

# **MIDDLEMOST POST**

#046 - "Burt Speaks"

Written By

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WRITERS DRAFT #1 - 05/14/21  
WRITERS DRAFT #2 - 05/24/21  
FIRST DRAFT - 06/01/21  
BOARD DRAFT - 06/04/21  
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**INT. S.S. STEADFAST - GALLEY - DAY**

BURT drives PARKER - who's a speeding FORMULA 1 RACE CAR.  
Trees whip by as they reach top speed! It's intense...

1 PARKER 1  
(commentator voice)  
Ooooh! Racing in from the back of the  
pack... it's Burt! He's taking over  
the lead! Can he pull it off? HE  
DOES! BURT WINS! BURT WIIIIIIIIINS!

PULL BACK to reveal the background is just RUSSELL sliding a  
fake backdrop of cardboard trees past really quick. Parker  
<POOFS> into a CLOUD TROPHY.

2 PARKER 2  
Congratulations, Burt!

The Parker trophy sprouts an arm with a microphone and shoves  
it in Burt's face.

3 PARKER 3  
Tell us, how do you feel?

Burt says nothing.

4 PARKER 4  
Hungry? Yeah, me too. Snack time!

Parker sticks his head in the fridge.

5 PARKER 5  
(re: fridge food)  
Whatta we got? Ooh! How about some  
leftover barnacle cakes!?

Burt <POPS>. It catches Parker's attention.

6 PARKER 6  
(mouth full)  
What? Burt?  
(after swallowing)  
Did you say something? Pop once for  
yes, and twice for no.

Parker's interest is piqued.

7 PARKER 7  
Am I a cloud?

Burt <POPS>. Parker is more intrigued.

8 PARKER 8  
Iiiiiis Angus a duck footed platypus?

Burt <POPS> twice.

9 PARKER 9  
HMMMMMM. Is your name Burrrrrrrrrrr  
<SHARP BREATH> urrrrrrrr... nie?!

Burt <POPS> twice. Parker's fully bought in and is surprisingly pretty chill about this new revelation.

10 PARKER 10  
Cool.

**EXT. MIDDLEMOST TOAST - ESTABLISHING**

11 PARKER (O.S.) 11  
You bring up a lot of valid points,  
Burt.

**INT. MIDDLEMOST TOAST - DAY**

We find Burt and Parker in a booth.

12 PARKER 12  
So what you're saying here is there's  
a clear gap between what the science  
says is necessary and what the people  
are asking for.

Burt <POPS>.

13 PARKER 13  
Mmmhmm. I can see that. Also,  
<CHUCKLES>, birds are jerks, am I  
right?

Burt <POPS>.

14 PARKER 14  
<BIG BITE!>  
(while chewing)  
Great, glad we can all agree on that.

Parker chows down on some toast - when GORDY'S head pops up from the neighboring booth.

15 GORDY 15  
Who you talkin' to, Parker?

16 PARKER 16  
Burt.

17 GORDY 17  
(surprised)  
Uh. Burt can talk?

18 PARKER 18  
He can say yes or no, which is pretty  
much talking. Right, Burt?

Burt <POPS>.

19 PARKER 19  
That's a yes. One pop is yes. Two  
pops is no. I call it Burtuguese.

20 GORDY 20  
So I can ask Burt a question and Burt  
will answer it?

21 PARKER 21  
That's how talking works, Gordy.

22 GORDY 22  
Hey, Burt. Did I order the cheese  
burger and crab toast today?

Burt <POPS> twice. A surprised Gordy holds up a plate of  
toast.

23 GORDY 23  
Golly gee. Burt was right. I ordered  
the steak and lobster toast!

STEWART pops up from behind the other adjoining booth.

24 STEWART 24  
Hey, man. You mind if I give Burt a  
spin on the old conversation wheel?  
Man?

Burt <POPS> twice.

25 PARKER 25  
Sorry, Stewart. Burt says no.

26 STEWART 26  
(impressed)  
Whoa. He can talk. Nice.

Other PATRONS gather round as MS. PAM approaches.

27 CITIZEN WALLA 27  
<IMPRESSED WALLA>

28 MS. PAM 28  
For gluten sake, what's going on over  
here?

29 STEWART 29  
Parker's cardboard friend... he can  
talk.

30 MS. PAM 30  
Huh, is that so? Okay then. Tell me  
Burt, that piece of disgusting toast  
stuck to my ceiling...

Ms. Pam points to an old piece of toast stuck on the ceiling.

31 MS. PAM (O.S.) 31  
Will it ever unstuck?

Everyone waits for Burt to answer. Drama. Then <POP>.

32 GORDY 32  
That's Burtuguese for yes.

33 MS. PAM 33  
Well he's wrong. That piece of toast  
has been stuck up there for twelve  
years! It's never coming do--

The piece of toast lands on Ms. Pam's head. <SMACK>.

34 MS. PAM 34  
Holy focaccia. Burt can talk!

35 STEWART 35  
And he can predict the future too!

More PATRONS gather round, wanting to chat up Burt.

36 CITIZEN WALLA 36  
<MORE IMPRESSED/EXCITED WALLA>

**EXT. S.S. STEADFAST - ESTABLISHING**

**INT. S.S. STEADFAST - MAIL ROOM - DAY**

Angus reads "Suspenders Weekly" magazine. He folds out a  
CENTERFOLD.

37 ANGUS 37  
(re: centerfold)  
Not bad.

A <KNOCK> at the door startles him.

38                               ANGUS                               38  
                    <NERVOUS EFFORT!>

He ditches the magazine and heads for the door.

**39** ANGUS **39**

(into ship)

Hey, uh, Parker, you expecting anybody?

40 PARKER (O.S.) 40

No.

Angus answers the door to find ROB and ROD.

41                                 ROB                                 41  
Bro. Burt here?

42 Yes. ANGUS 42

[illegible]

44 ANGUS 44  
Ha. Yeah, real funny, guys.

Angus accidentally shuts the door on their fingers.

45 Oh, bro! ROB (O.S.) 45

**46**                                                  ANGUS                                                  **46**

Good one.

Angus walks off.

47                                 ANGUS                                 47  
                                (to himself)  
Talk to Burt. <CHUCKLES> What a  
couple of jokesters.

Another <KNOCK> on the door. Annoyed, Angus answers it.

48 ANGUS 48  
<GROANS> I don't have time for  
pranks, fellas--

Angus finds MRS. SHORT at the door, not Rob and Rod.

49                                          ANGUS                                          49  
Mrs. Short? Well what are you doing  
here?

50 MRS. SHORT 50  
I need to speak to Burt the Wise.

51 ANGUS 51  
Burt the Wise?

52 CITIZEN WALLA 52  
<DEMANDING WALLA> / "We need to talk  
to Burt too!" / "Burt has all the  
answers!" / "Let us talk to Burt!"

Angus notices a long line of Citizens waiting to see Burt.

**INT. S.S. STEADFAST - LIVING ROOM - DAY**

Angus finds Parker formed as a RACE CAR again, up on cloud hydraulics. Russell acts as the mechanic, working under the car, oil on her face.

53                                         ANGUS                                         53  
Parker, you wanna tell me why there's  
a line of people outside that think  
Burt can talk?

54 PARKER 54  
Probably because Burt can talk. Oh,  
and also predict the future. Isn't  
that right, Burt?

Parker looks over to Burt who <POPS>.

55 PARKER 55  
He says yes. One pop yes. Two pops  
no. It's Burtugeuse.

Angus clearly doesn't buy any of this.

56 ANGUS 56  
Oh, I see. So if I was to ask "Burt  
the Wise" here a question that only I  
know the answer to, he'd get it  
right?

57                                  PARKER                                  57

Probably.

Angus picks Burt up, looks him in the face.

|    |  |                                                                                   |    |
|----|--|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| 58 |  | ANGUS                                                                             | 58 |
|    |  | Okay, Burt. Buddy boy. My first<br>girlfriend I ever had, was her name<br>Bianca? |    |

Burt <POPS>. Judging from Angus, that's correct.

59 ANGUS 59  
Lucky guess. Was she a mermaid?

Angus looks to Parker like he's got this. Burt <POPS>. Angus is taken aback.

60                                           ANGUS                                           60

She was.

(then)

Did I dump her because her hair  
smelled like wet seaquills?

Burt <POPS> twice. Angus turns solemn.

61 ANGUS 61

He's right.  
(weepy)  
She dumped me because my hair smelled  
like wet seaquills! <GROSS SNIFFLING>

**INT/EXT. S.S. STEADFAST - FRONT DOOR - DAY**

Angus throws open the door and addresses the line of people waiting to see Burt that has only grown since last time.

62 ANGUS 62  
Listen up, everyone! Burt the Wise is  
ready to answer your questions.

63 CITIZEN WALLA 63

<CHEERS!>

64 ANGUS 64  
One person at a time, and please, one  
question each.

|    |  |             |  |  |    |
|----|--|-------------|--|--|----|
| 65 |  | BRAD (O.S.) |  |  | 65 |
|    |  | Only one?   |  |  |    |

66 ANGUS 66  
Yes, Brad. Only one.

Angus heads back inside.

**INT. S.S. STEADFAST - MAIL ROOM - CONT.**

We find Burt sitting on a THRONE made of boxes. Parker caters to him, placing a pillow behind Burt.

67 PARKER 67  
Now how's that feel? Comfy? Would you  
like a blanket for your lap?

Angus joins.

68 ANGUS 68  
Okay, Burt. You ready?  
(Burt POPS)  
Great!

69 PARKER 69  
I gotta say, this is a super idea.

70 ANGUS 70  
Well, kiddo. If Burt has all the  
answers to life, and I firmly believe  
he does, then who are we to keep that  
gift from others?

71 PARKER 71  
We'd be total jerkfaces.

72 ANGUS 72  
And jerkfaces we are not.

73 MRS. SHORT (O.S.) 73  
Is it my turn?

A nervous Mrs. Short stands at the door. Russell leads her by the hand to Burt. (This should all feel like we're addressing the Dalai Lama).

74 MRS. SHORT 74  
Burt the Wise. Will my husband ever  
remember to put the toilet seat down  
after he tinkles?

Burt <POPS> once. Mrs. Short beams with joy.

75 MRS. SHORT 75  
<GASPS!> Thank goodness. <SIGHS>  
Blessings. Blessings, Burt.

Angus and Parker share a look, proud of themselves. As if they're single-handedly changing the world.

**INT. S.S. STEADFAST - SUPER CUT/BURT ANSWERS ALL**

76 BL3 76  
Will I ever spend lots of money so I  
can fly to outer space?  
(Burt pops once)  
Praise be!

77 ROB 77  
Bro, if I skip leg day, will my legs  
get huge and swole?  
(Burt pops once)  
Yes! Bro! Yeah!

NANCY holds a crying BABY DOUGIE.

78 NANCY 78  
Will Doug and I ever have another  
baby?  
(Burt pops twice)  
Phew. Thank you, Burt!

79 REGGIE 79  
Hi, I'm Reggie. Will you be my  
friend?  
(Burt pops once)  
My best friend?  
(Burt pops twice)  
Okay. Friend is good enough.

80 MS. PAM 80  
Will I ever return to my first  
passion in life? Ac-ting?  
(Burt pops once)  
<GASPS!> I knew it! I should get new  
head shots made!

Ms. Pam happily jaunts off.

81 MR. SHORT 81  
Will my wife keep nagging me about  
putting the toilet seat down?  
(Burt pops once)  
Yeah, you're right. She will.

**EXT. S.S. STEADFAST - CONT.**

Mr. Short exits the ship and rolls down the hill.

**INT. S.S. STEADFAST - BEDROOM - NIGHT**

Angus, Parker, Russell, and Burt are all nestled in their beds. Content.

82 PARKER 82  
Boy, Burt made a lot of people happy  
today. Didn't he, Angus?

83 ANGUS 83  
He sure did, kiddo.

84 PARKER 84  
Do you think more people will come  
tomorrow? 'Cause Burt can make them  
happy too!

85 ANGUS 85  
You betcha. Life is a mystery,  
Parker. A mystery our pal Burt has  
already solved. Heh heh, ain't that  
right, Burt?

Burt <POPS> twice. No.

86 ANGUS 86  
Hm. Probably tired, that's all.

Angus heads to bed.

87 ANGUS (O.S.) 87  
Eh, get some sleep everyone. Burt's  
got a big day ahead of him tomorrow.

88 PARKER (O.S.) 88  
Goodnight, Angus! Night, Russell!  
Goodnight, Burt the Wise!

As the MMP crew settle in, we stay on Burt propped up in bed.  
A BUBBLE softly pops causing Burt to slowly sag.

**EXT. S.S. STEADFAST - DAY**

A line of disgruntled citizens wait outside the ship.

89 CITIZEN WALLA 89  
<DISGRUNTLED WALLA>

**INT. S.S. STEADFAST - MAIL ROOM - CONT.**

FLORENCE asks her question.

90 FLORENCE 90  
Burt the Wise... Will I ever find my  
one true love?

Burt looks worse for wear sitting on his throne. Slumped over  
as if deflating (because he is). Burt <POPS> twice.

91 FLORENCE 91  
No? Rude.

She storms off. Angus and Parker share a look. That didn't go  
so well. BRAD steps up to Burt.

92 BRAD 92  
Burtstradamus, will my rad band, "The  
Underbites," featuring Brad, ever  
make it big?

Burt <POPS> twice and deflates even more.

93 BRAD 93  
NO!? You're wrong, man. We're gonna  
be huge!

Brad stomps off.

94 BRAD 94  
<ANGRY GUITAR RIFFING EFFORTS!>

95 PARKER 95  
Sorry, Brad!  
(to Angus)  
Angus, do you think something's wrong  
with Burt? He's not making people  
happy anymore.

96 ANGUS 96  
Well, it's hard to say. I don't have  
all the answers, kiddo. Not like  
Burt.

GR4 (Acorn) is next.

97 GR4 97  
Hi, Burt. Will I always be this  
short?

Burt <POPS> once. GR4 gets sad and walks away crying.

98 GR4 98  
Aw nuts.

Burt looks even worse now.

99 PARKER 99  
Angus, I definitely think something's  
wrong with Burt.

100 ANGUS 100  
<SIGHS> Me too, Parker. Me too. Eh, I  
think we should stop--

101 MAYOR PEEVE (O.S.) 101  
Ooooooh, no you don't!

They find MAYOR PEEVE, sans Ryan.

102 MAYOR PEEVE 102  
I didn't wait in line for two hours  
NOT to get my question answered by  
Burt.

Parker and Angus share a look. What to do?

103 ANGUS 103  
Well, I guess one more question won't  
kill anyone.

104 PARKER 104  
Okay.

105 MAYOR PEEVE 105  
<CLEARS THROAT><SHORT INHALE> Will  
the stupid, stupid "thing" that's  
currently blocking the sunshine from  
my mansion ever go away or possibly  
blow up?

Burt lets out a weak <POP> before collapsing to the floor.

106 PARKER 106  
NOOOOO! <SOBBING!>

107 MAYOR PEEVE 107  
YES! I heard it, it was a yes. Bring  
on the sunshine!

Peeve gleefully leaves as Angus, Parker, and Russell gather  
around Burt, who is splayed out on the ground.

108 PARKER 108  
You said one more question wouldn't  
kill anyone, Angus! But look, it did!  
Burt's a goner!

109 ANGUS 109  
No, no, B-B-B-Burt can't be gone.  
(shakes Burt)  
Stay with us, buddy. We can't lose  
you. Say something. Anything!

They wait for a response, but instead Burt COMPLETELY  
DEFLATES. <PFFFFFFT>.

110 PARKER 110  
BUUUURRT!!

111 ANGUS 111  
NOOO! What have I done!?

112 PARKER 112  
It's not your fault, Angus. You were  
only trying to share Burt's  
incredible gift with the world.

113 ANGUS 113  
He gave, <SNIFFS>, and gave, until  
there was no more left to give.

114 PARKER 114  
That's so Burt. <CRIES!> I'm gonna  
miss him.

115 ANGUS 115  
Me too, me too. <SNIFFS> I'll always  
remember the last thing he said to  
me.  
(beat)  
P-P-P-P-P-P-Pop.

The three embrace Burt.

116 PARKER/ANGUS 116  
<WEEPING!>

Something catches Parker's eye on Burt's bubblewrap.

117 PARKER 117  
What do those numbers on Burt mean?

Parker points to an expiration STAMP on Burt's bubblewrap. It  
reads "**Expires 8/6/1999**".

118 ANGUS 118  
Parker, now's not the time for math.  
<BLOWS NOSE><MORE CRYING!>



130 PARKER 130  
Oh.

There's a <BANG> on the door.

131 CITIZEN WALLA (O.S.) 131  
<MUFFLED RUCKUS>

Angus draws back the curtain on a porthole window to see angry members of the crowd. Parker and Angus share a look.

132 ANGUS 132  
Well I think it's obvious what we need to do now.

133 PARKER 133  
Yeah. Yeah, it's the right thing to do.

**EXT. S.S STEADFAST - FRONT PORCH - DAY**

Parker and Angus stand on the porch. The crowd is agitated.

134 BRAD 134  
Wait, what do you mean Burt took a vow of silence?

135 PARKER 135  
You'd have to ask Burt. Which you can't. Because of his vow of silence. Right, Angus?

136 ANGUS 136  
That's correct, Parker.

137 CITIZEN WALLA 137  
<UPSET WALLA> / "That's lame!" / "What about my question?" / "How will I ever know the future?"

138 BRAD 138  
Wh-when's Burt gonna talk again?

139 ANGUS 139  
Well, if I was to guess, probably in twenty years. Eh, check back then.

Annoyed, the crowd disperses.

140 CITIZEN WALLA 140  
<DISAPPOINTED MUMBLING>

Once gone, Angus turns to Parker.

|            |                            |            |
|------------|----------------------------|------------|
| <b>141</b> | ANGUS                      | <b>141</b> |
|            | (giddy)                    |            |
|            | You wanna go rebuild Burt? |            |

|            |          |            |
|------------|----------|------------|
| <b>142</b> | PARKER   | <b>142</b> |
|            | Mmmmm... |            |
|            | (beat)   |            |
|            | POP!     |            |

**THE END**