

LEAD AND THE BEAR

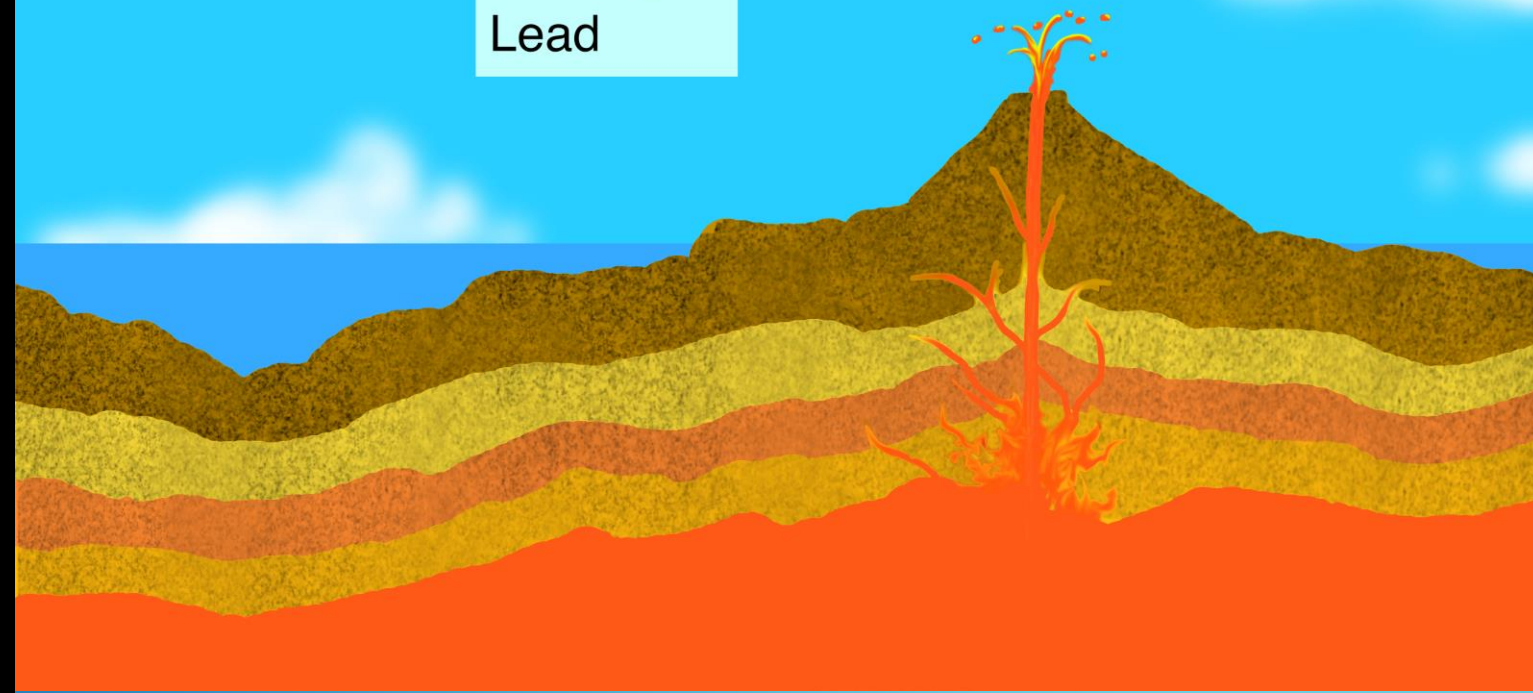
FANIE PELLETIER & BENOÎT LEBLANC

LEAD IS A NATURAL COMPONENT OF THE EARTH'S CRUST.

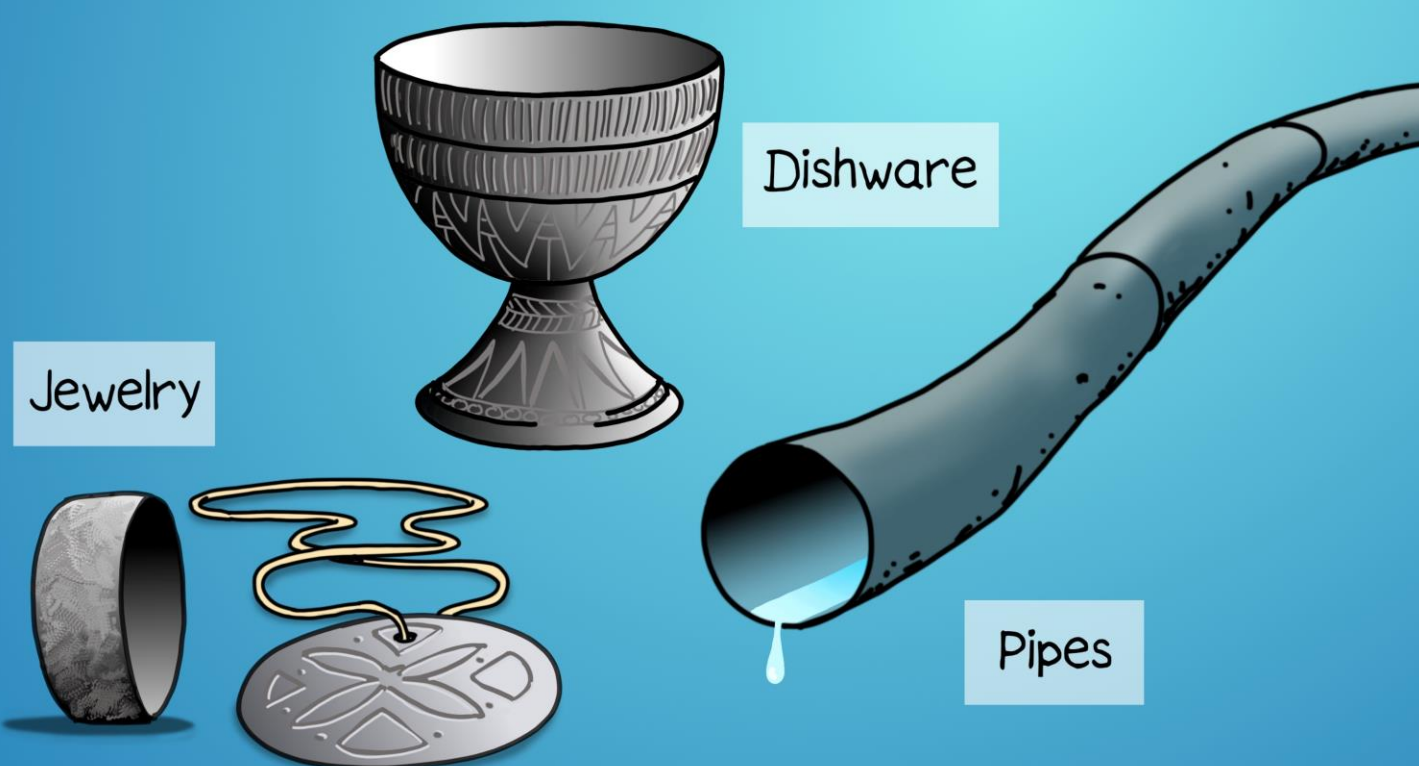
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Pb

Lead



THIS MALLEABLE METAL WAS USED BY MANKIND VERY EARLY ON TO CRAFT ALL SORTS OF THINGS.



LEAD IS HOWEVER TOXIC, SOMETHING WE'VE KNOWN SINCE ANTIQUITY. THAT DID NOT PREVENT MONKS IN THE MIDDLE AGES FROM ADDING IT TO WINE, TO WHICH IT GAVE A SWEETER TASTE.

GOTTA ADMIT, IT'S TASTIER THAT WAY. WHAT D'YOU THINK?

I THINK MY BELLY HURTS!!!



NATURALLY, LEAD IS COMMONLY USED IN MAKING AMMUNITION.

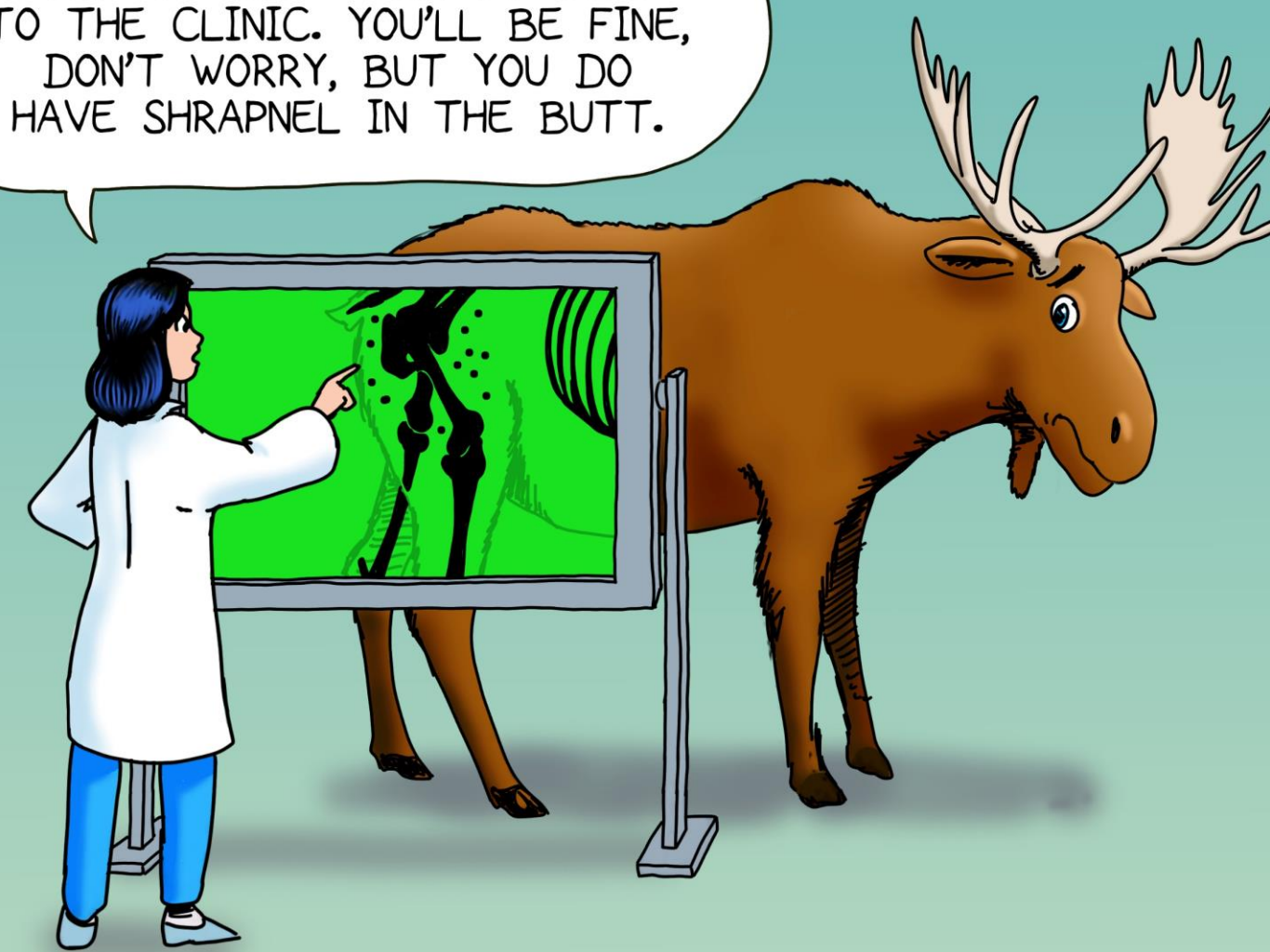
THEN THE OUTLAW SAYS "EAT HOT LEAD, SHERIFF!" AND THEN...

NOT SO LOUD, YOU SCARE THE GAME AWAY!



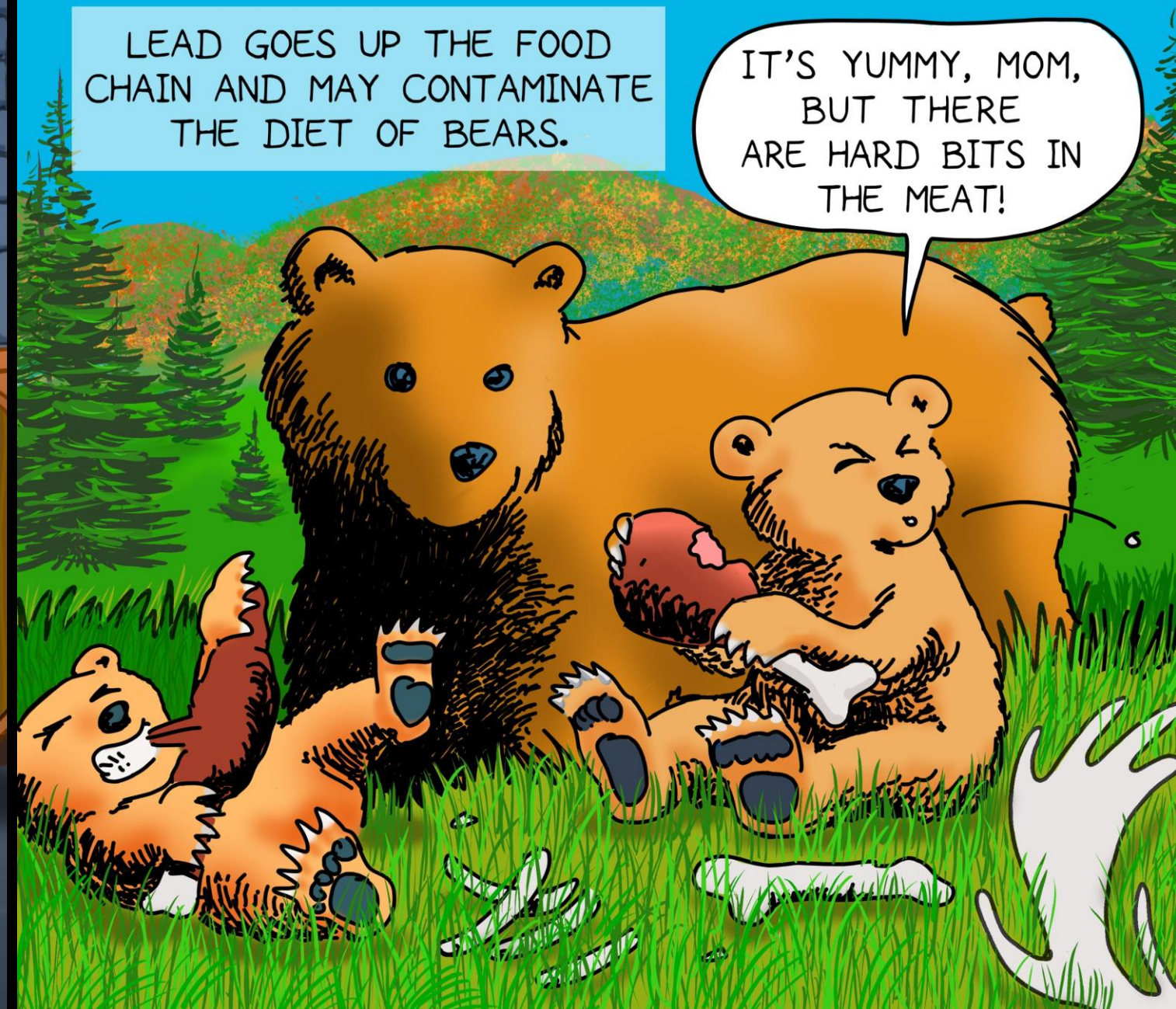
SUCH PROJECTILES CAN LEAVE FRAGMENTS IN THE BODY OF ANIMALS.

YES, YOU DID WELL TO COME TO THE CLINIC. YOU'LL BE FINE, DON'T WORRY, BUT YOU DO HAVE SHRAPNEL IN THE BUTT.



LEAD GOES UP THE FOOD CHAIN AND MAY CONTAMINATE THE DIET OF BEARS.

IT'S YUMMY, MOM, BUT THERE ARE HARD BITS IN THE MEAT!



SUCH CONTAMINATION COULD HAVE ILL EFFECTS ON THEIR HEALTH, AS IS THE CASE WITH OTHER ANIMALS.

WE JUST GOT THE RESULTS: YOUR LEAD LEVELS ARE ABOUT TWICE THE LIMIT SET BY THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION!

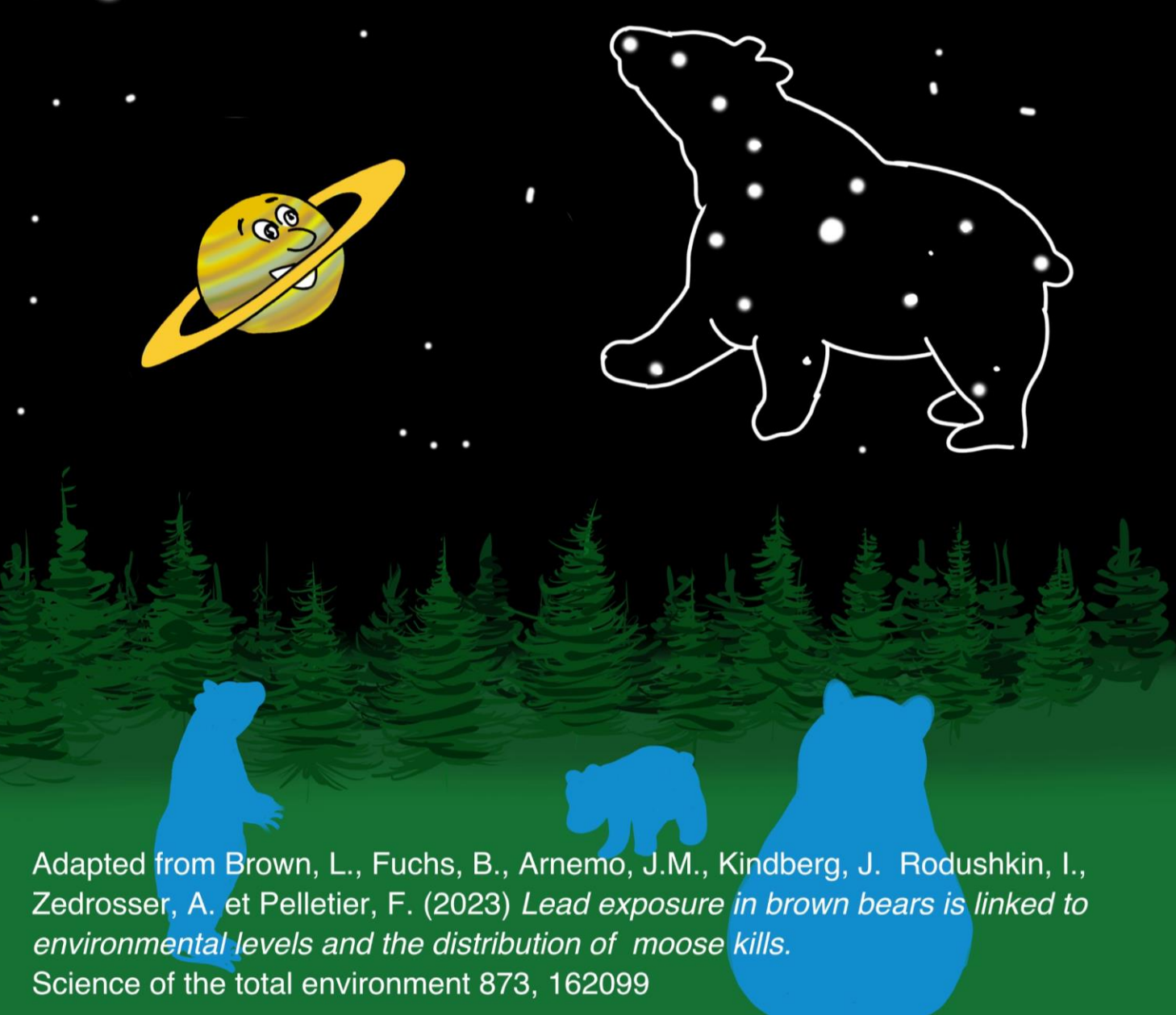
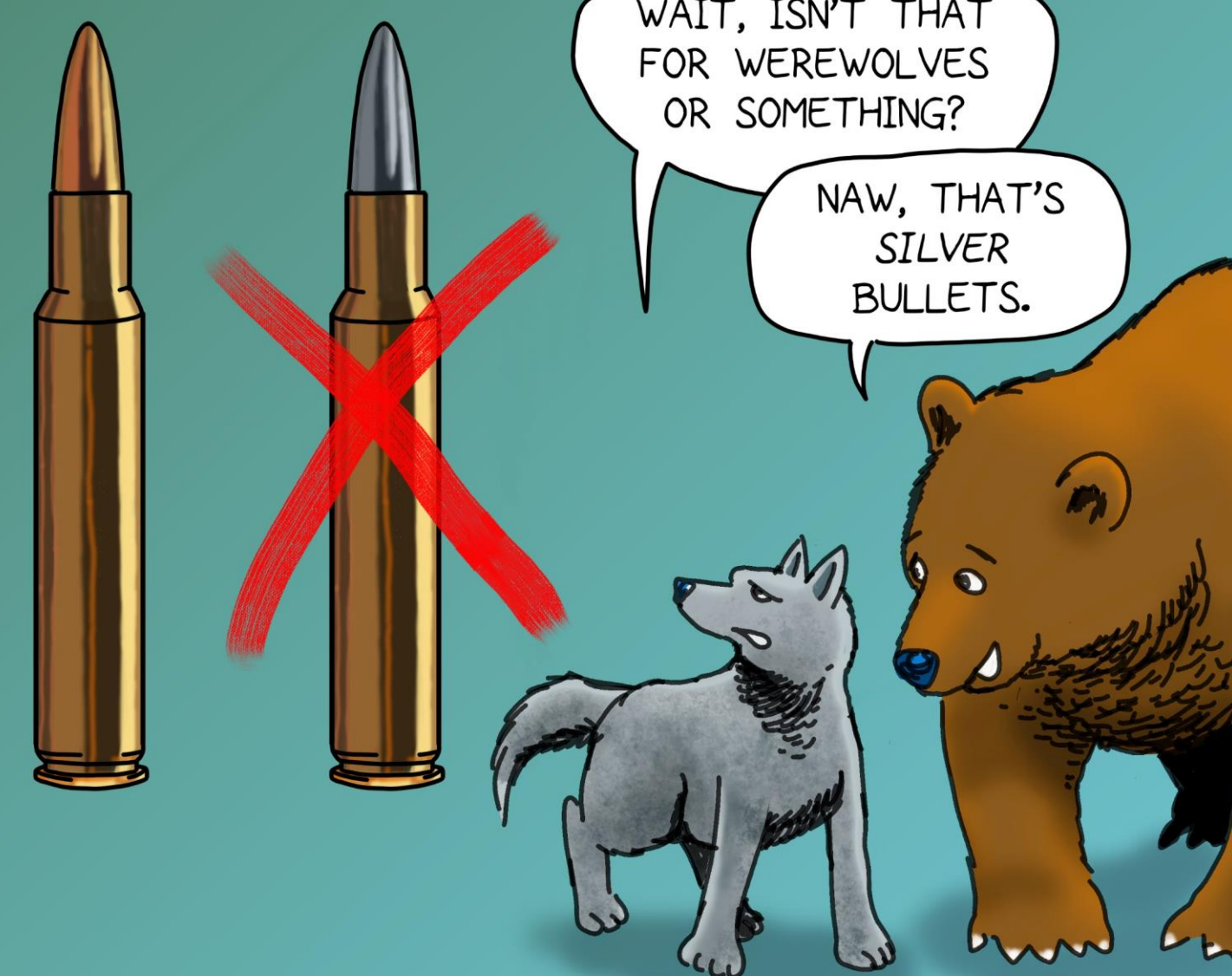
NO WONDER MY HEAD FEELS SO HEAVY!



THIS CAN BE AVOIDED BY SELECTING COPPER BULLETS INSTEAD OF LEAD ONES. THEY ARE READILY AVAILABLE.

WAIT, ISN'T THAT FOR WEREWOLVES OR SOMETHING?

NAW, THAT'S SILVER BULLETS.



Adapted from Brown, L., Fuchs, B., Arnemo, J.M., Kindberg, J., Rodushkin, I., Zedrosser, A. et Pelletier, F. (2023) *Lead exposure in brown bears is linked to environmental levels and the distribution of moose kills.* Science of the total environment 873, 162099