Powerless ... So it goes

by Jason_Love

Weâ€™re have rolling blackouts again. Thatâ€™s because there are too many people and not enough foresight to go around. One moment I was surfing cyberspace and the next I was a caveman.

Zzzzzzap! Lights out.

The refrigerator stopped buzzing; the clocks stopped ticking. Somewhere in the distance, a dog barked.

I stared at the blank screen for two minutes. It was like trying to accept that your car had been stolen. I was the guy standing in the parking lot saying, â€œTheyâ€™ll be backâ€¦â€•

I hadnâ€™t considered the possibility of my computer stopping. I wasnâ€™t even sure it had an off button. The computer was my secretary, my accountant, my publisher, and sometimes a date on the weekend.

Okay, I thought to myself (as opposed to thinking to someone else). This is probably a good time for a break.

I opened the refrigerator, and the light didnâ€™t come on. It was spooky. Some things you just count on: the sun rising in the west, poor choices for President, and the bloody refrigerator light coming on when you open the door!

In the pantry, I discovered a can of minestrone that I was saving for the end of the world. I hesitated at first, then figured, Why would I want to survive the end of the world anyway?

I pressed the lever on my can opener, and it didnâ€™t respond. Damn electric can openers. I considered opening the thing with a knife, then recalled the stitches following my frozen hot dog fiasco. So it goes.

I decided to throw a TV dinner into theâ€”NO MICROWAVE! Was there anything in this house that did not beep, tick, or buzz?

Okay, Jason, regroup. This can only last so long. What time is it now?

The clock was dead. ALL the clocks were dead. As was the cable box, the fax machineâ€¦

I would call time.

No I wouldnâ€™t. Cordless phones rely on their bases, which in turn rely on their outlets.

I walked outside to make sure the sun was on.

It was.

I returned to my cave with no computer, no phone, no TV, no TV dinner, no clock, and did I mention no lights! What was I to do, question the meaning of my existence? I had to stay busy.

There was that novel Iâ€™d been meaning to write for the past 20 years. No, Iâ€™ll get to that later.

My thoughts went out to my wife Yahaira. Was she too scrambling beneath this catastrophe? A siren trailed by outside. Were they going to Yahairaâ€™s work because she was dead, I just knew it.

Settle down, Jason. Take a breath. Remember what your dad used to say: shut up and keep your fingers out of your shorts.

I wandered the house noting all the dead devices. The electric blanket. My foot massager. The vacuum. The Glade Plug-Ins! My home was impotent, and I, a spoiled American unfit to survive a night in the woods, was trapped. I paced the halls, flipping the switches just in case. I marched myself right into a dizzy spell, which required that I sit.

I assumed the Lotus position and resolved to meditate. As I struggled to free myself from the mad machine inside my skull, I heard a noise. It was a joyous, familiar noise coming from the office.

Bleeeeeeep.

My computer! It lives!

The other appliances jumped to life as suddenly. On buzzed the refrigerator. On flashed the clocks. Out came the carcinogenic electromagnetic energy from the microwave. The white noise was back!

The radio announced that it wasnâ€™t a rolling blackout after all. A drunk man had smashed a local power unit. The drunk manâ€™s name is Kurt Baker. I am suing him for mental damages.

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