The Box of Many Mouths
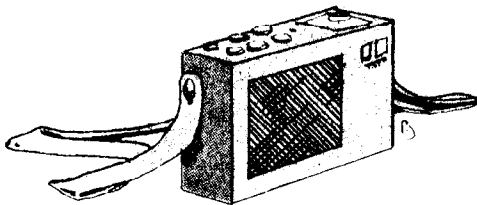### by Alex Muromcew

This magical item appears as a small box with a long leather strap attached to it. The box is 5" high, 4" long, and 2" wide. One face is covered by fine mesh. On top there are 3 - 7 buttons, 2 - 6 of the buttons represent the languages the box speakers. When one of the languages the box understands is spoken, it is translated into the user's language, and when he speaks, it is translated into one of the box's tongues. The choice is determined by which of the buttons is pressed. The other button determines whether the user's language is translated into another language, or whether another language is translated into the user's tongue.

The Singing Sword
by Alex Muromcew

These are rare powerful swords which are spoken of with great fear. This sword resembles a normal sword until it is used in battle. Soon as it hits an opponent it starts to moan or hum, the blade turns a steely blue, and it becomes +1 to hit, +1 damage. As it continues to hit its opponent, the hum becomes a shriek, and the blade becomes a blindingly bright blue. For each hit the sword makes the plus goes up by one until it reaches +3, +3. The appearance and noise of the sword cause the enemies morale to lie -1. Another bonus the sword has is that as soon as it hits an enemy it will start to regenerate any damage the wielder has taken at the rate of 1 h.p. per melee round. However, if the wielder is reduced to 0 h.p. or lower the sword will not regenerate any more points back. The battle is over there is a 10% chance the sword will attack one of the wielders own party. Due to the nature of the sword it is 01 - 60: Chaotic; 61 - 85: Neutral; 86 - 95 Lawful; 96 -100: un-aligned, Ego is 7 - 12 (6+ 16 D); Intelligence is will want to have itself decorated, and will either seek a more powerful owner or make its present owner more powerful at the expense of others. If a person of a different alignment picks the sword up there is 10% chance that the sword will change his alignment and try to control him.

THE BOOTY BAG
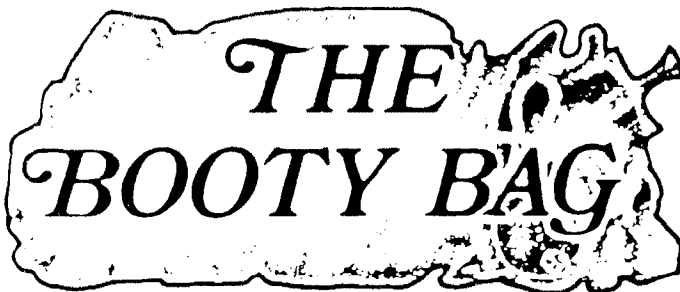
Magic Ring of Death
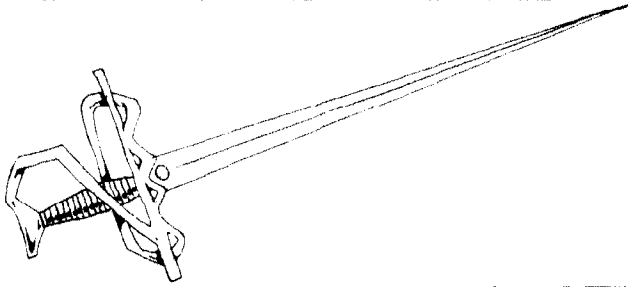### Magic Ring of Life
by Scott Johnson
These rings cannot be told apart. One has a pill in it
that kills instantly and the other has a pill that brings
a person back to life the next time they die.

### Barrier Sword
by Kevin Slimak

Will form into a blade barrier on command. Use
ful while sleeping/etc. If Intelligence is less than 9 it
runs a save vs magic each time it forms into a
barrier or it goes insane.

Coin of True Flipping
by Scott Johnson
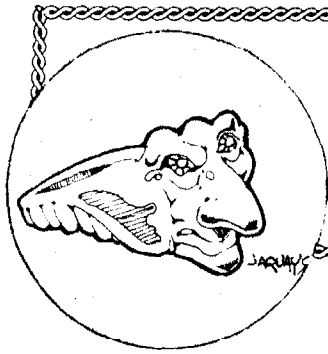Always answer Heads or Tails questions truthfully,
and flips the way you order it to so if you bet with
someone, you always win. Example: Should I go
left - "Heads", or right "Tails" to get out of the
dungeon.
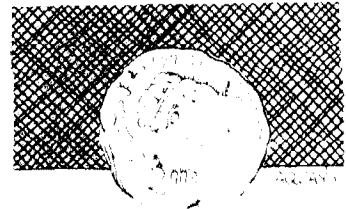
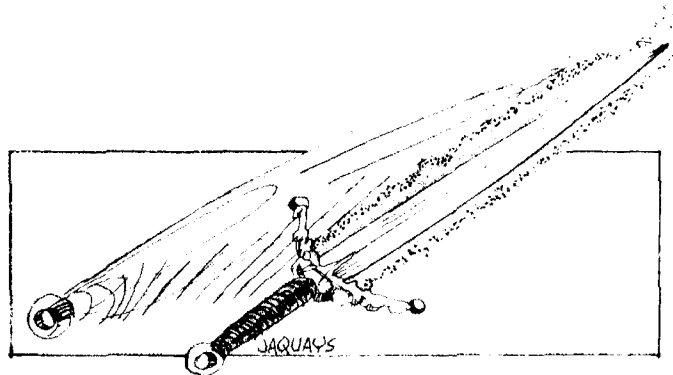### Ring of Jelousy
by Scott Johnson
Everybody that sees it has to have it.

Ring of Sword
by Scott Johnson
Sword +1 fits inside the ring and springs out upon
pulling stone.
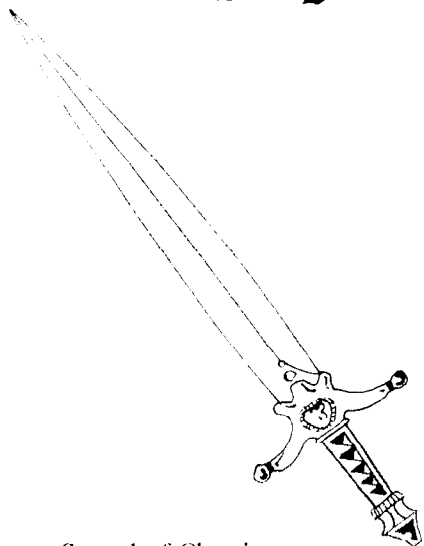
Sword of Cleaving
by Kevin Slimak

Any roll of 01-03-- after bonuses and such are added results in target being cleaved from shoulder to groin and taking a minimum of 75% of max. Damage rolls of or less are considered equal to 01 for the purpose of tabulating cleavage. These swords always have a purpose.

Spinning Sword
by Kevin Slimak

When thrown (range 60 feet/yards) it strikes as a vorpal blade and returns. Otherwise it functions as a sword +4 in melee and at ranges of 5ft and less.
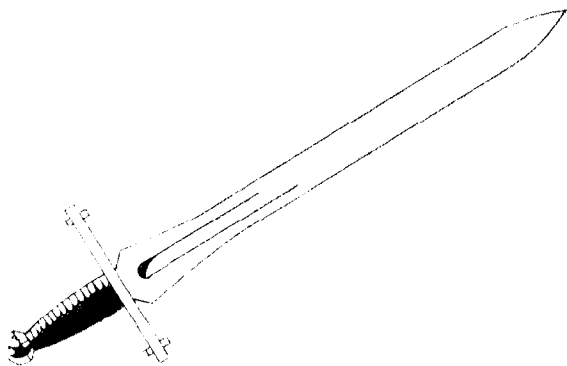
Golden Apples of Life
by Ronald Pehr

Each bite acts as a Cure Serious Wound spell. If the whole apple is placed in a corpse's mouth it acts as a Resurrection spell . Legends says that only 8 bloom each year, on a tree guarded by a Titan at World's edge.

Garnet Powder
by Ronald Pehr

Rubbed on a person or on clothes worn it acts as an insect repellent. Even giant insects will shun it for 3 - 13 turns.
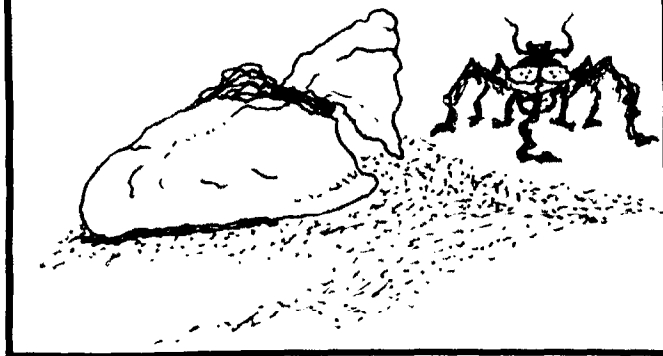
Spectacles
by Ronald Pehr

There are several types. All have clumsy wooden frames and thick glass lenses and cannot be worn under a helmet. There is a 1 in 6 chance that a hit scored on a werarer knocks them off and a 1 in 6 chance that they break if knocked off. A hit rolled of 19 or 20 will smash them rather than knock them off. Some of the known types are:

    Spectacles of Infravision
    Spectacles of True Sight
    Spectacles of Seeing Invisible
    Spectacles of Ethereal Sight
    Spectacles of Alignment (figures have a characteristic colored glow)
    Spectacles of Reading Languages
    Spectacles of Seeing Illusions (the wearer will not believe an illusion)
    Spectacles of ESP
    Spectacles of X-Ray Vision.
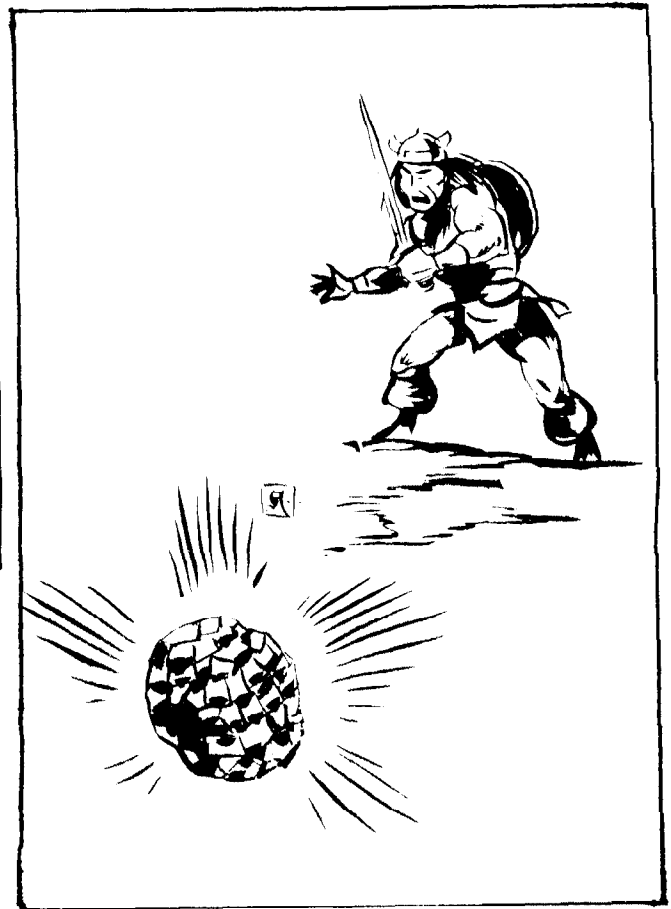
The Screaming Emerald
by Ronald Pehr

The stone screams - loudly - if any sentient being within 60 feet is planning to attack.
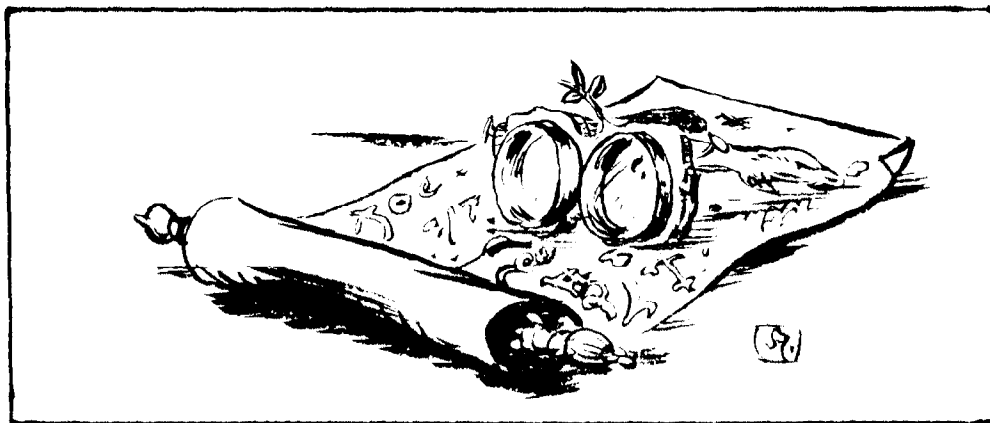
Swords, Sorcery and ⊕ SUPERHEROES

Paul Jaquays

For the sake of argument, let's say that you have just purchased Fantasy Games Unlimited's new superhero role playing game, **Villians and Vigilantes**. Agreed? (It's amazing how one can avoid writing complex, if occasionally witty introductions by making broad assumptions on the part of the reader.) (Oh, and if by chance you haven't bought the game, I recommmend it quite highly. The mechanics are simple and well organized and the game is very open ended. So much so, that it allows people like me to write articles like the one you're reading now. There I go again, making assumptions. You are reading this aren't you? Good. Back to our regularly scheduled article.) OK, you've got this game and you roll up a vigilante or a villain with magical spells. The rules are very open-ended about this. They tell you to use whatever magic system you want (although they do suggest **Chivalry and Sorcery** for obvious reasons). Great, no rules-no use. (A great number of people are not familiar with the fine art of making up rules as you go.) Or you've always had a burning desire to re-enact Ragnarok, but haven't the slightest idea where to get statistics for a frost giant. Or just possible, you'd like to have your hyper-powered good guys take on some fantastical critters that aren't humans, aliens or your garden variety mutants. For the sake of argument again, let's just say that you have encountered the above-listed irritations (amazing are the powers of writers' conventions). If so, and you are already a fantasy gamer, you may have the answer to your dilemma already on your very bookshelf (briefcase, file cabinet, or cardboard box buried under last week's laundry). Although FGU's (Fantasy Games Unlimited) **Chivalry and**

Sorcery is recommended, I have to admit that I never even read that rules system. However, I do have TSR's **Dungeons and Dragons, Basic D&D**, and **Advanced D&D**. And strangely enough, the various D&D systems seem to mesh fairly well with the **Villians and Vigilantes** rules. (D&D's influence can be seen in some of the V&V systems, but then again, D&D has in some way influenced every role playing game designed since.)

"AHA!" the perplexed reader expostulates and runs off to find his careworn and much retaped set of the D&D rules (let it be known here that I am not postulating that you should run out and buy the entire D&D or AD&D rules system if you do not already have it).

If converting a humanoid D&D character to V&V make the following alterations:

Strength: Except for the exceptional categories of 18 strength, the conversion is straight, 1 for 1. However, V&V bonuses and modifiers should be used when rerolling hit points or when in combat.

	D&D Strength	V&V Strength
18	01 - 50	18
	51 - 75	19
	76 - 90	21
	91 - 99	30
	00	51

Strength affects the direct damage done by humanoid characters.

Intelligence, Dexterity, Constitution, and Charisma (Wisdom is not used in V&V): This is a straight 1 for 1 conversion. V&V modifiers should be used for all combat, etc. determinations.

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Power Potential: This should be determined as per the V&V rules.

Movement: Use V&V dexterity chart. Encumbered movement rules may be designed if desired.

Hit Dice and Hit Points: To balance a D&D character more with the superheroes in V&V, take the level of experience that a D&D character has and go to the V&V table on page 20 and give the character the number of hit dice and pluses indicated, rolling 6-sided dice. This will tend to make the fighters less powerful and the mages more powerful. However, mages will not be using the D&D rules system any more (unless desired).

Converting D&D Monsters to V&V

This is pretty much a straight conversion. If desired, characteristics, such as **Strength, Intelligence,** etc. may be rolled for individual monsters. These can be used to determine power potential as per the V&V rules.

Power Potential: As stated above, the characteristics may be rolled as above or, take a number of d6's equal to the hit dice of the monster and roll them, totalling the score. This is the **Power Potential** of the monster. Some non-living monsters, such as skeletons or zombies may not have and **Power Potential** at all.

Movement: Take the movement rate in inches as indicated by the D&D rules and multiply it by 2. This will give the V&V movement rate.

Hit Dice and Hit Points: This is a straight conversion. However, all hit points should be rolled on d6's.

Special Powers and Abilities: Breath Weapons: Treat as V&V "power weapons" for attack and damage purposes, adding 1 point of damage per hit dice possessed.

Armor: All creatures (and humans) with a non-dexterity augmented Armor Class (AC) of 4 or higher are considered to be armored for V&V defensive purposes.

Heightened Defence: All creatures (and humans) with a non-dexterity augmented Armor Class (AC) of -1 or higher are considered to have heightened defense for V&V purposes.

Size Change: Larger: Creatures (and humans) taller than 10' are considered to have size change: larger for V&V purposes.

Control Self: Powerful psionically endowed creatures (and humans) are considered to have control self for defensive purposes in V&V.

Invulnerability: Certain D&D creatures have an innate ability to be immune to attacks by non-magic weapons. Such creatures are assumed to have the V&V power of invulnerability. They are also completely immune to attacks by lower level villians and vigilantes. Use the following table:

Defender may only be Hit by Weapon Of:	Attacking Villain or Vigilante must be at Least:
+1 or better	4th level
+2 or better	6th level
+3 or better	8th level
+4 or better	10th level

Note: Certain villains and vigilantes of supernatural origin may have in their possession a magic weapon. If the game master determines that such is the case, then the plus of that weapon should also be determined, but only for use against such monsters as described above. The plus designation of the weapon will have no other value in combat. This immunity applies only to hand to hand combat. Magical spells and other superpowers will still affect the creature (although the invulnerability power still applies).

Magic Resistance: The resistance to magic is the same as in D&D. However, a creature with a resistance to magic will also have a technology resistance equal to half its magic resistance. Thus, a Type V demon with a magic resistance of 80% will also have tech resistance of 40%. This means that any technological device (including device superpowers) will have a 40% chance of not being able to affect such a demon.

Magic Use by Characters and Creatures

If magic spells are indicated as being usable by a villain, vigilante, or monster, then the standard D&D spells may be used within the following parameters:

Attack: Treat any attack by a magical spell or a magical item (wand, rod, ring, etc.) as per a magical spell on the combat matrix.

Range: The same number of inches as indicated in the D&D rules. However, instead of 1" = 10', 1" = 5'. Ranges will always be in feet, not yards.

Duration: Since a D&D "round" is 1 minute and a V&V "turn" is 15 seconds, multiply all D&D spell durations that are given in melee rounds by 4 to find the number of V&V turns that they will last. A 10 minute D&D turn is still 10 minutes in V&V.

Power Requirements: The effectiveness of D&D magic might be plotted as a truncated curve as it goes up in levels. 1st and 2nd level spells are fairly weak but at the third spell level, the damage they do goes up rapidly. The game master may

want to use an alternate system for determining power use for each spell, but I think the following will work. Multiply the level of the spell beign used by 2. This will allow the use of 9th level spells by both monsters, villains and vigilantes.

Saving Throws: There are none, per sec, since they are built into the combat table structure.

Knowledge of Spells: To keep lower level monsters and supertypes from using gross magics too soon, I propose the following: A character (player, non-player or monster) may not use magic spells that are of a spell level that is higher than his or her (or its) experience level. In this fashion, a 5th level magic using vigilante who is working his way up to sorcerer supreme could not use gross 9th level spells, but he could use spells of the 1st through the 5th levels.

To determine the number of spells that is known by a given being use the tables in the various D&D rules sets that give a percentage chance of knowing a given spell. Roll for each spell as indicated in the rules. When going up a level, and thus gaining a new level of spell expertise a roll must be made to determine whether or not the being has enough intelligence to master spells of that level. To determine this possibility, subtract the number of the spell level being gained from the intelligence of the character and then roll under it on a d20. Failure to make the roll indicates that no spells of that level were gained. A second attempt may be made if one or both of the following conditions are met: 1) The character gains a level of experience. 2) The character's intelligence goes up by 1 or more points. Only one level of spells may be gained per experience level attained. That is to say, Windemere the Wise, Sorceror of the East has an intelligence of 15 and he is attempting to gain the use of 5th level spells. Subtracting 5 from 15 gives him a score of 10. Windemere rolls a 16, botching the roll badly. Windemere is 5th level but can only use 4th level spells. At sixth level, he tries again, but this time he rolls a 20. At last, Windemere returns to his hidden Himalayan retreat and studies for months on end, gaining an additional intelligence point. He again subtracts 5 points from his intelligence, which now gives him a score of 11. Luck is with the hapless mage and he rolls an 11. Windemere is now 6th level and may use 5th level spells. He determines to make sure he has a better than 50% chance at gaining 6th level spells when he attains 7th level and so, Windemere has gone into retreat again. A character may use any spell known at will (as long as he has PP).

Random Spell Determination: Since D&D has other spells, besides just Magic User spells, the following table can be used to randomly de-termine which discipline a magic using character follows.

Roll on a d10

1)	Clerical
2 - 3)	Druidical
4 - 8)	Magical
9 - 10)	Illusionist

Power Use: A being may not cast any more spells than he has the power potential to do so. Exception: a character or creature may use his or her (or its) hit points to power a spell. Hit points will be used up at a rate equal to twice the power requirement for the spell being thrown. There is a 25% chance that this hit point loss will be per-manent (not healable).

Magic Items and Devices: Magic D&D wea-ponry will add a 5% bonus to an attacker's offen-sive bonus for each +1 the weapon possesses. Magic armor will add a 5% bonus to a character's defense for each +1 it possesses (This is in addition to any bonuses conferred by having armor or heightened defence).

Magic devices such as wands, rods, rings, etc. are treated as devices (See V&V Intelligence Table, Page 5). They attack as magical spells.

Physical Combat

Combat will use the V&V combat matrix (3.21 on page 23). Since most fighting men and frost giants do not possess flying rams or psionic abilities, combat will usually be done hand to hand. This includes hand weapons (swords, maces, spears, axes, and daggers), missile weapons (bows, cross bows, rocks, boulders, VW vans, etc.), fire arms (pistols and rifles and possibly futuristic firearms), claws, fists, tails, fangs, spiked earlobes or what-ever. Any man or monster that fights will use the hand to hand table.

D&D Experience Levels: This is a straight conversion to V&V. A 4th level fighting man would gain the combat bonuses of a 4th level villian or vigilante. A 9 hit dice dragon would attack as a 9th level vigilante and so on.

Weapon Damage: For all medieval weapons, use the damage done as stated in the D&D rules. The V&V tables seem to indicate better made weaponry.

Non-Weapon Damage Done By Monsters: In most cases, just use the damage done by the monsters as listed in the D&D rules. In the cases where a monster does a gross amount of damage, the game master should use his or her best judge-

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ment. Multiple attacks may either be rolled for individually or lumped together into a single roll.

Range: Missile weapon ranges (in inches) will be twice those listed in the D&D rules.

Offensive Bonuses: Use those listed in the V&V rules (page 24) or make up a bonus that seems to approximate those listed. All missle weapons should use the bonuses as listed for a large, thrown rock. That is Short range: +10%; Medium range: +5%; Long range: −.

Magic Weapons: See Magic Items and Devices under the Magic Use listing.

Magic Armor: As above.

Experience

As usual, experience is up to the game master. Since this is a fairly straight conversion, use the V&V experience tables for all human characters. Under some circumstances a vigilante may gain experience for skragging monsters. A 9 hit dice dragon will be worth as many experience points as a 9th level vigilante or villian.

There you have it, for what it's worth. Again, I will throw in a disclaimer that this com-

bination of **Dungeons and Dragons** and **Villians and Vigilantes** is not approved by either TSR, Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson, or FGU, Jeff Dee or Jack Herman. It's just one fans opinions.

Hopefully, this article will allow for expansion (even if unapproved) of the V&V rules system and open up a few more vistas of play. Possible scenarios seem almost unlimited: Evil villain summons up legions of dead to conquer the world; Demonic visitors from another plane of existance seek to make slaves of mankind. A red dragon is scorching the local country side; An interstellar quest to a planet governed by the laws of magic and so on. With a little conversion, existing D&D play aids may be used to augment V&V. A super excursion into **Dark Tower** or an attempt to subdue the giants in TSR's G series modules. Again, the possibilities are only limited by the imagination and the game master's supply of comic books (Imagination should supercede the comics, though).

Any comments on this article may be sent to **The Judges Guild**, 1165 N. University Ave., Decatur, IL., 62526. Please enclose a self-adressed stamped envelope to facilitate a reply. If questions are pertinent they may be answered in **The Dungeoneer**.
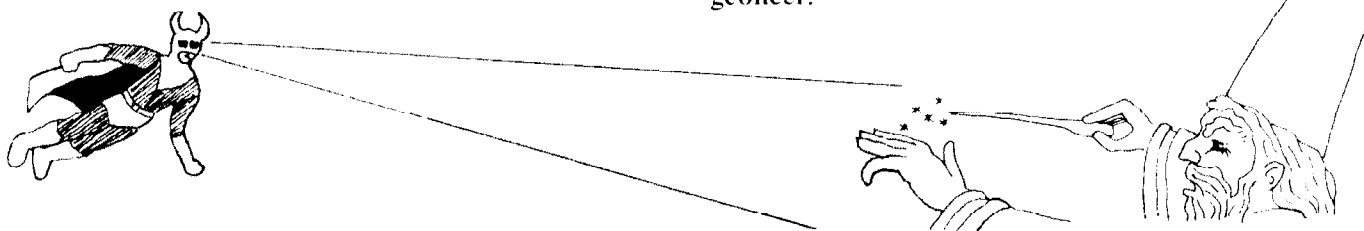
WORDS & WHIPS *(Continued from p. 2)*

pp. 31-32 (the same drawing twice)?

Mr. Davenport's contribution was good. Don't drop the comics stories or "The Booty Bag"! ("Fineous Fingers" is the best part of *The Dragon* — Gygax takes himself far too seriously and I expect him to kill off "FF" any day now.) Jaquays' "Dark Tower" material looked interesting.

Overall: quite good, but sadly lacking in layout and organization. Hope these comments improve *The Dungeoneer*.

Yours,
Lyle Craver

See my last reply for an explanation of the "Fake Color Process" article. Pp. 11-12 were an illustration of how to use the color-overlay process using Formatt, as explained in the article. The illos on pp. 31-32 were to demonstrate the tremendous improvement in visual appeal that color overlays can give to a simple black-and-white illo.

"To Curse the Darkness" by Jaquays and

Arocho has already been concluded, although "The Edge of the Galaxy" by Jaquays will continue. Some other stuff along these lines is in the works watch for it.

As for your statements about the magazines, ours and theirs: we are told that TSR Periodicals is a completely separate entity from TSR Hobbies. Gary Gygax is president of TSR Hobbies. If you were at Gen Con, you may have noticed that the two companies had separate booths. When Gygax writes something for The Dragon, he retains separate copyright and it is labeled a "guest editorial." These things should communicate something to you. Even if Gygax wanted "FF" to go (which I can't envision), it probably would stay. The Dragon already maintains some pretty high standards, and with Gary Jaquet coming in as editor... well, my regional loyalty clouds my vision: since he's from the Peoria area like myself, I feel he's bound to succeed. Like The Dragon, our own magazine is improving with the changes that have been made. Again, my opinion is prejudiced, but with Bob Bingham doing the layout for the first time this issue, I think this is our best issue yet. Ed.

A Closer Look At Anti-Paladins

by Tom Cooper, Jr.

I read Paul Nevin's article on anti-paladins in the **Dungeoneer** Number 10 with great interest. However, I feel he didn't go as deeply into their abilities as he could have, and I have several more suggestions and some clarifications.

An anti-paladin's meat and drink is lawful and highly evil acts (as versus a paladin's good deeds). Therefore an anti-paladin must be Lawful Evil in alignment. A player who is an anti-paladin should have as his goal to cause as much harm and damage to his party - and especially to good characters - as possible without getting caught. The more trouble an anti-paladin causes, the more favorably his God will look upon him (favor of the Gods is crucially important if the anti-paladin is ever caught!).

Anti-paladins obviously have to meet all the requirements of a paladin, and they require the same number of experience points to rise in levels as paladins do. But an anti-paladin has several different and unique abilities which are detailed below. If an anti-paladin ever knowingly commits a good act which helps a large number of people, he must seek out a LE cleric and confess his sin and do penance, or else he loses all of his benefits of being an anti-paladin and reverts to a normal LE fighter. The special benefits of being an anti-paladin are:

1) The ability to detect good up to sixty feet away as often as he wants, but the anti-paladin must be concentrating on doing so, it's not automatic.

2) Make all saving throws at +2.

3) Have immunity to all diseases.

4) Have the power to cause 2 points of damage per level by laying hands on a victim (this must be done carefully or other players might suspect something).

5) The ability to cause any disease on one person within a ten foot radius. The Anti-paladin can cause one disease per week for each five levels he has.

6) The ability to emanate a protection from good spell in a ten foot radius whenever the anti-paladin wills it, it can be turned off when ever he wishes it so (this will allow the anti-paladin to escape detection a little longer; who would have a permanent protection from good spell in the midst of a LG party?).

7) At second level, the anti-paladin gains the ability to obscure his alignment or make it seem something else, just like the reverse of the Know Alignment clerical spell, but he must be concentrating to get the effect.

8) At 3rd level the ability to persuade undead, devils, and demons as a 1st level cleric is gained. This rises to 2nd level clerical ability when the anti-paladin reaches 4th level, and so on.

9) At 4th level the anti-paladin can call for his horse, which is identical to a paladin's. If the horse dies however, the anti-paladin must wait 15 years before he can call for another one.

10) At 9th level and above an anti-paladin can use spells like a paladin, with the same restrictions.

11) Anti-paladins can use unholy swords with the same effect as paladins with holy ones, i.e. Dispell Magic as an equal level Magic User.

Since paladins can be turned by evil clerics, it only seems fair that anti-paladins can be turned by good clerics. Just substitute good cleric for evil, and anti-paladin for paladin on the turning undead table. Anti-paladins do not have to give tithes nor do they have any restrictions on how many magical items they can own. Anti-paladins do not attract a body of men-at-arms, but they can associate with any alignments (with obvious dangers to the other characters!). This makes anti-paladins a bit more powerful than paladins, but they take more risks. In my game, if an anti-paladin is caught, death by prolonged torture is not uncommon! I hope I have clarified this interesting class, and my thanks to Paul Nevin for his article, which inspired mine.

EDITOR'S NOTE ON ANTI-PALADINS:

Reading Tom Cooper's article prior to its publication has given me much food for thought. While an Anti-Paladin's sole aim in life is indeed the committing of evil acts, they should be performed in the service of some evil god or goddess. Just as with Paladins, Anti-Paladins' entire fighting careers should revolve around their deities; from rising until retiring, their sole aim is the commitment of evil in the name of Kali, Set or whomever.

One point I found most disturbing in the article was the focus on evil deeds committed against the fellow party members of the Anti-Paladin. In the campaign I ran for three years, Anti-Paladins were the sort who rode about the countryside leading bands of brigands and evil dervishes, looting and burning defenseless villages. The focus was more on victimizing the peasants rather than back-stabbing henchmen. Naturally, the followers were a good source of victims but one that should be used most sparingly, else the band either rebel against their leader (if the Anti-Paladin is low level or otherwise vulnerable), or simply desert at the first opportunity.

I generally liked to run Anti-Paladins as non-player characters, the subject of a quest or geas ("Go thou forth and search out this foul menace, and destroy him that we may live in peace"). But one player chose to start an Anti-Paladin and had a good time looting and burning for awhile. He worked up to fourth level before he tried to take on a caravan of pilgrims under the protection of a seventh-level Paladin. Tsk, tsk. And he was showing such promise, too...

— B. Hinnen

Key Words and Magic Items

by Bill Paley

An idea whose full potential to me never seemed to have been explored is that of requiring a special word or phrase to be spoken to elicit the magic powers of non-intelligent magical items such as **Vorpal Blades, Rods of Lordly Might, Staves of Power** and their ilk.

Once obtained, the characters effective power is enormously multiplied, especially in the hands of a high-level character. Although they may have received an item of such power relatively easily, they have a great boost in their capabilities. These items are of such immense power (especially in a low-power universe, such as my present campaign) that it wouldn't hurt to make them work some to gain their use.

I have been considering implementing a slight change in which items of great power can only be keyed to their full power by a series (or single syllable spoken aloud. Simple, and yet unless the character is able to hear this phrase or word spoken when attacked by the object, he will have a long and difficult quest before him to learn it, by Legend Lore, Bard tale or Contact Higher Plane (any of which may require a quest of him, or may fail to elicit the necessary data).

This additional work to bring out the item's power increases its worth to the player (since he has more time invested in it) and character, since along the way he will have learned a great deal about its reputed powers and past history.

Some judges may go overboard, requiring different key words to key different powers, but this is up to the individual. I would instead suggest that the object will perform each listed function in strict order, perhaps requiring a starting command each time, or a stopping command upon completion.

This is easily accomplished. All a referee need do is choose those items on the treasure list which he feels are of extreme power and then when such an item is rolled, he may then choose a nonsense word or syllable, or even a meaningful one, to bring out the objects great powers.

Examples:

Vorpal Sword: Switches from being a +1 Holy Sword to Vorpal status when the bearer says "Snicker-snack".

Rod of Lordly Might: Begins its various incarnations when a person says "Repulse", and stops when he repeats it (or when he says "Attract" or even "Eccentric").

Of course, even though a **+1 Sword** is a marvelous magical item (especially in low-magic universes), there is a limit to which these key words should be used. These limitations remain to the judge, a matter of taste and desire. However, I would not suggest requiring a person to say "Mama" to his **+1 Dagger** each time he tries to strike.
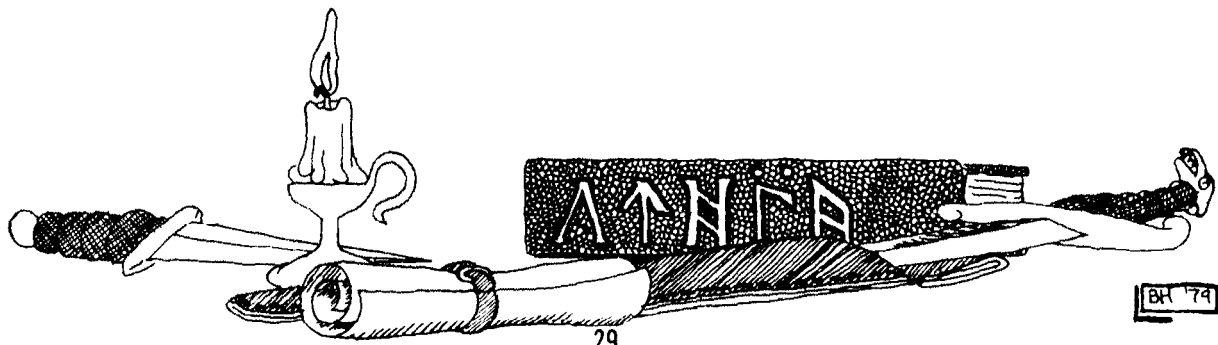
Lineage

by Thomas A. McCloud

When creating a D&D character, one aspect well worth considering is the character's lineage. Is he just a commoner? Is she the third daughter of a viscount? The answer will tell a lot about the character's background and personality. More than one Dungeon Master has set up a Lineage or "Social Rank" Table. Indeed, the Judges Guild "City State of the Invincible Overlord" has a social rank table. But none of the tables I have seen were quite the table I wanted to use. So, of course, I set up my own.

This table, or more correctly this system, has been in use here for more than a year, although the form and details are here slightly modified to benefit from that year's experience. It is based loosely on the English system of ranks and titles of nobility.

The following is designed for adventuring (played) characters. It is assumed that these are the "cream" of humanity. Only 10% of the general public (non-played characters) have ranks as distributed by this system, the rest are simply Commoners. Titles from other nations (Margrave, Count, etc.) can be equated to those shown. The table can be used for Humans, Dwarves, Elves, etc.

It can even be applied, if desired, to unusual characters such as Unicorns, Talking Dogs, and Flying Spider Monkeys.

Lineage Table

Level	Roll	Father's Rank	% Chance	Honorific
1	01 - 20	Commoner	20	Goodman or Mister
2	21 - 50	Gentleman (1)	30	Esquire or Mister
3	51 - 70	Knight	20	Sir
4	71 - 84	Baronet	14	Sir
5	85 - 92	Baron	8	Lord
6	93 - 96	Viscount	4	Lord
7	97 - 98	Earl	2	Lord
8	99	Marquis	1	Lord
9	00 & 01 - 50	Duke (2) (3)	0.50	Lord
10	00 & 51 - 89	Prince (3) (4)	0.39	(several)
11	00 & 90 - 99	King (3) (5)	0.10	(several)
12	00 & 00	Emperor (3) (5)	0.01	(several)

Notes:

1) A gentleman is entitled to bear a coat of arms. All legitimate children of a gentleman are gentlemen or gentlewomen.

2) The son of a duke is styled "Lord" by courtesy. Eg. Lord Peter Wimsey in Dorthy Sayers' stories is a younger brother of Gerald Wimsey Duke of Denver.

3) Dukes and above almost always have more than one title. Often one of the secondary titles is held by the eldest son: as the eldest son of the aforementioned Duke of Denver is Viscount St. George. Note that such extra titles sometimes evolve by separate rules. For example George the First was King of England, but also Elector of Hanover. When Victoria became Queen of England, she could not inherit Hanover as the Salic law applied.

4) There are "princedoms" such that the title of price is itself inherited. More often the children of a prince will only be in line for secondary titles. Unless, of course, the prince inherits a kingdom or empire.

5) The son of a King or Emperor is a prince, even if a youngest son.

The next step in this system is to determine the rank of the mother. As men more often married down and women married more often up, use the following: Roll percentile; A roll of 01-90 implies the mother's rank is the same as the father's; 91-97 implies the mother's rank is lower than the father's; 98-00 implies the mother's rank is higher tahn the father's. If there is a difference, start from a difference of one, then repeatedly flip a coin. Each time the coin comes up heads, add one more to the difference. Stop as soon as a tail is flipped.

Given that one's father was of a given rank, what are the chances that one has inherited the rank?

In the system suggested here, the eldest surviving son inherits the father's titles, and the eldest daughter inherits the mother's. First roll 1d12 to see how big the family is in terms of children. For each, flip a coin: heads= boy, tails = girl. Next, seeing how many sons (daughters) there are, roll an appropriate die to see which one is the character in question.

Once this has been done, roll to see if the father (mother) and all elder brothers (sisters) are dead. The basic chances are 7% for the father, 14% for the mother, and 2% for each sibling. Thereafter at the begining of each adventure there is a 1% chance that someone elder in the family has died. Roll an appropriate die to see which.

More complex inheritance chains, i.e. from uncles, are possible, but not considered here. Evil characters may try to asssassinate those who stand in their way, but properly speaking this requires a special adventure. If they get caught at it, not only are they most likely killed themselves, but they are also barred from inheriting by the attempt.

The entire problem of bastards is outside of this system.

Bear in mind when considering this system that it is only a suggestion. If it does not fit the background of the dungeons you run, if for example you take your background entirely from Tolkien, or from Howard's Conan stories, then the system presented here is inappropriate. In any case there is nothing to stop you from setting up your own system. After all, that's exactly what I did.
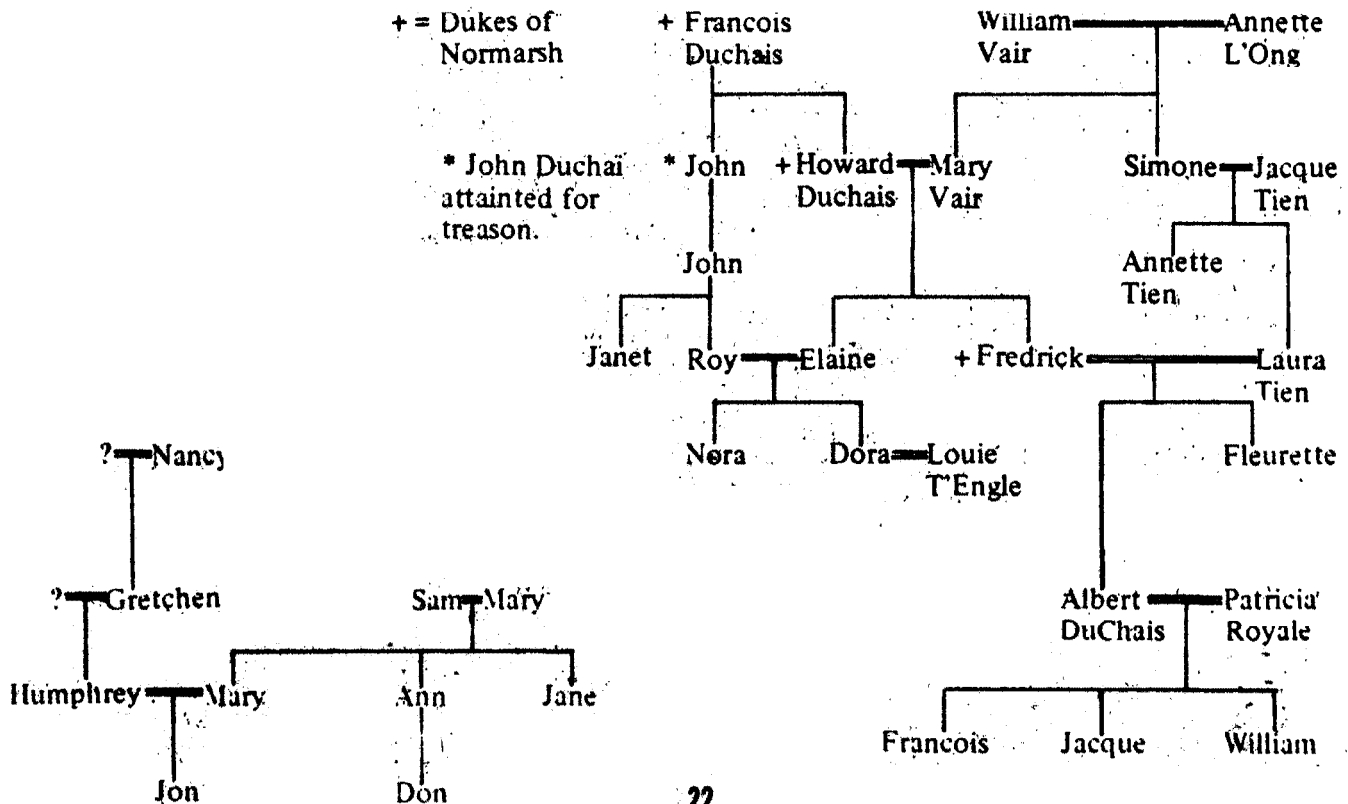
Experience: An Optional System

by Mark Lewis

In my campaign, I have incorporated a new type of experience system based on hit points, not hit dice. D&D suggests that experience be given according to how powerful the creature killed is, gauging this through hit dice. I feel this may not be a good way to distribute experience. If you roll poorly for a creature that is normally powerful, that creature would be easier to kill than a creature which had excellent hit points. You would still get equal experience no matter which one you killed. THIS IS NOT RIGHT!!

The new system I have created makes an attempt to right these wrongs. It helps eliminate the big argument over who gets what experience. Experience is given out during the battle itself. Each time a player rolls a hit and does damage he/she would get a certain amount of experience points depending on the type of monster being fought. He/she then writes down the experience *gained for that individual hit.* This takes the burden of dividing experience off the DM. The following is how I divide experience in my campaign:

Creatures which are relatively weak such as Kobolds, Giant Rats, Goblins, and other generally not-to-tough monsters are worth 5 experience points per hit point. This would mean a Goblin would be worth 5 to 35 points.

Creatures of moderate strength with no real special abilities such as Orcs, Gnolls, Ogres, Hill Giants, Men (including the other races) or the like are worth 10 experience points per hit point. This means that a Hill Giant is worth from 90 to 660 points.

Creatures which are quite powerful or have some ability such as regeneration or confusion are worth 15 experience points per hit point. These include Trolls, Purple Worms, Griffons, minor Dragons, powerful characters or NPC's, and others. A Troll is worth from 180 to 810 points.

Creatures possessing potent abilities such as level drain, stone turning abilities, and such, are worth 20 experience points per hit point. These might include powerful undead like Liches, mighty Dragons, Demons, Devils, and the like. This means a Lich is worth from 220 (assuming you rolled all ones) and up.

I give plus 5 experience points per hit point, if the monster being fought uses magic. There are other attributes which you may think deserve extra experience points like the ability to fly or the ability to change shape to name a few. I have set up a chart for my campaign which lists all the monsters and their point value based on the above information. You may also want to do this.

This is a very open system which makes it easy to incorporate into most established campaigns. It allows for more player participation, increasing the enthusiasm of the participants which makes the game more enjoyable for everyone!
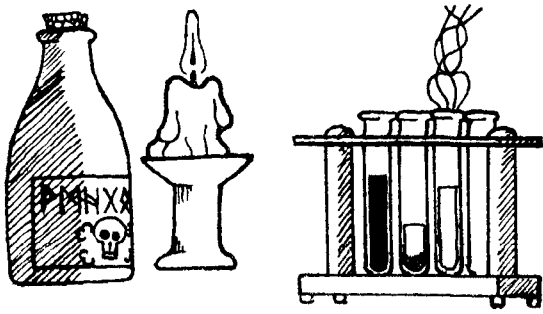
POISON USES

by Ronald Pehr

One of the most interesting contingencies in D&D is the use of poison. Those interested in the subject have written articles explaining the different types of poison, percentage chance of survival, and likely after effects. The Judges Guild Supplement, reprinted in The Ready Ref Sheets works better than any other idea I've encountered by linking potency of a dose to a quantified effect on the victim. The Judges Guild rules variant allows specific effects, and a possibility that a victim will survive even a failure to Save.

There are some things not fully taken into account, but which can be dealt with by ignoring some aspects of real-world poisons for the sake of enhancing the game. One of these is the failure to distinguish between substances such as rattlesnake venom (which is harmless if mixed in a drink) and poisons which are taken internally rather than injected by an animal's fangs. This can be left to the DM's discretion to decide if a given substance must be injected into the body tissues or can work in potion form or both. The decision can ignore known scientific facts by taking into account that nobody really knows what Wyvern or Purple Worm poison does, and a Wizard or Alchemist can make a potion turn out in any fashion his research allows.

Another oversight of the Judges Guild system is to relate damage directly to potency without regard to the different types poisons that actually exist. Arsenic, rattlesnake venom, and nerve toxins all have quite distinct effects. Once again the distinctions can be ignored on the grounds that modern pharmacology has not classified Phase Spider, Naga, or Amphisbaena. A DM with some knowledge of actual poisons can be creative in his use of the Judges Guild table, assigning particular poisons to whichever class seems most appropriate or mixing effects. For instance, certain snails and certain mushroom in the real world have incredibly lethal poisons with no known antidote (the real world being sadly lacking in Clerics with Neutralize Poison Spells). A DM allowing this type of poison might give in the effect of Class 9 but with the delay in initial onslaught of Class 1.

I think the most important aspect of poison use in D&D, which has not been adequately accounted for, is the Saving Throw. Although there is a percentage chance of anyone being affected by any poison at any time, depending on type of poison, quantity and state of health of the victim, the use of the Saving Throw should by applied to poison to keep the purpose of a Saving Throw as a remedy of divine intervention proportions against a contingency which would otherwise totally destroy a character.

Save vs. Poison should be used to determine, specifically: did the victim receive a lethal or potentially lethal dose? Hit points should not by the sole determining factor, just as in Saves against magic, dragon breath, or paralysis. If a character does Save vs. Poison then the character should not die. The Save means that a lethal dose was not taken. Thus, if half-damage would use up all of a character's hit points the character is not considered dead. The hit points are not directly subtracted as if the character was wounded in melee. Hit points in this instance are used only to determine if the character is poisoned by Wyvern-base poison, and has less hit points than 7 per round for 7 rounds (49) the character is dead if he fails to Save. If he does Save, he takes half-damage but if he has so few hit points that half would use them up he is considered unconscious and suffers the effects of the poison rather than actually losing hit points below zero. Thus a low-level character will suffer effects of illness, paralysis, coma (whatever is appropriate to the poison) but will always be deemed to have survived even if half-damage exceeds hit points.

This rule could also be applied to actual damage received in melee from a poisonous creature. The character Saves vs. Poison. If he fails, damage is done according to the closest creature-type on the Judges Guild chart. Alternately, the character incurs a loss of hit points/round equal to the hit dice of the monster. If he is considered to always die on a failure to Save, he loses those points/rounds until death (allowing possible timely intervention by Cures or Potions). When a character does Save, he suffers a loss of hit points/round equal to half the hit dice, rounded down. If that brings him to zero, he is unconscious not dead.

AS YOU MAY REMEMBER.. WE LEFT OUR INTREPID CREW EATING ICE CREAM. THEY HAVE JUST NOW DISCOVERED THAT THEY HAVE MISTAKENLY DEVOURED THE RIGEL 12 AMBASSADOR.

THIS IS THE LAST TIME I DRAW MYSELF INTO A STRIP!

I THOUGHT I TASTED TOO MUCH LICORICE. VOOOOO!

AND WHAT OF MR. SPARKS? HE HAS AT LAST FOUND ANOTHER BULKAN. SOMEONE WHO SPEAKS LOGICALLY....

HE SAID, SO I REPLIED, EH!?

I SEE... THE OLD ROUTINE. WELL, HAVE YOU....

ELSEWHERE.. DR. "JOINTS" McPALEY HAS FOUND THAT NOT ONLY HAS ENOGN DOXEY GIVEN BIRTH AGAIN BUT SHE ALSO IS STILL PREGNANT!!

MAYBE IT WAS THE ICE CREAM?

AT THAT MOMENT... SOMEWHERE OUT IN SPACE...

"THE FORCE LUPE USE THE FORCE"

SHUT UP... YOU CRAZY OLD MAN!

CAN'T YOU SEE... I'M GOING TO...

CRASH

MEANWHILE, BACK ON THE OLD GOREY, BLOTTY STILL HAS PROBLEMS...

LISTEN SON, I KNOW YE CAN DO A GREAT WARP DRIVE, BUT IT'S PHRASER NOISES THAT I'M NEEDING... TRY AGAIN!

...VERY GOOD, BUT, YE LEFT A FEW PIECES OF THE ONE SECURITY GUARD.

BUT WAIT... WHOSE EVIL EYE IS THIS?...

GOOD QUESTION... IT'S.. IT'S B.... AARGHHH