




The Birth of the World by Joan Miro

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


Confusion Diffused

By 

My name is a Wingdings character. Wingdings is the name of a font in Microsoft Word that is commonly used for inserting symbols into text, symbols such as arrows, starbursts, skull-and-crossbones signs, and little pictures of telephones. (Interestingly, the skull-crossbones symbol is making a comeback in today's fashions, as are pirates in general. I attribute this to the success of Captain Crunch in subverting America's youth with sugary devilry and additives.) Currently, in the standard version of Word, there are as many as three distinct Wingdings fonts, all with useful purposes. There is no Wingdings character for a hotdog in a bun. Otherwise I might have used that.

This kind of tomfoolery has been tried before by Prince, aka the Artist, fka Prince. This is a cheap gimmick to pick up chicks and get free drinks at Starbucks. This I freely—and gladly—admit. I am also illiterate and have chosen to make this my mark, like the X of yesteryear. But since I decided to reserve my X's for marking buried treasure, I am left with little choice.

I like to think of my name as a buzzing sound—the kind of sound that emanates from a sleeping cartoon. A trail of Z's is typically how sleeping is depicted in cartoons. "" is reminiscent of Z's.

My name also resembles the symbol for "approximately equal to," and for all practical purposes, this is where my analysis begins. But before I begin my analysis, which I will codename "Hey La Hey La, Bite Me," let us pause for a brief interlude of quotations. It's up to you to twist the meaning however you wish and add (nonexistent?) layers of symbolism:

"Softly, softly catchee monkey."

"Here it is. Is this it?"

"Duct tape, I need it for...taping something."

"Welcome to the Monkey House."

So, I started with a monkey quote and I ended with a monkey quote. This is purely coincidental. Or is it?

The God's honest truth is that writing, all writing, comes from the inside of a person's head. (I lied previously about being illiterate. If that were true, I would find it difficult to type this article. You should have known at the time that I was yanking your chain.) It is truly remarkable,

...continued on page 3...

Mattlock

By Calderwood and Fritz

"Keep your shirt on; I need to finish my cigar."



Newsletter Ideas

I'm looking for writers for the following topics:

1. The impact of a bi-lingual society in America
2. The current fascination with sci-fi/fantasy/comics
3. How the current James Bond actor stacks up to the others
4. Speciality Mixed Drinks
5. The rise of vegetarianism, or how modern man is shielded from the death created by meat-eating, or the modern dis-association with nature
6. How IMDB changed the world

Send your article ideas in today!
editor@babbleonline.com ☒

Letter from the Editor

Welcome to Volume 5 of the newsletter!

As you enter the New Year (and indeed we have all already entered), I encourage you to take some time and enjoy being in it. The sun will rise, reach its peak, and fall, all in good time. As you oscillate between work and play, I encourage you not to rush to finish everything but to come up for air every now and then. When it heats up, take a rest under the linden trees.

Dan, editor@babbleonline.com ☒

Recipe of the Month:

Scandinavian Meatballs

By Elizabeth Carlson

1-cup finely chopped onion
 4 TBSP butter, divided
 2½ pounds meat loaf mixture (ground beef, pork, and veal)
 1-cup breadcrumbs
 3-eggs, slightly beaten
 1½ cup half-n-half
 2-tsp salt
 1-tsp dried dill weed, divided
 ¼-tsp pepper
 ¼-tsp nutmeg
 ¼-tsp allspice
 ¼-tsp cardamom
 1/3-cup flour
 2-(10 oz) cans beef broth
 1-cup whipping cream

Cook onion in 1 TBSP butter until soft. Mix cooked onion, meat, breadcrumbs, eggs, half-n-half, salt, ½-tsp dill, pepper, nutmeg, allspice, and cardamom. Shape into 1½" balls and bake. Bake at 400° 15 minutes.

Meanwhile: Melt 3 TBSP butter. Add flour to make a rue. Whisk in the broth. Cook over medium heat until thickened. Stir in whipping cream and remaining ½-tsp dill. Simmer for 5 minutes. Put in a 3-quart casserole dish and refrigerate overnight.

Bake at 325° 50-60 minutes.

If you don't have time to wait until the next day you can bake right away, but it really is the best the next day. ☒

Tower of Babble-ON's

'Before-and-After' Corner

By Susan Fritz

"Third Eye Blind Luck"

☒

Submission Suggestions

Your contribution can be anything that fits onto a sheet of paper.

Here are a few ideas:

Editorials	Reports	Philosophy
Reviews	Ramblings	Rants
Comics	Puzzles	Jokes
Quotes	Polls	Trivia
Drawings	Poetry	Recipes
Photographs	Short stories	News
Predictions	Advice	Graphs

Please send all of your submissions to editor@babbleonline.com. ☒

...*Confusion Diffused, from page 1...*

therefore, that any two sentences written by any two people can be so similar in nature, excepting the possibility of blind mimicry. The fact that communication can occur *at all* implies that people's inner workings are similar. In other words, people are "approximately equal to" each other. Not only can sentences be structured the same on paper or in speech, they can be *understood* by another person. Transmission and reception coincide. The plug fits into the outlet—though in Europe there is a different voltage than in the United States. The shape of the outlet is also different, requiring a converter if you are traveling between those two continents. I don't know about the rest of the world. Do they even have electricity? Of course they do. If Ben Franklin can get it by flying a kite in a thunderstorm, they must at least have electricity in Afghanistan, where *The Kite Runner* takes place.

In 2006, a movie called *Babel* was released, which dealt with language and miscommunication. The movie had nice scenery. But is miscommunication an interesting, new idea? Incidentally, the name of this newsletter was based on the same story as the movie *Babel*. According to the book of *Genesis*, the word Babylon has the same root as the word "babble" or "confusion." Babylon actually comes from an Akkadian root meaning "Gate of God." That's not really the same, is it?

Not to get on the subject of religion or politics or other potentially flaccid topics, I will now shift gears and talk about the wonders of the Chia Pet. Here is an excerpt from the instruction manual for planting your Chia Seeds:

"Submerge Chia Planter in water for 24 hours. In a separate container, mix two teaspoons of Chia Seeds and ¼ cup of water. Stir well to moisten all seeds. Allow seeds to set for 24 hours. The seeds will form a thick, gel-like past which will help seeds adhere to your Chia Planter."

And like magic the seeds will sprout after a few days. You can essentially count on that fact. Now, imagine you were a Chia Seed and you were planted on a Chia Planter. Which Chia Planter would you prefer to grow on—the ram? the turtle? the hippo? Does it really make any difference? Yes, it should. These are the things that make life interesting. Diversity. Variety. Just kidding(?).

This, of course, ties back to the original analysis, which was on the topic of approximate equality. While all Chia Seeds grow in approximately the same fashion, all people communicate in approximately the same fashion within the framework of their native language. There are misunderstandings, but again, it's amazing that anyone can understand anyone else at all. I barely understand my own thoughts, unless when dreaming, during which point many unusual things make perfect sense. It makes perfect sense that my hands are in the shape of cheese wedges and the room smells like shampoo.

Dream analysis is a fascinating field of study. Let me give you one to analyze. I am running down endless flights of staircases. At the bottom, I slip and break my face on the ground. My head morphs into a fruit basket. And the people who are pursuing me slip on a banana in the basket. We then all continue sinking and sinking through the ground. Many people have the talking-naked-in-front-of-a-crowd dream or the teeth-falling-out dream or the flying-through-the-air dream. This is simply more proof that people typically function in similar ways and feel similar feelings. Don't get me wrong—you are a snowflake, you are a snowflake. But you are also a icy treat, or a Freezie, and every Freezie has a destiny too.

Use your Freezie wisely. ☒

Gretubas

By Runtle B. Jehofeth

Gretubas's vast plains and sloping mountains made it look quite inviting for life to flourish, but the lonely planet had not been inhabited in 3000 years. Gretubas had been a bustling and colorful place, full of excited Gretubians who enjoyed traveling the land, searching for new experiences. Gretubians were nomadic people who bored easily of the same experience and the same faces. Though this flippant nature added to the charm of the Gretubians, it also led to their demise.

One day, Malmax decided that he had had quite enough of the low lands of the Fluvian Doldrums just east of the Chasma Ocean. Malmax was the leader of his caravan of 280 Gretubian flatbeds, and he decided when the caravan was to move (and to where). Malmax was chosen for his keen sense of direction, his responsible nature, and his command of public speaking. He was able to convince anyone to jump into the fire of the Flameheads, though nobody would venture into the nether regions where the Flameheads existed. But, had he put his mind to it, he could have convinced even the most hesitant Gretubian to traverse the untrodden Flameheads. Malmax had a strong stature, a broad smile, and a steady hand. His slick, purple hair stuck straight up (as is the case with most Gretubians), and his round caramel face was offset by a puff in his cheeks. He was about 7 feet tall (slightly shorter than average), but his personality made him appear that he could touch the clouds. Back when there were still clouds.

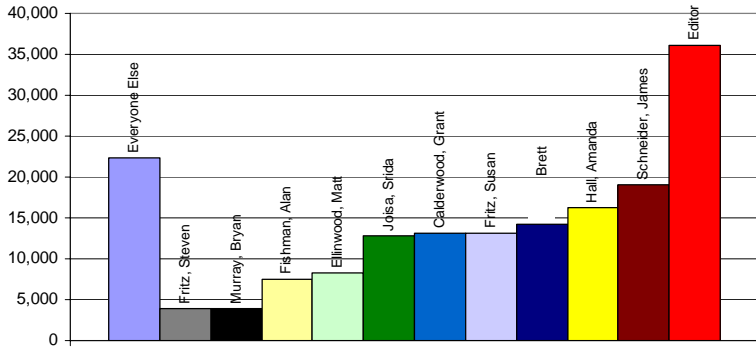
Malmax walked along the stone pocked path to the Chasma's shore, which was the eastern-most edge of the province of Tolodon. Malmax felt the salty air on his tongue and smiled at the memories he had of the gorgeous seaside crescent. His caravan had yearned for a change from the tall structures of their last stop in Granmar City, and he decided that the Fluvian Doldrums were just the change they needed. Quiet, picturesque, and sunny, the Fluvs seemed ideal. The trouble was, existence became boring on the Fluvs. Only so many times can a Gretubian float in the Chasma or run along the sand sills. After a few months, the low hanging Mocksom trees with their beautiful sprays of delicate, white flowers become less exotic and more part of the everyday scenery. Malmax barely noticed the Mocksom in his path, and its stretching branches slapped his caramel face.

Malmax remembered his initial splendor of Granmar City. Rarely did such cities exist, since few Gretubians enjoyed settling down. It was, however, a haven for those that had little interest in travel and did not bore quite as easily. Granmar was the only city on the entire plain of Tolodon, though Malmax had read about an even larger and more wondrous city in the province of Queelong. One day, he would take his people there... ☒

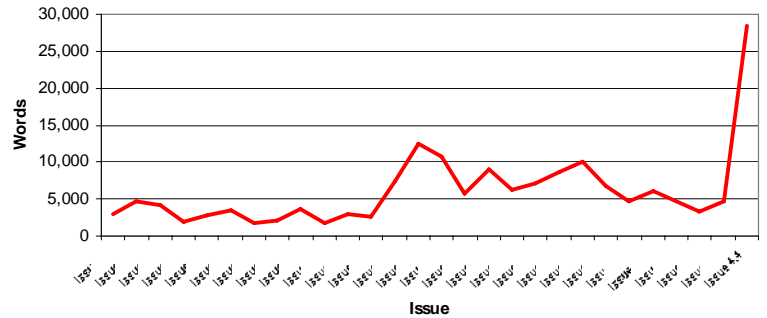
NEWSLETTER STATS

Note: Margin of Error is +/- 3%. Does not include the current issue.

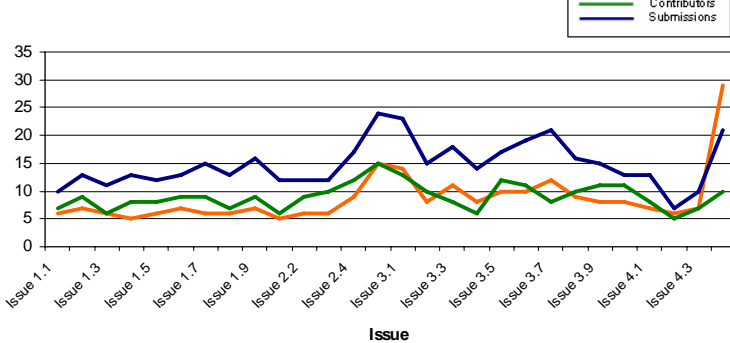
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Life-to-Date Stats

Word Submissions only
Includes the editor
Does not include the current issue

Total Words: **170,939**
Total Pages: **244**
Total Contributors: **36**
Total Submissions: **415**

Average Words/Page: **701**
Average Words/Contributor: **4,748**
Average Words/Submission: **412**

Awards

These awards could be yours!

For Total Words Contributed:
1,000: **Little Scribbler**
5,000: **Babble-ON-ian**
10,000: **Grimmelshausen Award**
Each additional 10,000:
Proust BabbleStar

For Exceptional Content:
Alfred, Lord Tennyson
Platinum Seal of Excellence:
To date, no one has won this.

Good luck, and keep the submissions coming! ☒

BabbleList of Distinction

This month's *Grimmelshausen Contributor* award winner:

GRANT CALDERWOOD, BABBLE-ON-IAN

Grant's pieces have ranged from mindful self-actualization to silly fiction. Additionally, his contributions to the regularly published comic "Mattlock" won him a Reader's Choice award in 2005. *Babble-ON* salutes you!

Note on the Grimmelshausen Award: Grimmelshausen distinctions are awarded to *Babble-ON* contributors who have submitted over 10,000 words. The award is named after Johann Jacob Christoffel von Grimmelshausen, the 17th Century German author of the picaresque (and very lengthy) novels of the *Simplician* cycle, among other works. ☒

Global Watch Map

BabbleON has attracted contributors and readers from around the globe. In addition to the U.S. writers from 14 different states (noted on the map), there have been international submissions from: Germany, Belgium, Italy, and Australia.

Key: Red squares mark the residence of each contributor. ☒

