

Letter from the Editor

Just when you think that everything couldn't get any better, it does.

I'll leave that thought open while I tell you about this publication. There is an uncanny frequency of midget references in this issue, so it's only appropriate that the Picture of the Week be that of a friendly, woodland gnome. While the thought of a gnome might actually scare you (I refer you to the gnome statues in Salzburg as seen in the background of the *Sound of Music*), in general I find them somewhat cheery and amusing. Similarly, though some of the content of *Babble-ON* may not turn your proverbial crank, in general I think you will be pleased.

But remember, the success of this endeavor is up to you. I'm just here to push paper around.

Dan



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Twelve Inches to Darkness

By *Gnome Chomsky*

That's right, man. I've got the insider tip on a place some refer to both as "jolly" and "ol". If you guessed Uzbekistan, you'd be close, but incorrect. The locale I'm jiving on about is none other than Jolly Ol' England—London to be exact. Now, by the time this 4th issue of *Babble-ON* hits the international network of computer waves, this will all be old and tired news, but for now, I'm in the know about the particulars of the London Power Grid Failure. Mysteriously accented sources from the National Public Radio affiliate in Dallas (conveniently located in

...continued on page 4...

Picture of the Week: a friendly, woodland gnome
www.upenn.edu/gsc/nso/gnomes.htm

DARKNESS WARSHED OVER THE DUDE: Blackout Hits New York, plus some dipshit places in Canada

By *James Schneider*

I shit you not; the name of the Fox News reporter who first clued me into the cause of the power outage was Eric Shun.

Sitting on the computer refreshing my Yahoo! fantasy football page, my computer suddenly and quite unexpectedly powered down. At the same instant the lights in the house flickered and failed. The fan halted its cooling goodness. In a moment New York, Detroit, Ontario, and Toronto (along with Ohio and some other places) plunged into a sea of darkness, reverting the Northeast to a pre-20th Century level where "technology" was sans electricity. Luckily it was 4:20; not yet dark and most tokers were only annoyed that the Simon and Garfunkel albums blaring on their stereos more perfectly imitated the sounds of silence.

Instinct sent me towards the freezer where I snagged the last two Toasted Almond Good Humor bars. If I was going to make it through this survival scenario, polysaturated sustenance would be most required. Then I set out for the other prerequisite of "technology-free"

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Q&A

with Swinton
Chumblebrook

Ask a Hapless
Houston Doctor



<http://www.frankasch.com/current/doctor.jpg>

Tired of speaking with the (un)dead, our field correspondent Swinton Chumblebrook decided to “spin some yarn” with a Houston doctor this week. Let’s see how this new approach panned out!

SC: Do you mind if we walk and talk? I’ve always wanted to ask a doctor whether he’s fantasized about his job like they do on *Scrubs*. Man, I love that show!

HD: Interesting question. Wait a sec, I’ve gotta grab that elevator before it closes....

SC: With your head? What the—

The interview was stopped short as the doctor got his head stuck in the elevator and was decapitated. So much for exciting, new journalistic approaches. ☒

Babble-ON Interactive Poll!

Generically speaking, what do you (personally) call a carbonated beverage (such as Coca Cola):

- Soda
- Pop
- Soda Pop
- Soft Drink
- Fountain Drink
- Coke

Please send all submissions to dan@fritzcomics.com

Docile Reptile

A Haiku by Chad Fritz

A docile reptile,
Smashed by your mom’s bad driving.
Sad to see and smell.

Happy Humphrey meets... The Trix Rabbit!

By Dan Fritz



Straight from the state penitentiary, the Trix® Rabbit took his box and ran for the border.

Dictator of the Month: Ceausescu



This adorable Romanian menace *nearly* survived through the entire Cold War. His policies made possible such grand national achievements as bread rationing, systematic resettlement, and health crises. He even instituted (every man’s dream) a strict policy of population expansion and anti-contraception. *And* he avoided Soviet domination of his country! Way to go, Ceau! ☒

...Darkness Warshed over the Dude, from p. 1...

survival, batteries. Flipping on my newly-purchased mp3-CD player, and with pipe dreams restored (just kidding), I lay down in the nearly 90 degree heat and waited for the fan to resume its whirling wonderment.

After about 45 minutes, power was restored to my neighborhood. Most of my town and about 50 million people were not so lucky. Fox News reported on a far more globalized blackout than I had expected. Scanning through other channels revealed a semi-apocalyptic scene; cars and buses in utter standstill with hordes of people swarming about in relative chaos.

While Mayor Bloomberg beseeched the city to not turn this inconvenience into a tragedy, my mother feverishly tried to contact our loved ones. Cell phones were down and panic struck fiercely. My father, who works in White Plains, was probably looking at either an overnight hotel stay or upwards of an 8 hour commute home. My brother was collecting his high school yearbook at Chaminade and was also unreachable. And, my grandfather – who suffers from heart problems – was trapped in New York City without a car or a working train to get him back home.

As time passed, worry struck with bitter vengeance, but we soon learned that most of it was for naught. My father, as it turns out, was in Putnam County and avoided Manhattan arriving home via Brooklyn and Queens. A Good Samaritan couple graciously delivered my grandfather to Valley Stream – essentially within 5 miles of his home. Yet my brother, a young and inexperienced driver was still missing. He called around 7 o'clock complaining that his car had stalled out over a bridge, while reassuring my mother that he thought he could still make it home.

It was about 8:20 and my mom was sick with worry. With a hurried spaghetti ala Vodka dinner in our stomachs, we set out in our blue Volvo to try and locate my brother's red one. We drove the straight distance towards Chaminade but neither he nor his car was in view. We even meandered through some backstreets that he wasn't likely to have followed just in case. Cars' high-beams frustrated and confused my caveman ways, and without traffic lights or much in the way of uniformed officials to guide the flow of traffic, we were lucky that the momentary frackus was not true bedlam.

An hour later, my mother and I had searched high and low with no success. Luckily we saw no accidents or signs of road trauma, and she prayed that my brother was at home. Luckily he was; the amalgam of inexperience, closed roads, and lack of any sense of direction found John driving toward Queens – the complete opposite direction of where he should have been. By the time we arrived home and saw him safe, the sense of relief was palpable.

As I sit in my now well-fanned bedroom and type this, millions of people are still without power. My father, along with countless millions of others, was forced to take an off day. Trains and subways are inoperable and preventative measures are being taken to assure that this will not happen again. Residents of Toronto are engaged in mass rioting and looting. GW addresses the nation and looks downright foolish as ever. At least Blackout '03 left some things constant. ☒

**Happy
Humphrey's
September
Fortunes**



**First name starts
with A-M:**

If your age is an even number:
Size will not matter in your search for happiness.

If your age is an odd number:
Size will make all of the difference in your search for happiness.

**First name starts
with N-Z:**

If your age is an even number:
Length is the key to your happiness.

If your age is an odd number:
Width is the key to your happiness.

...Twelve Inches to Darkness, from p.1...

the hall closet across from the bathroom in the apartment of one DLF and SJM, currently of Dallas, TX), called this reporter earlier today and spoke of a befuddled-looking twelve inch gnome-like creature headed to Heathrow airport on a non-stop flight from D/FW on Tuesday, August 26th. This mini-oompa was spotted carrying an antique wicker basket held together with a mother-of-pearl clasp, a carry-on item not unusual, but certainly not typical of twelve inch gnomes. When asked about the contents of said item on his way through the security gate specifically designed for the vertically impaired, said gnome candidly responded, "Good afternoon, hello. I will be taking this wicker basket and its unknown contents to the heart of London's Big Ben where I will proceed to use it in order to sabotage the city's main power grid."

My source says he watched with curiosity as the inspectors—hand selected from an elite group of vo-tech drop-outs—patted the little fella on the head for good luck and waved him good-bye as he boarded the plane.

Two days later, the lights went dark.... ☒

Internet Action

For a bit of cheap amusement, visit
www.jedimaster.net

**The End Times:
An Overview**

By Dan Fritz

"There will be wars and rumors of wars...."

Have you ever noticed that society continues to get worse? Do you see the Roman Empire re-establishing itself as a pagan superpower? Does the thought of one world currency make you shake in your boots? And—just for fun, my fun—do you think that there are aliens, and that they are actually Satan's minions coming to take over the earth?

If you answered yes to any of these questions, you might be eligible for a Doomsday Scout Patch. Granted, the first question has been regarded as the old person's battle cry since the beginning of the 20th century, if not since the beginning of time, and if you had grown up in Poland in 1941 you would definitely have been right. But what of the rest of this seemingly goofy nonsense?

It's not so goofy if you are a Doomsdayer. Your typical Doomsdayer—someone who centers his life around the fact that the world will end tomorrow—will cling to these ideas like cat hair to a black sweater. He'll tell you things about the futility of your wanton decisions and say how foolish it was for you to have even tried (and naturally failed). A Doomsdayer says that we are in the "End Times," and things will only get worse from here on out. Some of the most prominent Doomsdayers even put a date on the end of the world—the year 2000, for instance. So, the world didn't end three years ago—that's just because we were using the wrong calendar. Even with a seemingly failed prediction, a Doomsdayer always has a way out, because he'll eventually be proven right in one form or fashion, even if it takes ten lifetimes.

Though many Doomsdayers are religiously oriented, they come in all shapes, sizes, and affiliations. They can be old or young, right-handed or left-handed. But they all have something in common: joy in suffering, both of themselves and (chiefly) of others.

Just in case the Doomsdayers are right, here some entities to steer clear of:

- | | | |
|-------------------|---------------------|---------------|
| *Yasir Arafat | *China | *ATMs |
| *Bill Gates | *Russia | *The Internet |
| *Hillary Clinton | *The European Union | *Red Meat |
| *Gerhard Schröder | *Saudi Arabia | *Locusts |
| *Gray Davis | *New York City | *Aeroplanes |

Happy End Times! ☒

PERSONALS

SWF looking 4 DWJM w/ BMW & 401K for S&M and M&Ms at a B&B, PDQ.
Mailbox 43567

40-year old attractive male in the movie industry looking for romance. I am 5' 8" (but look taller) and I have brown hair and eyes (oh, and a great smile). I am looking for another single male for walks along the beach, quiet Blockbuster nights (my favorite movie is *Steel Magnolias*), and rousing games of Boggle. I hope you are out there. I just want to be loved.
Mailbox 699669

SBF mid-forties, employed by the government, ISO a SWM in his fifties. Can be married (heart trouble ok). Hoping you are in position of power. Hobbies include: being on the cover of *Time*, invading small countries, prank calls to Canadian Prime Minister, and causing blackouts for funsies. No prudes.
Mailbox 29102

SOM (single orange midget) in search of tall, lanky man with a penchant for chocolate. Enjoy being submissive.

To contact personals, dial (267) 312-48XX and give the mailbox number.

Asa Say...

By Asa Hadsell

"It's hard to be enthralled by the present when I can't see the future."

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Quotes of the Week

By Ryan Meyer

"Somebody's gotta be the hero, and it may as well be me."
—Charles Barkley

"Not everything that can be counted counts, and not everything that counts can be counted."

—Albert Einstein

"Hell hath no fury like a woman's scorn for Sega."

—Jason Lee, as Brodie in *Mallrats*

Name that Quote

By Frank Waterhouse

(see the answer below)

"What?! Over? Did you say over? NOTHING is over until WE decide it is! Was it over when the Germans bombed Pearl Harbor? HELL, NO!"

Suggestions for Submissions

Your contribution can be anything you can fit onto a sheet of paper. Here are a few ideas:

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

Take some time to think about it. Publications go out every other Friday. Please send all of your submissions two days in advance to: dan@fritzcomics.com.

Next Issue...

- Interactive Poll Follow-up
- *Everybody* goes to Hollywood?
- Classified Ads

Name that Quote Answer: from Animal House