

# Powerless

By Chris Ware



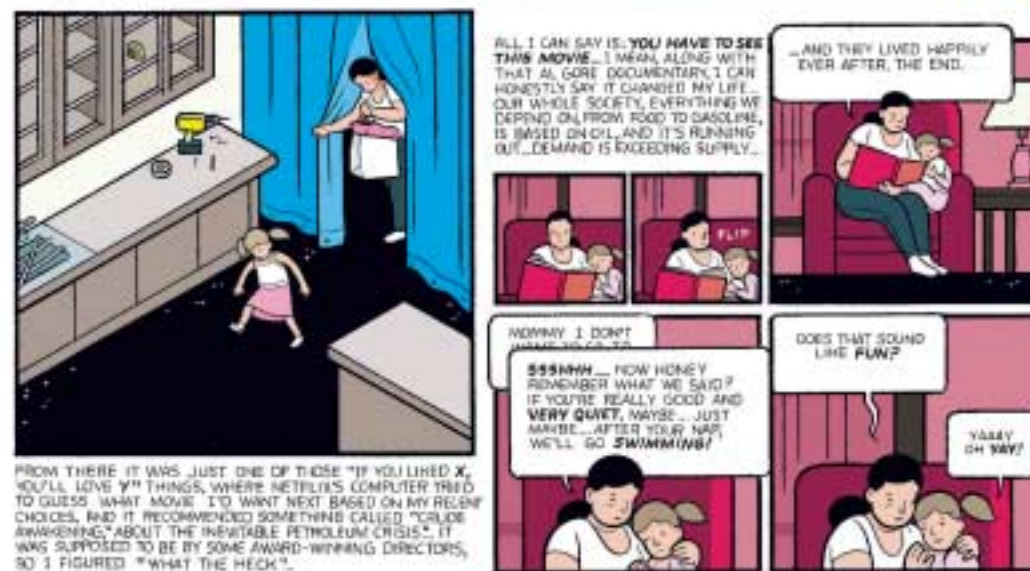
**I'M NOT** ONE OF THOSE "DOOM AND GLOOM" TYPES, THOUGH... IN FACT, I'VE ALWAYS CONSIDERED MYSELF SOMETHING OF AN OPTIMIST, EVEN WAY BACK IN ART SCHOOL WHEN EVERYONE WAS SUPPOSED TO BE MAKING PRINTINGS ABOUT SEXISM, AIDS AND U.S. FOREIGN POLICY (AS IF ANYONE WOULD CARE WHAT AN 18-YEAR-OLD THOUGHT ABOUT THESE THINGS...)



I THINK IT ALL STARTED WHEN I NETFLIXED A TV MOVIE ABOUT NUCLEAR WAR I'D REMEMBERED FROM WHEN I WAS A KID...

**Bo**

ODD, WAS IT EVER TERRIBLE... THOUGH... EVERYONE HAD SWORN WAR AND THE SPECIAL EFFECTS WERE REALLY CHEESY... MY HUSBAND AND I LAUGHED OUR WAY THROUGH IT...



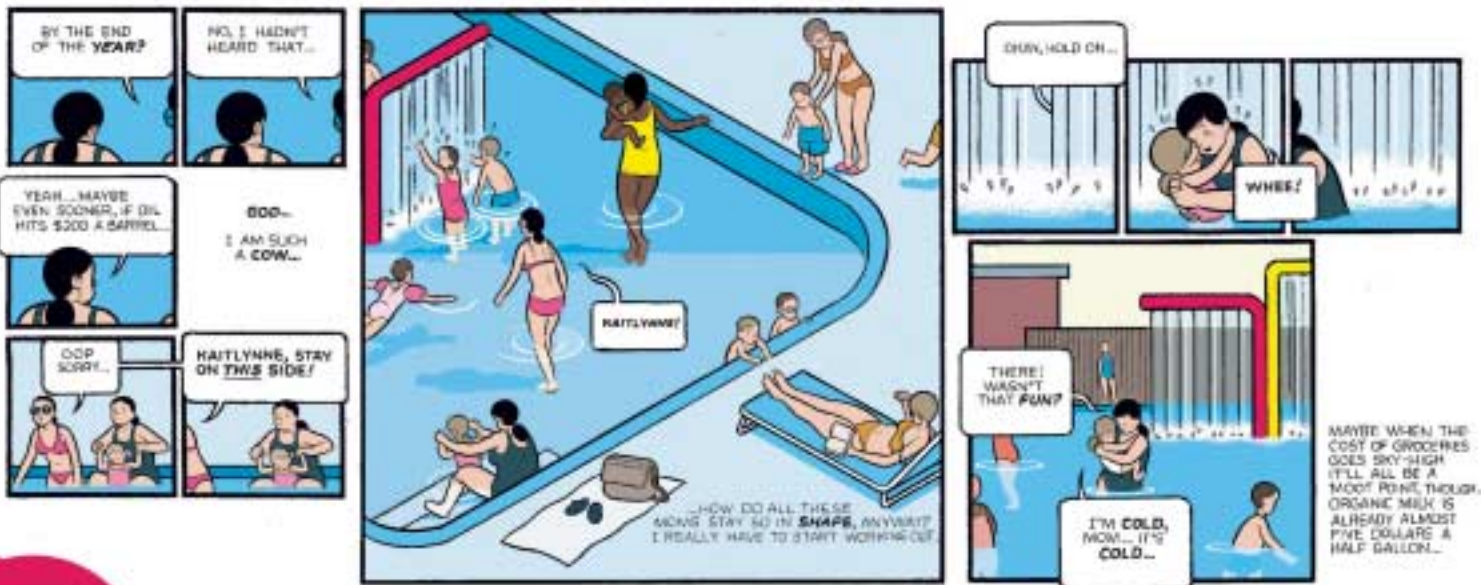
## FOR SO MANY YEARS

I JUST REALLY DIDN'T PAY MUCH ATTENTION TO THE NEWS AT ALL... I'D HAVE IT ON AS BACKGROUND NOISE WHEN I LIVED ALONE BUT THAT WAS ABOUT IT... NOW, THOUGH, I CAN'T GET ENOUGH OF IT, AND THE REASONS OUR GOVERNMENT DOES ANYTHING, ALL SEEM CRISTAL CLEAR TO ME... IT'S ALL ABOUT OIL, FROM THE EXCESSES OF THE REAGAN YEARS UP TO THE IRAQ WAR... WITHOUT IT, OUR SOCIETY WILL LITERALLY QUIT WORKING... JUST TODAY I READ THAT SOME ANALYSTS EXPECT THE AIRLINES TO GO BANKRUPT BY THE END OF THE YEAR...



\* IN ACTUALITY, "A CRISIS AWAKENING: THE OIL CRASH" 2006 -- BE.





OM

MOSTLY,

I GENUINELY WORRY HOW THIS IS ALL GOING TO AFFECT OUR DAILY LIVES... IT'S LIKE EVERYTHING IS COMING CRASHING DOWN AT THE SAME TIME, FROM ENERGY TO CLIMATE TO THE ECONOMY... IT'S ALL SO DELICATELY INTERRELATED... WHAT IF SOMETHING LIKE LAST MONTH'S TRUCKING STRIKES IN GERMANY AND THE UK HAPPENED HERE?



GOOD LORD

I'M TIRED... I'M NOT EVEN SURE I CAN STAY UP UNTIL PHIL GETS HOME... I KNOW HE HAS TO WORK, BUT IT'D BE NICE TO HAVE DINNER TOGETHER EVERY ONCE IN A WHILE... HE'S SO BUSY, THOUGH... HE DIDN'T EVEN RESPOND TO THE LAST LINK I EMAILED HIM.



I LOVE

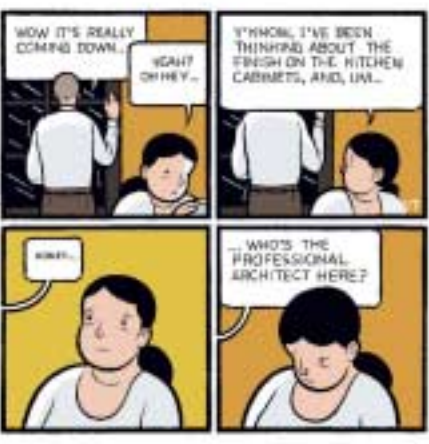
MY HUSBAND SO MUCH... HE'S ONE OF THE **SWARTEST** AND MOST TALENTED PEOPLE I'VE EVER MET...

SOMETIMES, THOUGH, I'VE FOUND IT'S BETTER TO AVOID AREAS OF POTENTIAL CONFLICT BETWEEN US RATHER THAN **DWELL** ON THEM.

...ARE YOU **SURE** THAT A LIGHTER COLORED WOULDN'T BE BETTER? I MEAN...

**MONEY**

...WHO'S THE PROFESSIONAL ARCHITECT HERE?



»





**MY THOUGHTS**  
IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE:

JESUS CHRIST

A BOMB... A BOMB HAS GONE OFF DOWNTOWN... THE SEARS TOWER HAS BEEN BOMBED AND PEOPLE ARE DYING RIGHT NOW AND IN A FEW SECONDS A NUCLEAR FIREBALL WILL SWEEP OVER US... BUT... SOUND IS SLOWER THAN LIGHT... FRONT! LIGHT TRAVELS FASTER THAN SOUND, THE SOUND OF CAR ALARMS GOING OFF IN THE DARK...

BEEP

LIGHTNING.

THAT MUST'VE HIT RIGHT NEAR HERE.

MAYBE... MAYBE... IT WAS JUST LIGHTNING...

I DON'T SEE ANY OF OUR TREES DOWN...

IT YOU OKAY?

**SHAKILY.**

WE EMBRACED... AND JUST AS SHAKILY, WE WENT UP TO CHECK ON LUCKY, THE RUSH OF RAIN AND DISTANT THUNDER BOMBING AND THE CREAK OF OUR FEET AND THE USUAL BAWLISH PARENTAL FEARS (SUFFOCATION, STRANGULATION BY BLAMME'ER).

... BUT OF COURSE, SHE WAS FINE... FAST ASLEEP.

**AFTER** THE STORM PASSED, PHIL WENT OUTSIDE TO MAKE SURE THE CARPENTER'S TARPS WERE SECURE, AND I WENT TO THE BASEMENT TO RESET THE MODEM, WHICH HAD BEEN KNOCKED OUT BY THE LIGHTNING STRIKE... SUCH A TENUOUS CONNECTION IT PROVIDES, THIS LITTLE BLINKING BOX...

PHIL, IT WASN'T SUPPOSED TO BE FUNNY...

AFTER A PAUSE, I ADDED (CALMLY) THAT I THOUGHT IT WAS EARLY PRESCIENT OF ME, ACTUALLY, GIVEN WHAT HAD JUST HAPPENED...

PHIL?

ON YEAH... PRETTY FUNNY...

I MEAN, WE THINK OF ELECTRICITY AS SOME KIND OF RIGHT, BUT SOMEBODY HAS TO GENERATE IT, AND WITH HOME FORECLOSURES SKYROCKETING AND THE COST OF FUEL OIL GOING UP, THEN WHAT?

HEY, DID YA GET THAT EMAIL I SENT YOU?

EVERYTHING I SAID OR SUGGEST IS IMMEDIATELY O.K.

HONEY HONEY

I KNOW YOU'RE UNDER A LOT OF STRESS LATELY...

BUT THE WORLD IS AN EXTREMELY COMPLICATED PLACE, AND THOUGH THINGS MAY NOT ALWAYS LOOK SO GREAT, IT'S NOT ALL GOING TO COME CRASHING DOWN AT ONCE, OKAY?

REALLY?

TRUST ME ON THIS, OKAY?

**I DIDN'T**

WANT TO ARGUE, SO I JUST LET IT GO-- BESIDES, MY DAD ONCE TOLD ME "DON'T GO TO BED ANGRY," WHICH I'VE FOUND TO BE GOOD ADVICE... STILL, I DON'T SEE WHAT'S SO WRONG WITH BEING... WELL... PREPARED... WE TALKED ABOUT PLANTING A GARDEN A LITTLE WHILE BACK, BUT IT'S GETTING SORT OF LATE IN THE SEASON FOR THAT NOW, AND WITHOUT A FENCE AROUND OUR YARD IT WOULDN'T BE SAFE FROM THIEVES, ANYWAY...



**THEN AGAIN,**

I WILL ADMIT THAT IT'S A LITTLE HARD TO STAY CALM AFTER READING A BLOG ABOUT HOW MANY DAYS IT WILL TAKE FOR RIOTS TO BREAK OUT IF THE FOOD SUPPLY IS CUT OFF... ONE GUY SAID HE WOULDN'T HESITATE TO KILL SOMEONE FOR A BOTTLE OF WATER IF HE KNEW HIS OWN CHILD WAS DYING OF THIRST...



I MEAN, WHAT AM I SUPPOSED TO THINK ABOUT THAT?