the back seat.

73 ANGUS (CONT'D) 73
We're getting Burt back! The real
Burt. Burt OG. The Notorious
B.U.R.T. Burt!

74 Really?? PARKER 74

75 ANGUS 75
I don't care what that King was
squawking about. Burt is our buddy
and that's that.

76	PARKER	76
	Wooo-hooo!	
	(then)	
	Angus, are we stealing a car?	

77 ANGUS 77
Noooo. Uh, we're, uh...
"repurposing" it.

78 PARKER 78
Oh, cool! So we're recycling it?

79 ANGUS 79
 Yep, into a Rescue Burt Mobile!
 Now, let's get our boy back!

Out of nowhere, Recycle King appears in front of the car, just as Angus goes to drive off. <SCREECH!>

80	RECYCLE KING	80
	Wonderful! You made it for the factory tour! Smooch over, big cheese. Make room for the others.	

Recycle King puts on a HEADSET (*Think Universal Studio Tram Ride from here on out*). Suddenly, a handful of VISITORS (DOUG, NANCY, DOUGIE, PL2, and GR7) load into the tram, filling it up. They're decked out in Burt Merch.

81	RECYCLE KING (CONT'D)	81
	Let me hear it if you're pumped to learn about recycling!	

<CRICKETS>. The guests don't seem too jazzed. Then--

82	RECYCLE KING (CONT'D)	82
	... Through the gift of song!	

83 VISITORS/PARKER/RUSSELL 83
<CHEERING!>

Angus couldn't look more annoyed...

CUE: "THE TRAM RIDE" SONG BY CAKE IN SPACE

INT. RECYCLE FACTORY - BACKLOT TRAM RIDE - DAY

NOTE: As RK sings about the different Neighborhoods on the mountain, we see "It's a Small World" type configurations of all of them.

84 RECYCLE KING 84
*"I love to sing with my new friends
and I won't stop until the tour
ends..."*

85 ANGUS 85
(spoken)
Ugh...

86 RECYCLE KING 86
*"Come with me, you will see, all
the hues, that re-use..."*

87 ACORN ANIMATRONICS 87
(repeated ad nauseam)
*"Throwing waste in the world is
just wasting the world, and we want
some world left over. Don't throw
waste in your world, that's just
wasting your world. Use it over and
over!"*

88 ANGUS 88
(spoken)
Someone make it stop! Please!

89 RECYCLE KING 89
(spoken) First stop is Outstanding
Orangefield! (back to singing)
*"Orange you glad they recycle
there? Tons of trash from that
County Fair!"*

<LAUGHING!> (spoken) Yellow
Springs: a veritable rat pack of
pack rats! (spoken on beat) *"They
re-use in the desert of deserted
dreams. Go for the pyramid, stay
for the schemes!"*

(rapping) *"Red Ridge, Red Ridge: My
fave by JUST a smidge. But the
Reddies just aren't ready when it
comes to waste. They're half the
reason we started this place!"*

Parker and Russell happily bounce in their seats to the song.
Suddenly, the tour passes through a tunnel.

EXT. RANDOM TOUR STOP - DAY

The tram slowly and finally comes to a stop. The music fades
out.

90 RECYCLE KING 90
Now, for the moment you've all been
waiting for!

Russell and Parker share an excited look.

91 PARKER 91
<GASPS!> Burt?!

92 RECYCLE KING 92
I'm afraid Burt is in the middle of
a photo shoot right now, and he's
very, very busy. Come, my children!

Recycle King leads the guests away from the tram, twirling
like Willy Wonka. The annoying acorn chorus of the song we
just heard starts back up again.

93 RECYCLE KING (O.S.) (CONT'D) 93
<HUMMING TO MUSIC!>

94 ANGUS 94
Parker, this is our chance to lose
Mr. Sing-a-lot and go find Burt.
I'm going to whisper a plan in your
ear. It's gonna sound like a bunch
of gibberish to everyone else, but
you'll understand every word.

Angus leans into Parker's ear.

95 ANGUS (CONT'D) 95
<WHISPERING GIBBERISH>

96 PARKER 96
Yup. Yup. Roger that. Yes! Crystal
clear.

The Recycle King reaches a COVERED PEDESTAL in the middle of
an empty room. The guests gather around it.

97 RECYCLE KING 97
Gather around, everyone! Feast your
eyes on the very first can...
recycled!

The Recycle King whips off the cover revealing a GLASS CASE
that houses a single, kinda gross, SOUP CAN. The visitors
<SNAP> pics off screen.

98 VISITORS (O.S.) 98
Ooh! Ahh! <IMPRESSED WALLA>

99 PLINCIDENTAL2 99
What's it recycled from?

100 RECYCLE KING 100
Cans! Thirty two cans to be exact!
Isn't that stupendous!

While the others are distracted, Angus gives Parker a knowing NOD. Parker nods to Russell. Russell nods to Angus. Angus nods back to Parker. Parker nods to Russell. Russell nods to Angus. Angus looks frustrated.

101 ANGUS **101**

<GROANS!>

Finally, Parker gets it.

102	PARKER	102
	<NERVOUS/EMBARRASSED EFFORT>	

Suddenly, Parker <GROWS> into a puff of SMOKE.

103	RECYCLE KING	103
	<SNIFFING> Does anyone smell smoke?	

104	ANGUS	104
	Nope. All I smell is dirty soup can.	

Cut to Smoke Parker, wafting around a FIRE ALARM.

105 PARKER 105
<GIGGLING!>

Then, the alarm <RINGS!> SPRINKLERS activate, <DRENCHING> the room!

106 DOUG 106
What's happening?! Are we in
danger?

107	RECYCLE KING	107
	Of course not!	

In the background, Russell <SPLASHES> water onto the pedestal on purpose. The SOUP CAN is <KNOCKED> into the river of water forming on the ground.

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108                                RECYCLE KING (CONT'D)                                108
                                <HORRIFIED GASP!> Can down! Don't
                                worry! I'll save you!

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Recycle King scrambles to save the can as it gets washed away. Parker poofs back to his buddies.

109 ANGUS 109
Well done.

The three of them quickly <DASH> out of the room.

INT. FACTORY HALLS - CONT.

The MMP Crew race down a hall. We hear the annoying acorn chorus again.

110 PARKER 110
We did it!

111 ANGUS 111
Not yet, Parker. We still gotta
find out where that photoshoot is.
Time for step two.

INT. FACTORY LUNCH ROOM - LATER

A couple of ACORN WORKERS on their lunch break. The *"Don't Waste Your World"* Acorn Anthem continues to play over speakers.

112 ACORN WORKER #1 112
Be honest with me, Mikey. The song,
it's annoying right?

Acorn Worker #2 (MIKEY), looks completely fried from the song. Huge eyes that never blink.

113 MIKEY 113
No, I love it.

As Mikey fills a cup of coffee, the liquid starts to <OVERFLOW> onto the floor.

Suddenly, Parker, Angus, and Russell <BURST> in. Angus wears a BERET and French MUSTACHE. Parker is disguised as a cloud ACORN. Russell is wearing a HEADSET and holding a BOOM MIC.

114 (ACORN) PARKER 114
Hello, fellow employees.

Acorn Worker #1 look at Parker.

115 (ACORN) PARKER (CONT'D) 115
Any chance you cool nuts know where
that Burt photo shoot is happening?

116 ACORN WORKER #1 116
(re: Angus)
Who's that?

117 (ACORN) PARKER 117
This is the famous French
photographer, Monsieur Baguette.
Burt is expecting him!

Acorn Worker #1 looks at Angus suspiciously.

118 ACORN WORKER #1 118
Hmm...

Angus sweats a little, nervous.

119 ACORN WORKER #1 (CONT'D) 119
Hmnmnm...

Angus gets even more sweaty and nervous.

120 ACORN WORKER #1 (CONT'D) 120
Hmnmnmnm...

Finally, Angus breaks the silence.

121 ANGUS 121
French fries.

122 ACORN WORKER #1 122
Seems legit. He's down the hall,
second door on the left.

123 ANGUS 123
Got it! Thanks.

MMP <RACES> off. Mikey drops the coffee POT he was using
entirely and <FALLS> to the ground.

INT. WHERE WE LAST LEFT RECYCLE KING - DAY

The visitors huddle near Recycle King in waist deep water.

124 NANCY 124
You think it's gonna make it?

Reveal the Recycle King cradling the SOUP CAN tenderly. The
waterlogged label peeling off.

125 RECYCLE KING 125
I'm afraid we're too late. <CRIES!>

Recycle King reaches over to a recycle bin and drops the can
inside. The visitors look away somberly until--

126 RECYCLE KING (CONT'D) 126
Hey, where's that bearded man with
the fluffy cloud?

127 PLINCIDENTAL2 127
They left to steal Burt.

128 RECYCLE KING 128
They did what!? How do you know?

129 PLINCIDENTAL2 129
(shrugs)
I speak a little gibberish.

INT. PHOTO SHOOT ROOM - CONT.

An enthusiastic ACORN PHOTOGRAPHER (again, GRINCIDENTAL4) snaps photos of Burt.

130 ACORN PHOTOGRAPHER 130
Yes, Burt! Yes! You're smoldering,
Burt. Mmm, more pouty. Now give me
serious. Now excited! Yes, yes!

Burt NEVER changes expressions in any of these shots, but the photographer continues <SNAPPING>.

MMP peaks into the room from the doorway.

131 ANGUS 131
(whispering)
Okay, there's Burt. Time for step--

Parker BURSTS in and races towards Burt.

132 PARKER 132
BURRRRRRT!

133 ACORN PHOTOGRAPHER 133
Excuse me, this is a closed set!

Angus grabs the little fella like a ball.

134 ANGUS 134
Okay, see you later then!

He throws the acorn off screen. It sounds like he's been thrown very, very far away.

135 ACORN PHOTOGRAPHER 135
<SCREAMING INTO THE DISTANCE>

136 PARKER 136
Hi, Burt. I missed you. <SNIFF
SNIFF> Shhh. I know. I know.

Angus and Russell share a teary-eyed look. So sweet.

137 ANGUS 137
<SNIFFS!>

INT. OUTSIDE PHOTO SHOOT ROOM - SAME TIME

Recycle King storms down the hall towards the room the photo shoot was in.

Reveal Burt, baseball taped to his hand, on a pitcher's mound. He <DROPS> the ball.

147

PARKER (CONT'D)

147

Ball number four! Batter, take a
base! The Nimbuses take the win!
Woohoo!

EXT. S.S. STEADFAST - DECK - LATER

Mirroring the beginning, Parker and Russell sit on either side of Burt, popping sunflower seeds.

148

PARKER

148

Eh, don't hang your head, Burt.
Coulda gone either way out there
today. You're still my best bud!

Parker squeezes Burt tight!

THE END.