

THE TAMING OF THE FLUE

1830s LONDON.

AN ENTERPRISING LAD, **CARL YOUNGER**, INVENTS A CLEVER INSTRUMENT THAT CLEANS **CHIMNEYS**, MAKING THEM SAFER.

HE HAS A PERSONAL STAKE IN HIS INVENTION. YOU SEE, WHEN CARL WAS A YOUNGER YOUNGER, HE WAS ONE OF THOSE FILTHY AND OFT-ABUSED BOYS WHO WERE SHOVED UP FLUES TO CLEAN CHIMNEYS.

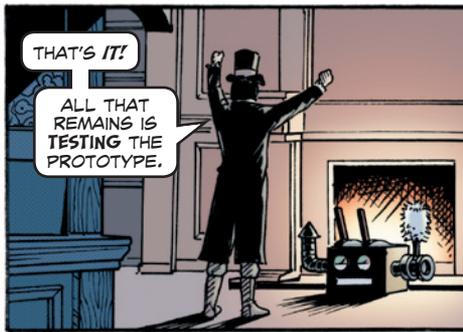
THE **ONLY GOOD THING** TO COME FROM THAT DARK SPELL IN CARL'S WORK HISTORY IS A BURNING MOTIVATION TO END THE SUFFERING OF POOR CHIMNEY SWEEPS EVERYWHERE.

OH, AND IT IGNITES HIS DETERMINATION TO WIN THE LOVE OF A QUIRKY GAL. BUT WE'LL GET TO **THAT JUICY DETAIL** IN DUE TIME.

SO DEAR READERS, SETTLE DOWN WITH YOUR LIBATION OF CHOICE, AND JOIN ME AT THE HEARTH AND IN THE HOME OF A FIERY MAVERICK BORN BEFORE HIS TIME...



EUREKA!



THAT'S IT!

ALL THAT REMAINS IS TESTING THE PROTOTYPE.



I'LL GO DOOR-TO-DOOR AND...



SLAM



SLAM



SLAM!

I DON'T UNDERSTAND!

THEY WON'T EVEN LET ME CLEAN THEIR CHIMNEYS FOR FREE TO SHOW HOW THIS NIFTY WIDGET WORKS!



NEVER ONE TO GIVE UP EASILY, CARL DEVISES A PLAN TO WIN OVER UNSUSPECTING HOMEOWNERS.

IT INVOLVES CLEANING CHIMNEYS WHEN THE OWNERS AREN'T INCONVENIENTLY AROUND TO ARGUE THE POINT.

CARL GAMBLES THAT A SPIC-AND-SPAN FLUE WILL SIMPLY SELL ITSELF!



FORTUNATELY, ONE RESIDENCE WAS UNLOCKED, FOR THE PROVERBIAL ABSENT-MINDED PROFESSOR, HOBERT BYRNBRIGHT, AND HIS EQUALLY GEEKY DAUGHTER, CASSIOPEIA, LIVED THERE.

NEITHER ONE EVER REMEMBERED TO LOCK THE FRONT DOOR, AND IT WAS JUST AS WELL, FOR THEY WERE FOREVER LOSING THEIR KEYS ANYWAY.

YOUNGER WALKS RIGHT IN...



NOW, CASSIOPEIA WAS YOUR TYPICAL VICTORIAN YOUNG LADY, EXCEPT SHE PREFERRED PETROLOGY TO PETIT POINT, AND TAXIDERMISTRY TO TEA PARTIES.



HALLOO THERE! TAKE A LOOK.

WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THIS SLIDE? IT'S NOT EASY TO GET GOOD STAINS OF ULMUS CARPINIFOLIA, YOU KNOW.

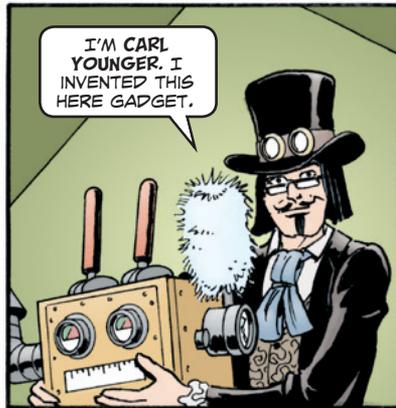
UH, INTERESTING.



INTERESTING, HE SAYS. HMMM, I MIGHT SAY THE SAME OF YOU.



WHO ARE YOU, AND BY ATHENA'S BRAIN, PRAY TELL WHAT IS THAT CURIOUS APPARATUS?

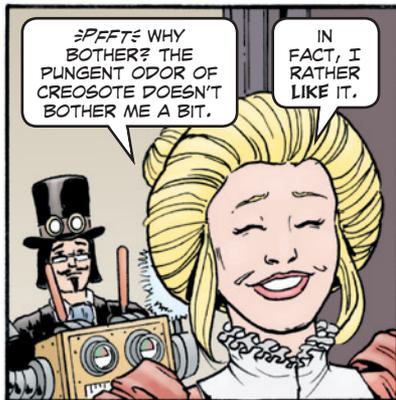


I'M CARL YOUNGER. I INVENTED THIS HERE GADGET.



GREAT ZEUS! DOES IT DISSECT SPECIMENS?

NO, IT CLEANS CHIMNEYS.



EFFE WHY BOTHER? THE PUNGENT ODOR OF CREOSOTE DOESN'T BOTHER ME A BIT.

IN FACT, I RATHER LIKE IT.



HOW ABOUT FATAL HOUSE FIRES? DO YOU FANCY THOSE AS WELL?

AH, SARCASM! SIGN OF A KEEN MIND. NOW YOU'VE KINDLED MY INTEREST.



THEN LET ME EXPLAIN ALL THE BENEFITS OF THIS THINGAMABOB, MISS.

YOU REALLY SHOULD SPEAK TO MY FATHER, PROFESSOR BYRNBRIGHT, ABOUT THAT WHATNOT...



...BUT HE'S OUT GIVING A LECTURE ON PRIVY SNORKELS.

I'M CASSIOPEIA.



WELL, MISS BYRNBRIGHT, MAY I DEMONSTRATE THIS DOODAD TO YOU INSTEAD?

WHY NOT? I NEED TO LET THIS AGAR SET UP ANYWAY.



A FEW MINUTES LATER...

WELL, SCORCH MY SHINS AND PETTICOATS!



SCORCHED SHINS AND PETTICOATS ARE WHAT WE'RE TRYING TO AVOID!

THE LINK BETWEEN CREOSOTE BUILD-UP AND FIRES IS CLEAR.

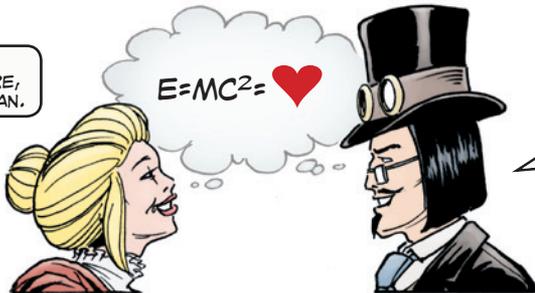
YET WE MUST NOT ENDANGER CHILDREN ANY LONGER BY FORCING THEM TO CLEAN FLUES.

THIS THING-AMAJIG IS THE ANSWER.

I LIKE YOUR FIRE, YOUNG MAN.

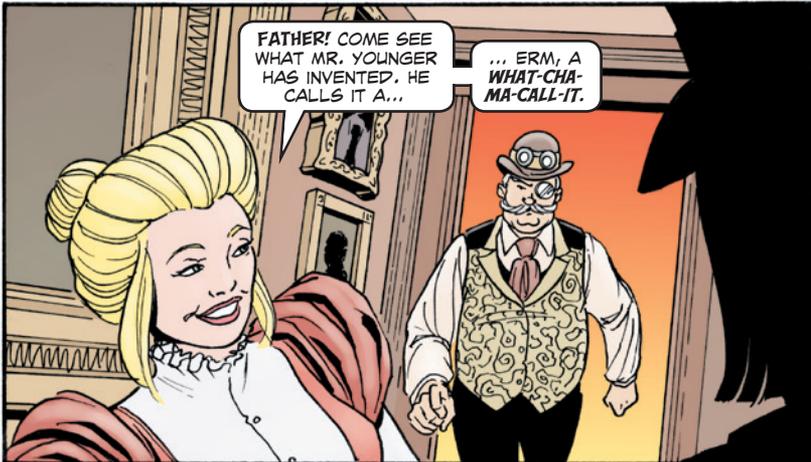
$E=MC^2=$ 

CALL ME CARL, PLEASE. YOU'RE NOT 80, AND I'M NOT 8.



FATHER! COME SEE WHAT MR. YOUNGER HAS INVENTED. HE CALLS IT A...

... ERM, A WHAT-CHA-CALL-IT.

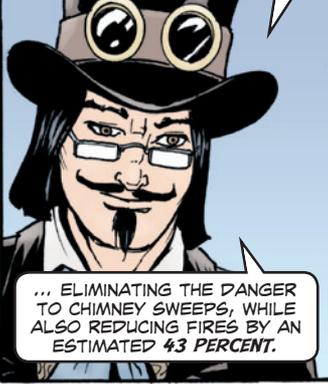
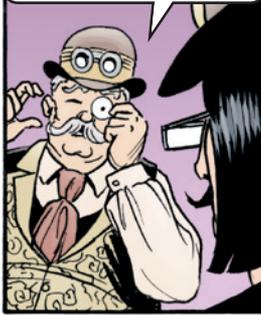


ZOUNDS! I KNOW YOU. YOU'RE THAT WHIPPERSNAPPER WHO COMES TO MY LECTURES AND BABBLES ON ABOUT SOME NONSENSE CALLED "PREVENTIVE MAINTENANCE!"

THAT'S RIGHT, SIR. NOW I'VE DESIGNED A DEALIE-BOB TO DO PM. THIS CONTRIVANCE DISSOLVES CREOSOTE LICKETY-SPLIT...

... ELIMINATING THE DANGER TO CHIMNEY SWEEPS, WHILE ALSO REDUCING FIRES BY AN ESTIMATED 43 PERCENT.

POPPYCOCK AND PATENT NONSENSE!



WELL IT IS PATENTED NOW, SIR, BUT I STILL NEED A RESPECTED AUTHORITY LIKE YOU TO WIN OVER SPONSORS AND CONVINCE A MANUFACTURER TO MASS PRODUCE THIS HANDY LITTLE DOOHICKEY.



OH, FATHER, YOU SHOULD SPONSOR THIS BRILLIANT INVENTION.

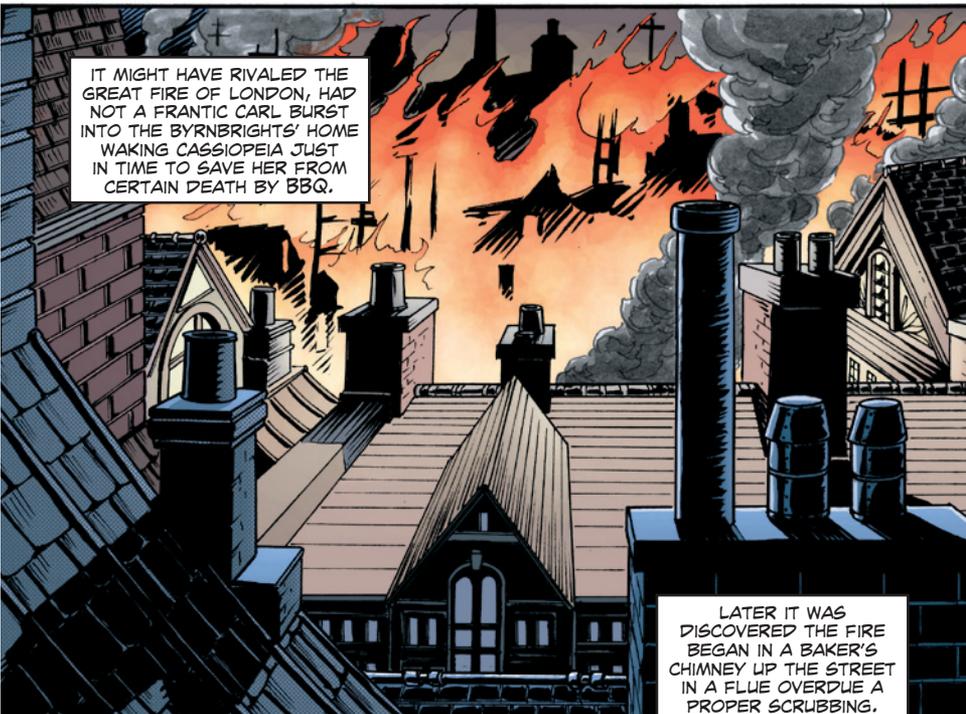


AND RISK DESTROYING MY SCIENTIFIC REPUTATION? NEVER! GO HOME, YOUNG MAN, AND INVENT SOMETHING TRULY USEFUL, LIKE A BIRD-POWERED BLIMP.

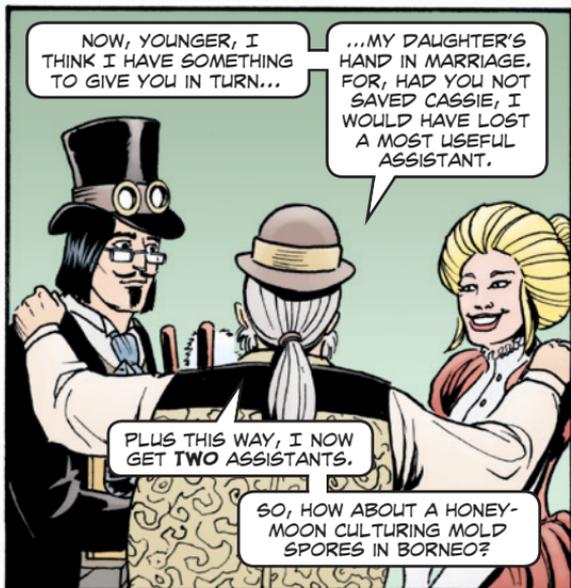


DESPITE CASSIOPEIA'S DRAMATIC PLEAS AND CARL'S ARGUMENTS, THE PROFESSOR IS UNMOVED AND THE YOUNG PEOPLE PART IN TEARS. BUT A FEW WEEKS LATER, DISASTER STRIKES WHILE THE PROFESSOR IS AWAY AT A CONFERENCE ON CRANIUM COOLERS.

IT MIGHT HAVE RIVALED THE GREAT FIRE OF LONDON, HAD NOT A FRANTIC CARL BURST INTO THE BYRNBRIGHTS' HOME WAKING CASSIOPEIA JUST IN TIME TO SAVE HER FROM CERTAIN DEATH BY BBQ.



LATER IT WAS DISCOVERED THE FIRE BEGAN IN A BAKER'S CHIMNEY UP THE STREET IN A FLUE OVERDUE A PROPER SCRUBBING.



SO HAPPILY ENDS THE STORY OF CARL AND CASSIOPEIA, AND BEGINS THE PM LEGEND OF A VERY HANDY, UM, GIZMO.

I THINK I'LL CALL IT A "WHIRLY-GIG!"

