

# MYSTERY MEN COMICS ISSUE 55

## ANIME KITTEN PANIC!

The Evil Anime Empire, or Ampire, if you will, sends loose a swarm of rainbow-colored vampires to bite the city's cats and turn them into vampire kittens! The effect of the rainbow colors is, admittedly, somewhat muted by vampires' traditional reliance on darkness. But still.

*Man-Eating Cow, Team? What Team?, Groovy Flower Power Girls, Shoji Shaman*

The Man-Eating Cow finds rainbow vampire kittens disturbing. She may be equally offended by non-rainbow vampire kittens, but we'll never know, as they're not on offer. So she goes about stomping and biting the kittens, and winds up in a furious battle with all three Groovy Flower Power Girls AND Shoji Shaman, all trying to save the wee little kitties!

It's frustrating, is what it is. Cows don't react drastically to Dream Dust; perhaps their dreams are of prosaic things, like grass. They don't mind butterflies, even swarms of them, not when they can flick them away with their tails, which have no other purpose, oxtail soup being a cruel joke on the English. And although they don't like being kicked rhythmically to a Tae-Bo beat, the Man-Eating Cow does weigh more than a thousand pounds, so she's not in any danger of falling over.

"Colored Milk Swirl Reverse Rainbow Reflection Philosophy!"

Oh no.

The pastel colors infesting the vampire kitties reverse out of them, photonegativize in midair, and swirl into the Cow's protesting nostrils, dying her milk rainbow colors! And having your milk dyed rainbow colors doesn't feel good. No, sir, it does not. The Man-Eating Cow is saved from seriously considering converting to Kittenivorism, and tips over like a tipped cow.

This means that five of the heroes spend their first moments on the scene fighting each other, leaving the field clear for the Rainbow Vampires. Kamen Rider Tokyo uses his cherry armor to deflect, reflect and refract the Red Vampire, his magic power sword to cleave the Orange Vampire, and the power of devil fruit to turn into banana bubble gum, sticking and trapping the Yellow Vampire!

This leaves three more vampires who plan to drink Kamen Rider Tokyo's blood. Fortunately, the Lone Power Ranger lets silver lasers do his talking, pardner, lighting up the Green Vampire. Godzilla blows radioactive gamma ray breath on the Blue Vampire, literally blowing him away, and the Purple Vampire rips off his mask to reveal a catcher's mask!

"Huh?" says everybody.

"So, you've defeated my vampires, Kamen Rider Team! And you others ... have defeated a cow, who wasn't on my side. But no matter! It is better this way, that you know who you face in battle, the scheming master of misdirection, who controls every move behind the scenes! No longer a lowly Pokemon Arena referee, I now reveal my true identity as the Evil Anime Umpire, or ANIMUPIRE, if you will! And I declare all of you OUT!"

"So you're NOT a purple vampire?" Butterfly Betty wants to know.

"No! But I hardly need to drink purple blood when I can initiate Sudden Death Overtime with my army of pocket monsters! Hold on, it's a big pocket ... almost got it there ... mmf ... let's see how you like facing a dozen kaiju with machine guns and pineapple-spraying missile axes ..."

The Animumpire looks like he's having trouble pulling giant kaiju out of his trouser pocket, but you never know. He might manage it. So Godzilla steps on him.

"FOUL!" he cries, but no one listens.

Freed of their Evil Anime Empire Umpire Vampire bondage, the kitties gambol and frolic playfully. But there is one reminder of their ordeal they will carry all their lives! Although they no longer crave the blood of the innocent, their fur has permanently acquired the pastel hues of their vampire masters!

"Can we KEEP them?" Butterfly Betty squeals.

And the girls fall to picking out the fluffiest, bluest, pinkiest of them all, and giving them names, and hugging them.

Godzilla yawns.

Evil Anime Umpire's Vampires DEFEATED!

*Team? What Team? +2 Luck*

*Groovy Flower Power Girls +2 Luck*

*Shojo Shaman and the BACKUPS: +1 Luck*

*Outsiders: +1 Luck*

*Kamen Rider Tokyo: 4 xp*

*Kamen Rider Godzilla: 3 xp*

*Lone Power Ranger: 3 xp*

*Dream Dust Debbie: 3 xp*

*Tae-Bo Tina: 3 xp*

*Betty Butterfly: 3 xp*

*Shojo Shaman: 3 xp*

*Man-Eating Cow: 3 xp*

## THE REWARDS OF FAME!

The Granite Lady attacks the most famous team, the Super Squadron! (Yes, Shojo Shaman's team has equal Fame, but according to the Mystery Men Superheroic Combat Association's Book of Regulations and Procedures, ties go to the President.) She's a normal-sized lady, but made of granite!

*Fast Racer, Barrelman, Bag Lady*

Unfortunately, a vital press conference on the status of the recently rediscovered State of East Virginia keeps Super President out of the loop! And Supermarket Santa is called away to defend the North Pole of the Universe from the Sinister Skellington and his Galaxy Ghosts. And Captain Curling's on the way, gosh darn it – sorry! – but the slope's a tricky one, eh?

This leaves Fast Racer, in the Mock Mach Macht Schnell, and Barrelman, in the Barrelmobile, to face the Granite Lady's granite fists! Bag Lady arrives early, falls asleep, but the Granite Lady trips over her, allowing the heroes the advantage. What a shame that gentlemen never hit a lady first ... but Bag Lady is no gentleman!

Her clobbering swing of a soggy paper sack spatters the Granite Lady's dress with banana peels, old coffee grounds, egg shells, and popsicle sticks. Her dress is ruined ... RUINED! And the Granite Lady is speechless.

So Bag Lady smacks her again, and she's even more speechless! But she doesn't need to speak to smack Bag Lady back, with a granite palm. That smarts. And Bag Lady's back in dreamland.

Fast Racer drives around the Granite Lady shooting rockets, little robot birds, grappling cables, spinning blades ... everything. So speedy is his speed that she can't lay a finger on him, which is lucky, because one granite finger weighs eight pounds and would definitely crack his crash helmet! Unfortunately, none of his weapons can even slow her down, slow as she already is. Which means Barrelman is up against it, hand to hand ... and his hands are encased in aged oak, which is among the very hardest of the woods, but granite is among the very hardest of the minerals! So eventually he jumps into Fast Racer's car and they escape, unable to stop the Granite Lady but with her being equally unable to catch them!

Since her mission was to defeat the Super Squadron, and the only unconscious hero left at the scene is Bag Lady, the Granite Lady shrugs, and calls in for further instructions.

No-score DRAW!

Bag Lady: 1 xp

Fast Racer: 1 xp

Barrelman: 1 xp

## TO ROB A WRITER!

**Mr. Metamorphic** attacks the most wealthy team, the Baen Books Hard SF Panel! ("Wealthiest? There must be some mixup .. we work for PUBLISHERS!" says David Weber.) And he's using heat and pressure to transform asphalt into granite, brick into marble, and people into briquettes!

Baen Books, Graffiti Guru

Mr. Metamorphic's powers can turn ordinary granite into gleaming marble by squeezing millions of years of heat and pressure into just a few intense seconds! From their knowledge of science, the Baen Books Hard SF Panel concludes that the effect on human tissue would be somewhat less semi-precious and considerably more Phantom of the Ashtray. So they don't want to be squeezed by Mr. Metamorphic. Unlike the Soft Fantasy and Magic Realism panelists, who expect to be transformed into the purified essence of themselves in much the same way that stone becomes marble! But fortunately, THOSE guys are at another convention this weekend. Because they're WRONG.

"Yield to the power of metamorphism!" demands Mr. Metamorphic! "The Granite Lady has the density of igneous rock, and the Tectonic Twins the flexibility of sedimentary rock, but only I combine both attributes in the best of both geologic worlds!"

"Marble isn't real flexible," John Ringo rebuts. "That's why they had to fix the Washington Monument after that quake. Are you really a geologist?"

"No! I am no mere student of the Earth – I am GEOLOGY ITSELF!"

"Well, I'm not studying you any more. I did all my required Geo back in high school," says Lois McMaster Bujold. She displays a small hammer.

"What – what do you propose to do – with THAT?" says Mr. Metamorphic warily. He backs slowly away."

“Me? Nothing,” says Bujold. “Except toss it to Weber, who’s behind you.”

She does. He whaps Mr. Metamorphic. A tiny chip breaks off his marble exterior.

“I’m RUINED!” he exclaims. “Don’t look at me – I’m HIDEOUS!”

“I usually don’t tag monuments,” Graffiti Guru adds, arriving just in time. “But seeing as you’re already ruined – ha cha cha!”

He writes his name, underlines it, does a shadow in green, then wraps the whole thing in Day-Glo orange. It’s a statement, man. He knows who he is.

And Mr. Metamorphic, when he sees what has been done to him, freaks ALL THE WAY out.

His marble muscles bulge, his marble eyes spin in their sockets, and his marble hair bursts into marble fire! The swirls naturally present in marble start swirling faster, as though his whole body were melting down into a whirlpool of liquid rage! And in fact, when his anger reaches and exceeds the boiling point of 77.3 kilobanners, Mr. Metamorphic TRANSFORMS!

"Shoulda seen that coming," remarks Weber. "John, how's it coming with that solar mirror?"

John Ringo, who is holding up an umbrella covered with mirrors, is attempting to balance an even bigger umbrella, covered with even more mirrors, on top of it. Already focused spots of sunlight are igniting patches of asphalt on the streets.

"Once I get it ... all centered ... he's going from liquid straight to plasma, without stopping at gas!"

Mr. Metamorphic's volcanic heat melts the street, the cars, and the concrete all around him. These molten substances, bent toward him by the heat of his rage, metamorphose into arms, legs, fists, fingernails, teeth ... as an entire city block metamorphoses into more Mr. Metamorphic.

Graffiti Guru has tremendous speed, so he's able to dodge the massive fists that drop seemingly from the sky. Ringo's mirrors, unfortunately, first shatter, then melt, then flow into the seething blob that is Mr. Metamorphic, then metamorphose into additional matter for his already immense, and not even vaguely humanoid any more, body.

"Aw dang ..."

Weber unleashes a flurry of bullets, then shakes out a chain on which are suspended several additional guns. By rotating the chain, he can pull all the triggers simultaneously, throwing not one or two but twelve gunloads of lead at once, using only two hands!

"ARROOO!" bellows Mr. Metamorphic, and at this point we're just going to drop the Mister, because that's reserved for humans.

Globs of bubbling geology transmute into fast-growing quartz icicles! The icicles are hit by the bullets, and some of them shatter! But

1. quartz is really hard
2. there are a LOT of icicles, far more than there are bullets

And therefore, although Marblemorphic's quartz fingernails sting like the dickens, Weber gets nailed by a lot of quartz. A LOT of quartz.

"Places it would be good to have a suit of nanomolecular battle armor ... LAST in a series!" he shouts, which doesn't help, but it's memorable. If you're gonna go down, make 'em remember you.

Lois Bujold rams Marblemorpho with a car, which was a good idea, but it melts. She jumps clear before the wave of mutant minerals wash over her.

Graffiti Guru, seeing an opening, rushes in to save Bujold. But for some reason, her feet won't lift off the ground! The concrete ground ... which has metamorphosed into a glassy crust, holding her ankles firmly in place with the mass of metamorphism!

The howling, swirling glob washes over Graffiti Guru and Lois Bujold, sweeping them away like a tidal wave of rocks. Later, there's a jagged hole in the street, which leads into a tangled labyrinth of underground fissures and sinkholes ... and no writers, either of the Hard SF or Street Calligraphic varieties!

Heroes DEFEATED! (probably captured, but possibly metamorphosed into granite guardians of villainy! Although flesh doesn't really react that way to metamorphic pressures, so they're probably okay. Whew!)

# TECTONIC TAG TEAM !

The Tectonic Twins unite, cutting deep crevasses across the city, in their effort to capture or destroy the city's luckiest team, the Global Grappling All-Stars! Can they stay in the ring when the very ring itself is bouncing up and down! It's the Showdown Rattle in the Bouncy Castle!

*Global Grappling All-Stars, Chicken Little*

"Maaan, brother! I almost didn't make it on time to this titanic twosome!" shouts Smash Samson, flexing his 20-inch pythons. "Good thing you and Mean Dean called my cell, knocked on my door, busted it down and dragged me out of bed!"

"Had to do worse," said Mean Dean cheerfully. "But everyone comes to one of my bouts, like it or not!"

"Yeeeeeahhhhhh!" says Manic Man Jamie Wild, shaking his wild hairdo.

"I don't tink that's who we're supposed to wrestle," says Serge the Colossal doubtfully. "For one ting, isn't dat Chicken Little?"

"Awwrk! The sky is falling! Awwrk!"

"Dat's definitely Chicken Little," Serge concludes. "He helped us pin Hamfist dat time. In my country, he would be called Petit Poulet."

"Awwrk! The ground is rising!"

"Dat's a new one."

And not only is Chicken Little's dire prophecy original, but it's also accurate! For the very ground is heaving, humping, heaping in places and crumbling in others, like a blanket under which two cats are fighting! Hard!

The Metropolitan Sports Arena lists like a sinking ship, and then, also like a sinking ship, sinks!

From the fuming sinkhole, mephitic vapors tinged of burning sulfur and scorched iron assail the colorfully clad grapplers, although Serge manages to hold Chicken Little above the worst of the cloud. And out of that cloud steps a massively muscled figure as red as seared brick, laughing despite the evil atmosphere!

"I'm Fault and this is Fissure! We're the Tectonic Twins, and the very skin of the Earth is ours to command! We want all of Champion City to see that even dumb luck won't save them if they stand in the way of the Underminer – by defeating their luckiest heroes!"

"Awwk! Universal destruction! Awwk!"

"You, chicken – you don't sound very lucky. Just let us slam these foolish posers to the mat, and we'll leave you alone," says Fault.

"Aye! Else ye be a candidate for Extra Crispiness, if ye tangle with the Tectonics!" says Fissure.

"Is it talk like a pirate day already?" Mean Dean scoffs.

"It's Talk Like a Pirate Who's Got His LEGS Stuffed Down His NECK, Day!" says Manic Man Jamie Wild, whose identical twin, Passive Man Peter Wild, isn't here today. "You called us POSERS, man! That aggression

will not stand, man! MAN!” He jumps up and down, flailing his arms with his fingers spread wide, like a cobra with arms.

“That’s right, Tectonic Pinheads,” says Smash, flexing both mighty upper arms to set his American flag-themed sleeves aflutter. “These colors never run!”

“Shoulda brought Wind and Fire, you losers,” says Mean Dean, “because tonight, Earth is going right back in the Dirt!” He holds the microphone above his head and turns slowly, letting his sequins sparkle.

“And we aren’t posers, either,” says Serge. He looks around at his comrades.

“At least, Chicken Little and I are not.”

“It’s ON!” says Jamie Wild, and leaps.

“It’s going DOWN!” says Fault, and leaps also.

“Och aye macBran nach-gylliangoch!” says Fissure, and charges.

“I got the mushmouth!” Smash demands, and charges right back.

THWUDD! Massive champions of justice and seismology collide in the parking lot of the once-mighty sports arena!

“Awwk! It’s the end! The end of everything! All is lost!” says Chicken Little.

“You got that right, brother,” Mean Dean affirms.

Jamie Wild pins one of Fault’s arms in a backward-flex hold (banned in seven states!) but Fault uses his other arm to snatch both of Jamie’s legs out from under him and piledrive him headfirst into the pavement!

Smash Samson steamrollers right into Fissure. Fissure falls down. Smash runs over him, at which point Fissure jumps to his feet, straightening his back and arms at the same time, and throws Samson high into the air! Then he comes down, throwing an elbow block into a blender-barrier of whirling forearms! Crunch! Samson is rolled over on his face, both arms bent behind him, while Fissure stands on his back! Were it any other man, Samson would surely signal his surrender, but instead of slapping the asphalt to admit defeat, he holds out a steady right hand to Serge the Colossal!

Jamie Wild is out cold. Smash is bent double. Fissure takes Smash’s bootlaces and ties them to Smash’s wrists, effectively hog-tying the Smashomaniac! Now Serge faces two winded, battered, but still mobile villains. The Twins slap palms together, then split up like a basalt formation, spreading to either side of Serge.

“We’ve got you now!” says Fault!

“There be no escape!” says Fissure!

“We’re doomed! Doomed! There’s no way we can both strike at once, and whoever tackles this Gallic colossus first is Doomed!”

Fault looks at Fissure.

“You think?” he says. “I thought we had this wrapped up.”

“T’wasn’t I!” says Fissure. “Twas thee who did doubt our victory!”

“No I didn’t – you did! And now you’re trying to blame me, just like you always do!” says Fault.

“That may hae worked on Mother Earth, but it cuts no sediment wi’ me, brother!” says Fissure.

“Cut that out! You’re not even Scottish!” says Fault!

“Dinnae be tellin me what tae do!” says Fissure! “I be ten minutes yer senior, and ever will be!”

Glaring at each other, the Tectonic Twins, like an overstressed crevice, SNAP!

“Barnaclad barbarian!” says Fault, hurling himself at his twin.

“Whingeing weasel!” says Fissure, doing the same.

They fight. Serge watches – they’re both very fast. Serge makes a move towards one, then the other, but they’re never in one place for long.

The very ground trembles and begins to crack open, with faultlines radiating out in all directions. As the nearby buildings start leaning this way and that, Serge steps to one side of the brothers and lets the momentum of their argument hurl them into him.

Then he grabs them both and squeezes until they calm down.

“Doomed!” says Chicken Little. “DOOMED!”

Mean Dean starts to raise one of Serge’s arms in triumph. That lets the Tectonic Twins draw breath and start to get free. So he doesn’t, and raises one of Chicken Little’s wings instead.

“Champion City, I give you your World Champions of the Universe for All Space and Time --- the GLOBAL GRAPPLING ALL-STARS and CHICKEN LITTLE!”

Lots of people applaud, because all the residents of the city’s towers have come outside once their buildings started swaying.

*Tectonic Twins CAPTURED! Until Serge’s arms get tired ...*

*Manic Man Jamie Wild: 4 xp*

*Smash Samson: 4 xp*

*Mean Dean: 4 xp*

*Chicken Little: 6 xp*

*Serge the Colossal: 6 xp*

*Global Grappling All-Stars: +6 Luck*

*Shojo Shaman and the BACKUPS: + 2 Luck*



# JAIL UNDER SIEGE!

And a previously unimagined number of Rockworms drill out of the ground to bust the Underminer out of prison! Funny thing, prisons – they never put barbed wire or armed guards UNDER the cells!

Don't Quit Your Day Job Heroes, Justice With a Slice of Justice on Justice Pie, Outsiders, Away Team, The Flash  
40 xp, +14 Fame

Sixty-two points of Power show up to defend the jail. If the Rockworms were coming across the ground, they'd be history. But they aren't – they're coming UNDER the ground!

“Like wicked! None of us have burrowing powers!” says Bongo Drummer Boy.

“Give me a shovel and a coupla days and I'll get us down there,” says Darrel of the Outsiders.

“Darrel's a regular steam shovel when he's on the job,” Two-Bit adds.

“My Wand of Wonder might be able to get us underground, but it's a long shot,” says Wonder Boy.

“I've got a flashlight,” says the Flash.

“And I've got a plan!” says Captain Starship, smacking his fist into his palm. Wonder Boy, enthused, smacks his fist into his own palm. They nod in unison.

“What's that rumbling?” says no one in particular.

Then two things happen: the jail starts sinking a foot at a time, as though bumping down an underground staircase, and the earth erupts with Rockworms attacking the heroes!

“All according to my plan!” says Captain Starship. Lt. Decoy falls into a crack in the earth.

“AAiaa!” he Wilhelm Screams as he goes down.

“DECOY!” says Starship! “Again!”

The faster heroes rush to the jail, while the others START to rush to the jail, but get caught by the Rockworms outside.

FAST:

**Bongo Drummer Boy** drums some sense into those bongos!

**Weasel Bag** unrips the forces of Chill Weasel! Turns out, Rockworms hate the cold.

**Chief Justice** calls the riot to order!

**Robby Rocket Pants** races around, punching Rockworms until his hands are all swollen and sore!

**Steve** just grins his wicked grin and clobbers the Rockworms with a pole while they're not looking. Which sounds wicked, but they're blind, so there's really no other time to hit 'em.

A few of the Rockworms tear out the bottom of the Underminer's cell, dropping him into inner darkness. But before he falls to freedom, he pauses to taunt the heroes thus:

“And so I return to the empire which is my home! But never imagine you are safe from me – your world above is but the skin on the apple through which I, the Underminer, crawl like a well-fed worm! Aha! Aha! Ahahahahaha!”

This gives Robby Rocket Pants time to dart in and grab him right out of the Rockworms’ startled jaws.

“Unhand me!” the Underminer demands.

“You’re the boss,” says Robby Rocket Pants. “Oh, wait, that’s when we’re under the Earth. You sure you want to drop ALL THE WAY down there?”

The Underminer looks down. He sees clouds, and through them, suburbs. He can see entire suburbs quite clearly.

“I want my lawyer,” he gulps, but says nothing further.

NOT SO FAST:

**The Novelizer** is surrounded by spiky, spiny, reticulated Rockworms. And no trees. No trees at all. But he describes them anyway, towering to the sky, filling the air with resinous fragrance, carpeting the ground with a sound-deadening blanket of needles. The Rockworms sniff the air, puzzled, and slam into the trees that weren’t there a few minutes ago ... but which seem so real!

**Wonder Boy** wields his wand and causes lightning to fall from the sky! Then the Rockworms who are hit by lightning start spitting lightning at other Rockworms, who start spitting lightning at other other Rockworms! It’s a chain reaction of worm-thunder!

**Utility Belt** tries Bat-Rockworm-Repellent, and that does, indeed, repel the Bat-Rockworms. The non-Bat-Rockworms, however, roll over Utility Belt and plant him like a tulip.

**Swiss Army Knife Man**, one of the Justice Combination’s part-time members, flips out a knife, saw, awl, pick, screwdriver and corkscrew! The Rockworms are stabbed, sawn, awled, picked, screwdriven and corkscrewed before they wrap around Swiss Army Knife Man and pull his tools in ten different directions.

**Darrel** gets control of a Bobcat mini-bulldozer and rams two Rockworms into each other. Then he hefts a sixteen-pound sledge and sets about breaking their armor into fragments. Their soft, albeit boiling hot, interior really doesn’t like being hammered, and all it takes is one good blow to send a Rockworm fleeing for the interior. Darrel, however, lands two really solid blows. So the Rockworm will tell his friends.

**Ponyboy** fights really hard, but his blows rattle off the rock armor without effect. The Rockworm rolls over, pressing Ponyboy into the dirt, but at least it doesn’t make him eat it.

**Two-Bit** grabs a big ring of keys and a guard’s baton and hammers his Rockworm! The baton doesn’t do much, but when it opens his mouth to eat him, he rakes the soft inner mouth parts with the keys like a morningstar! The Rockworm yelps, and decides to eat someone else.

**Captain Starship** makes a cannon out of a car battery, baking soda, duct tape and some broken pipes lying around. He blasts the Rockworms with the contents of a shattered jewelry store – and those diamonds really STING! The Rockworms recoil.

**Dr. Bones** tries giving the Rockworms a massive dose of tranquilizers. With an arm full of this stuff, they wouldn’t be afraid of a supernova! Too bad they don’t HAVE arms ...

**The Flash** flashes his flashlight in the monsters’ eyes, which doesn’t work, because they don’t have eyes. But he can blow his whistle really really loudly, which annoys them enough that they ignore several other heroes in order to close in on, and utterly destroy the Flash. Could this be the end?

No, because **First Officer Science Alien** records the vibrations common to the Rockworms, then plays them back out of synchronization with the originals! The Rockworms, not knowing what to do, thrash this way and that until they get fed up, and tunnel for the wide black horizons of home!

With the Underminer safely in custody and the world’s supply of Rockworms surely depleted, Science Alien brushes the dirt from his knees and comes over to participate in the traditional laugh on the bridge. Then, his

tricorder <cough-laptop-cough> starts pinging frantically. As he reaches Captain Starship and the others, he unslings it and opens a new window.

“Ground vibrations increasing, Captain. They are on the same frequency that we used to confuse the Rockworms, but of much greater amplitude.”

“Can you ... tune in on them, somehow?” Starship says.

The ground buzzes with a low, low bass note. “UNNNDERMINER!”

“Good work, Science Alien,” says Starship.

Science Alien merely points to the blinking battery warning ... his laptop isn't even on.

“YOU HAVE FAILLLED MMME .... FOR THE LASSST TIIIIIME!” says the ground.

“Waugh! No! I demand police custody!” says the Underminer desperately. “Somewhere up high ...”

The bass rumbling continues, but no longer sharply enough to form words. Instead, the earth twitches twice per second, left and right, left and right, left and right and left and right and ...

“Everybody OUTSIDE!” commands the Flash.

Of course, there are about two hundred prisoners in the jail. Letting them out of their cells takes time. And may not actually be such a good idea. But all the prisoners are let loose and just barely get out of the prison, before a volcanic eruption blows the entire building sky-high in a blast of flames and smoke!

Roaring smoke under so much pressure it acts as a solid spears the sky and blossoms forth clouds of rolling thunder. From the clouds rains lava; the big drops are molten and sticky, which is bad, but the small ones cool on the way down, so that they're just ROCKS FALLING OUT OF THE SKY!

Everyone is pelted and pummeled; there's nowhere to hide, no place to run. Well, Weasel Bag slides under a parked car, which stops a lot of the volcanic rain, so I guess there was somewhere to hide.

Robby Rocket Pants takes a rock to the shoulder, laying him out. The Underminer breaks free, the falling pebbles pattering off his mining helmet, and frantically races in circles, looking for a soft patch of dirt to dig into.

From the gushing crucible of fire, an arm made of glowing hot magma unfolds, snatches up the Underminer in a three-fingered burning hand, and withdraws into the volcano. The volcano just keeps right on spewing, by the way. Pretty soon a cone of expelled lava is heaping up around the caldera, with molten goo dripping down into an ever-widening circle of the Industrial District.

“Those are gasoline storage tanks,” says Chief Justice, and then everyone's very busy for an hour or so.

*Underminer DEFEATED!*  
*Bongo Drummer Boy 2 xp*  
*Weasel Bag 2 xp*  
*Chief Justice 2 xp*  
*Robby Rocket Pants 4 xp*  
*Steve 2 xp*  
*The Novelizer 2 xp*  
*Wonder Boy 2 xp*  
*Utility Belt 2 xp*  
*Swiss Army Knife Man 2 xp*  
*Darrel 3 xp*  
*Ponyboy 2 xp*  
*Two-Bit 3 xp*  
*Captain Starship 2 xp*  
*Dr. Bones 2 xp*  
*Lt. Decoy 2 xp*  
*First Officer Science Alien 4 xp*  
*The Flash 2 xp*

## Meanwhile ... Team? What Team?

Meanwhile , during the Battle With the Underminer ...

Tokyo: "Ok Underminer prepare to..."

Then winging out of the darkness come a giant slash of wind.

Tokyo: "Wait what's going on!"

Stranger: "I am Crobat the doom bringer of plague."

Tokyo: "Oh you another one of those monsters "

Crobat: "I have come to bring a message , we of the evil anime Empire, or Ampire if you will, have sent out rainbow colored vampire to bite the city's cats"

Tokyo: "Why? I mean you've done silly things before, like when you tried to have that Jigglypuff girl become a pop star or when you tried to take over the world by making every kid cry or when you..."

Crobat: "Okay, okay, I get it, this is ridiculous and we probably shouldn't be doing it , what it is what my superiors ordered this is what they will get. "

Tokyo: "Like I'm going to let you..."

As Tokyo is about to punch Crobat, the Lone Power Ranger Runs up and by sheer the accident knocks a stone man into Tokyo, and he end up fighting Crobat instead.

Lone Power Ranger: "All right, varmint, prepare to die! Wait who are you?"

Crobat: "I am Crobat. Who are you who dares to death I the will of...?"

The Lone Power Ranger, then in his small form, knocks Crobat on his butt and then the fight begins. The Lone Power Ranger and Crobat trade blows for a while.

Crobat: "okay that's it. By the power of TV Tropes make my me grow!"

There's a low angle shot, and then Crobat its huge, at this point the Lone Power Ranger activate the lambda capsule and grows 50 feet tall. The Lone Power Ranger then finishes the monster of the week off with the Lincoln Tunnel cannon.

Tokyo: "Okay, now that I have destroyed all those rock men, I'm going after that vampire... Wait, where is it?"

Lone Power Rangers: "I think I just destroyed that varmint, you were talking about. Well, see ya."

Tokyo: "Wait, I miss my own fights? Aww, man!"

Meanwhile on Monster Island

Gigan: "Rawer"

Gigan's translation: "This is the dumbest idea you've ever had, Rayquaza."

Rayquaza: "Don't look at me. It wasn't my idea."

Lord Zedd 1: "What what's wrong with the idea?"

Lord Zedd 2: "Yeah, we like it!"

Ghidorah: "Rawer"

Ghidorah's translation: "It's still a dumb idea."

Rayquaza: "I have a good idea. What if we use these kitty vampires as it was to find the spring of eternal life."

Gigan: "Rawer"

Gigan's translation: "What will that do? I'm already immortal."

Rayquaza: "Its very simple, it will help me, and you gentlemen, gain infinite power."

The brothers in unison: "Sounds good to us"

Gigan: "Rawer"

Gigan's translation: "How?"

Rayquaza: "You will see, Mwhahaha!"

# Super Squadron

When the barrel-signal shines against a conveniently low hanging cloud from the top of the Shadow Hill police station, a dark cylinder of wood dons his utility barrel-belt, emerges from the secret Barrelcave, and dashes to the Barrelmobile!

He is passed on the road by the Arrowcar of Green Arrow and the Batmobile of Batman, not to mention the Black Beauty, and that silly flying car Super President uses! But then when a jolly red fat elf in a sleigh passes him, and then a curling athlete with the broom wiping the street free of small irregularities in the ice as a very slowly moving stone moves by, Barrelman begins to wonder whether a barrel-shaped 'car' that is actually just, you know, a barrel, is the best possible mode of transportation. Beside, is this actually his car, or is it considered armor like the mobile infantry suit of Iron Man, or is it considered his costume?

# Don't Quit Your Day Job Heroes

In the Don't Quit Your Day Job Hero's secret headquarters...a basement in Pokey Oaks:

Novalator sighed, "That Debbie. She sure is something. Did you see her back on Shadow Hill, giving rockworms whatfor!"

"What four? What's *What four* have to do with it, man?" Bongo Drummer Boy replied. "Besides, you are so terribly, terribly wrong. Tina is the one who shines with pixie-cutie dust. Debbie's all right, don't get me wrong...but would you eat carrot cake when you could have apple pie a la mode!"

"I happen to be feeling puckish for carrot cake," the Novelator replied peevishly.

"Guys, that's...really gross," said Weasel Bag, wincing. "Besides, it doesn't even make sense. Debbie's the blond and Tina's the carrot top."

"What? Um...No! Not like that! Geeseh! Get your mind out of the gutter," the Novelator whacked at Weasel Bag with some pages of his latest novel. Weasel Bag countered with some pages of his own. "What 'cha reading?"

"This? Oh, some stuff I found in my dad's trash. I found it next to some experimental tablets my Weasels ate. They seem more...explosive than they used to. Their attacks have a real pow to them.

"What's in the failed experiments?" asked Bongo Drummer Boy.

"Experiments gone wrong. Makes kind of funny reading. Did you know that book *Inkheart* is based on a real incident? Guy who could make stuff in books come to life? My dad's people tried to reproduce that, but all they managed to do is cover people in bookbinding glue...which, face it, is not the best weapon around...kind of soft and springy."

Putting down his manuscript, Keith lunged at Sean's hand. "Give me that!"

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The midnight lights burned late in the suburban townhouse of Keith the Novelator. Somewhere around two in the morning, colored smoke erupted from all the windows...through the glass...followed by a shriek of:

"Eureka!" followed by a softly muttered, "I wonder if Debbie will think this is cool."

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The next day, the Don't Quit Your Day Job Heroes met in Keith's basement in Pokey Oaks.

Keith: "Guys, I've had a major breakthrough. I've figured out what Dr. Oevil did wrong in his experiments. I have perfected Novelation to a new level! The Physical Story Attack! It's temporary, maybe lasts an hour at the most, and it took me a while to perfect less than lethal force...kind of feel bad about those first three pigeons...but...I've got it. Look!"

Keith stood and expounded. He told a story with such power and vividness that the image impressed itself upon the imagination of his listeners so vividly, that soon they could not tell whether they were imagining it or it was real.

Then, it was real.

The two martial artists described in Keith's ninja pirate story fought a dramatic battle, punching and kicking and destroying a lamp -- while being chased by angry weasels, before they faded back into the imagination from which they sprang.

"Wow!" blinked Sean, trying to get his weasels back in the bag.

Bongo Drummer Boy just gaped. Maybe he had had one to many hits of the Cheer Weasel.

Keith cried, full of excitement. "And it doesn't stop there! Bongo, I think I've figured out how you can apply this same technique to drumming."

He explained his idea.

Bongos: "Oo! Oo! I want to try that!"

Bong!!

One hour later:

Keith and Sean woke up, holding their throbbing heads and moaning. "That...what happened?"

Bongo was playing away. "Sorry, guys. Took me a while to learn how to do this without knocking out my friends. I think I got it now! It's amazing! I'll be the most forceful drummer alive! Tina's gotta be impressed with that!"

Sean held his aching head, which still throbbed as if someone were playing the drums on it, and sighed.



# Away Team

“Captain’s Log 0602.14 I ... feel ... vulnerable. These ... ROCK-worms ... are drilling ... through half the city. They’ve got to be stopped. But ... HOW?”

Capt. Starship clicks a button on his plywood and spray-painted command chair, and swivels dramatically toward the science station.

Ka-THUD!!! The command chair, not mounted to the ground, springs back and rocks to the side, just before tipping all the way over. Starship, rolls dramatically to the left, grabs a console and begins barking orders.

“Helm, hard about!”

“Um ... Captain? We’re in the garage.”

Lt. Decoy’s bemused expression changes to one of horror as the entire room begins to shake violently.

“Science Alien, Report!”

“Captain, it appears that one of the Underminer’s rockworms has just drilled underneath this facility. I recommend we evacuate before the whole building collapses.”

“Everyone to the shuttlevan! On the double! Grab what you can on the way out!”

The Away Team frantically gathers some odds and ends strewn about the roughly-disguised garage, and pile into the minivan just in time to see half the house collapse into a sink-hole.

“What did we get away with?”

Reaching into a duffle bag, Lt. Decoy looks up and says, “Well, I was able to salvage these two modified phasers Science Alien was working on.

Turning around from the front seat, giving a wry smile, Dr. Bones holds up his black bag, “Oh, I’ve got my usual bag of tricks, with a few new potions and concoctions mixed in, just for good measure.”

“Well, First Officer? What did you bring with you?”

Science Alien raises an eyebrow. “While you all were doddering around for your trinkets and vials, I was able to secure the science equipment we borrowed from the University. I was thinking about the rockworms, and how they communicate. Clearly, the Underminer isn’t giving them orders with his mouth, otherwise they wouldn’t have known which cell to find him in to break him out. There was no verbal communication between them that I can think of. Therefore, he either had a telepathic link to the rockworms, which is highly doubtful ... he isn’t that advanced a being ... OR, he is using seismic wave patterns to communicate with them.”

Cpt. Starship, stroking his cleft-chin, spends a moment pondering what this means. “Yes ... I see where you’re going with this. If the rockworms are communicating through sound vibrations in the rocks, then we should be able to either disrupt or reinterpret the sound patterns.”

“Wait just a damn minute!” Dr. Bones interjected. “You mean to tell me that these ... THINGS can talk?”

“Hardly, Doctor. They are animals. Nothing more. But like all trained animals, they respond to various stimuli and act according to their training. If we can study the seismic patterns and figure out what the different signals mean, we might be able to send some signals of our own.”

“... And turn the rockworms against the Underminer!” exclaimed Lt. Decoy. “That’s brilliant, Science Alien!”

Cpt. Starship looks off into the distance, as if facing a camera and a spotlight, waiting for a close-up. “Right ... and this science equipment is just what we need to get the job done.” (cue music)