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MUST-READ: Ed Zitron on CZ & FBF, Zucknarok, & Elondammerung:

The internet is still young at heart because it can produce things like this!:

Ed Zitron: [Moving Fast and Breaking Things](#): “**Fake Money, Real Crimes:** Sam Bankman-Fried [has decided that extradition would be the preferable option](#) to [living in a rat-infested prison with a bucket for a toilet](#), capitulating the world’s shortest four-dimensional chess game with the US government”. Bankman-Fried built his structure up carefully—a dorky “*genius*” techie that had made a magic money machine, but legitimately this time, and because he showed the right signs, people gave him more and more money. Changpeng Zhao (AKA CZ, CEO of Binance) of Binance [called his bluff](#), because he *too* was this kind of monster. CZ, much like Bankman-Fried, always assumed he was one step ahead. He believed that doing this would flush Sam from the industry, all while Binance kept the market stable enough for the bad news to pass as it had so many times, except it didn’t. And now their auditor is [so concerned about the validity of their analysis that they’ve pulled Binance’s audit and stopped working in crypto entirely](#).”

What happens with Binance is anyone’s guess. They are likely some form of insolvent, though it’s not obvious if that means we have the equivalent of assets or we do not have enough of anything. But it’s not great when you have to [pause withdrawals of a major stablecoin](#) because people have been trying to pull billions of dollars at once, something that would not be an issue if you, say, had those billions of dollars sitting in your exchange. He also didn’t realize that his best scenario would be to keep Bankman-Fried and FTX’s problems as quiet as possible.

Zucknarok: As I wrote in [The Year Of Finding Out](#), 2022 has been an era where we have seen “*geniuses*” revealed as at best situationally intelligent and at worst *ruinously stupid at the only time it counts*. [I still believe Mark Zuckerberg will kill his company](#). I cannot imagine that Meta exists in the form it does today if Zuckerberg continues to push “the metaverse.” The technology is not there yet. [He thought he was Steve Jobs](#), but he’s really Gil Amelio.

Elondammerung: At the precipice of self-inflicted destruction sits Elon Musk, [who] has proven himself to be a petty charlatan who lacks any meaningful skills necessary to run a company. [It] is more likely that SpaceX and Tesla have *survived* his tenure as CEO rather than thrived under his leadership. The current state of Twitter is fascinating because it is the most conspicuous analysis of a company we’ve ever seen, one that has revealed exactly how little a Chief Executive can know, how foolishly a Chief Executive can act, and how ignorant one very rich man can be. Musk [owns 25% of Tesla between stock and options and has pledged more than half of it as collateral for loans](#), and much of his wealth (currently \$209 billion) appears to come from the *private* valuations of companies like SpaceX and The Boring Company. Rivian, Cadillac, Ford, Audi and other auto manufacturers are creating better-looking vehicles at similar (or cheaper) price points.

[Forbes reports](#) that Musk’s wealth was \$24 billion in 2020, ballooning to \$155 billion in 2021—a Bankman-Fried adjacent pumping *based entirely on Tesla’s stock value and trust in the valuations of private (and in some cases pre-revenue) companies run by Elon Musk*. If you begin to question how well Tesla, or SpaceX, or The Boring Company ([which is better known for abandoning projects than completing them](#)) are run, it’s fair to consider whether he’s worth all that much to begin with. Musk’s entire fortune—his entire *existence*—is fueled by hype and trust in his genius; not altogether different from Sam Bankman-Fried. He will never *not* be a billionaire, but I would be shocked if his wealth doesn’t return to something more like he had in 2019 or 2020...

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ONE VIDEO: LibTard Propaganda from the 1960s!:

© Joseph Manckieics (Director) & Rod Serling (Writer) (1964): [A Carol for Another Christmas](#):

Courtesy of Roy Edroso:



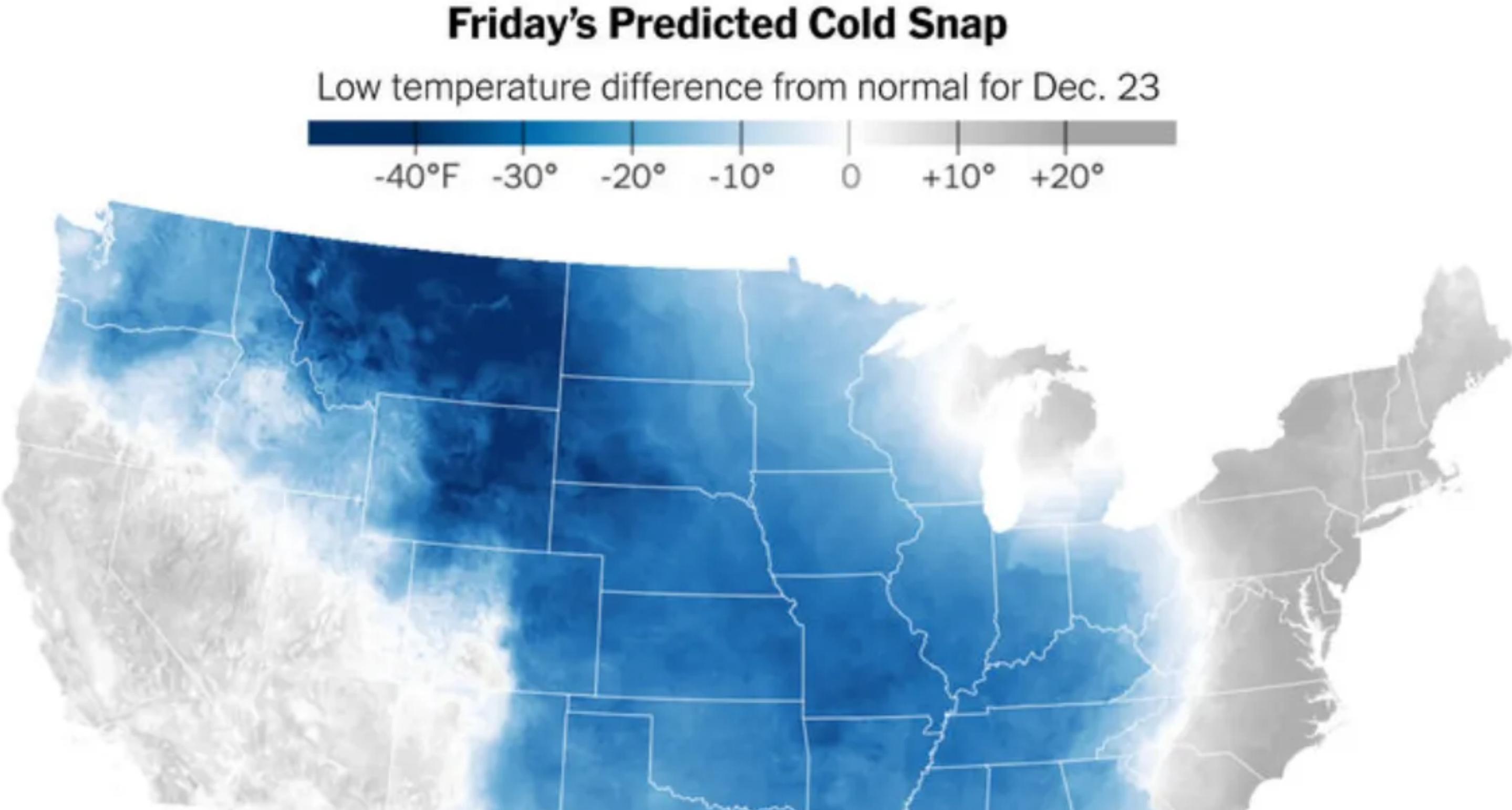


[Roy Edroso Breaks It Down](#)

[Have a Cold War liberal Christmas!](#)
Here we are in A Christmas Carol season. Regular readers know Iâ€™m partial to the Alastair Sim version â€” the hammy Victorianism of it suits me (and, I think, Dickens) right down to the ground. But some of the other versions have their charms and sidelights to throw on that grand moral fable of recalcitrance and redemption. A friend tipped me to the relatively obscure 1964 Rod Serling versionâ€”
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- **David Colander:** [Was Keynes a Keynesian or a Lernerian?](#)â€
- **Chance:** [â€”If you wonder](#) what might be motivating Elonâ€™s recent revenge-porn-style dirt-digging-in-Slack-archives hype-apalooza, you should familiarize yourself w/whatâ€™s going onâ€™”i.e., \$140m owed to execs if Elon canâ€™t prove they were fired for causeâ€
- **Azeem Azhar:** [My second robot brain](#): â€”Three ways in which ChatGPT improves our quality of thinkingâ€; The divergent thinker. The challenging critic. The verbaliser...
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Noah Smith: [Techno-optimism for 2023: 'Techno-optimist](#).... 2020 happened.... Cutting-edge technology... near-miraculous vaccines and treatments.... Climate change suddenly [appear solvable](#), thanks to a near-miraculous explosion in [green energy tech](#).... I see lots of technological developments that are either changing our world in major ways already, or seem likely to change it soon.... **The A.I. breakout**.... Co-authorship is exactly the right model for what a lot of human beings are going to be doing with these new AI tools.... The key reason to be optimistic about AI is that *it isnâ€™t slowing down*.... If it extends the powers of our minds the way physical technology extended the powers of our bodies, another productivity boom is probably ahead. **The energy revolution rolls onward**.... The solar revolution is going from theoretical to actual.... This is exactly what people who looked at the solar cost curve were predicting for years.... **The strange biotech boom**.... The big advances are happening in a bunch of different directions.... These are just three particularly exciting areas of technological progress. There are others...

Simon Kennedy: [Wages in Crosshairs](#): â€”The pivotal question for Fed officials is whether the climb in US pay over the past 18 months or so is a one-time bump â€” as companies adjust to scarce labor supply, and a realization that their workforce was under-compensated â€” or a pernicious feedback loop in which prices and wages drive each other up. The signs are that theyâ€™re not willing to take any chancesâ€

Tej Parikh: [Ricardo Reis: â€”Central banks must balance bringing inflation down without breaking thingsâ€™](#): â€”We had a lot of very bad shocks together with a few missed judgment calls on the part of central banksâ€; surprised by the speed of the recovery from the pandemic, the supply chain disruptions and the energy crisis, whileâ€; not paying enough attention to inflation expectations data. This meant that inflation rose more and was more permanent than what it might have beenâ€; A theorist of monetary policy who is thinking about economic mechanisms saw a lot of red flags and worried that the 5 per cent would persist. Empirics is wonderful when weâ€™re in a stable and steady regime; theory is what you need when you have big shocks and possible regime changesâ€; The big forecast errors of â€œteam transitoryâ€ 18 months ago seemed to come from putting too much emphasis on micro data and so mistaking the forest for the treesâ€; If we had raised rates earlier, we wouldnâ€™t have had so much inflation nowâ€; Firms, wage setters, price setters, speculators, professionals at banks, everyone thinks that inflation is going to be at 2 per cent in the medium-term. A recession was always going to happen for the eurozone and UK which are large net importers of energy. Thereâ€™s not much that central banks could do about thatâ€; Then, later, as inflation comes down close to 2 per cent, are there good reasons to ask whetherâ€; [we should] have an inflation target of 3 per cent? The answer is probably yesâ€; Credibility is not tarnished because longer-term inflation expectations are anchored.â€ The recession of next year is caused by Putinâ€™s invasion of Ukraineâ€

Tom Nichols: [Zelensky Knows the Clock Is Ticking](#): â€”The real question, though, is whether anything Zelensky can say will matter to a Republican Party that has decided to torment the ghost of Ronald Reagan by taking sides with a neo-imperial Soviet nostalgist.... Rank-and-file Republicans support aiding Ukraine against Russia. But the Trumpian GOP is now controlled by its fringe, the same activists and primary voters who wear the â€œIâ€™d rather be a Russian than a Democrat" T-shirts.... Republicans performing for their base are unlikely to change their views now. But Zelensky is about to speak to all of America, and his presence in Washington will help remind people that this is not some esoteric foreign-policy tangle, but a brutal, bloody human contest between democracy and authoritarianism. His presence in front of a divided Congress mightâ€”at least, we can hopeâ€”help Americans ignore the cartoonish objections of right-wing pundits.... The war in Ukraine is not over...

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Tej Parikh: [Ricardo Reis: “Central banks must balance bringing inflation down without breaking things”](#): “We had a lot of very bad shocks together with a few missed judgment calls on the part of central banks! surprised by the speed of the recovery from the pandemic, the supply chain disruptions and the energy crisis, while! not paying enough attention to inflation expectations data. This meant that inflation rose more and was more permanent than what it might have been! A theorist of monetary policy who is thinking about economic mechanisms saw a lot of red flags and worried that the 5 per cent would persist. Empirics is wonderful when we’re in a stable and steady regime; theory is what you need when you have big shocks and possible regime changes! The big forecast errors of “team transitory” 18 months ago seemed to come from putting too much emphasis on micro data and so mistaking the forest for the trees! If we had raised rates earlier, we wouldn’t have had so much inflation now! Firms, wage setters, price setters, speculators, professionals at banks, everyone thinks that inflation is going to be at 2 per cent in the medium-term. A recession was always going to happen for the eurozone and UK which are large net importers of energy. There’s not much that central banks could do about that! Then, later, as inflation comes down close to 2 per cent, are there good reasons to ask whether! [we should] have an inflation target of 3 per cent? The answer is probably yes! Credibility is not tarnished because longer-term inflation expectations are anchored.” The recession of next year is caused by Putin’s invasion of Ukraine!

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