

Issue One - July 2000

# Half-Baked

the Journal of Ideas That Aren't

Here we have it. Yet another “underground” magic journal. This one is meant to serve a different niche than others, though. *Half-Baked* serves the interests of the magic inventors and creators out there. It wasn't long ago that this journal was a half-baked idea itself. I started to mention the concept among creative folks and received a fair amount of support. The purpose of this issue you are now holding is to pitch the idea to more inventors in the interest of gaining even more support.

The general concept of this journal is something to serve as a “collective notebook”. Many of us, I am sure, have our own notebooks used to scribble down ideas. If you do that I can almost guarantee you will have ideas written in there that have yet to be worked out. The ideas will be in various states of completeness. Sometimes effects without methods, or methods without effects. Whatever it may be, you just haven't had the inspiration to complete the idea. This is where *Half-Baked* comes in. You can publish these bare-bones ideas in this journal's pages so that inventive people like yourself may see it. They can then set their mind to work on the concept and if any ideas pop-up, publish them in a future issue. It becomes a constant tossing around of ideas, with each person adding to or twisting them. Basically, it will be the biggest ongoing brainstorm session in magic history.

In theory, this is a self-perpetuating thing. Ideas beget ideas as the creative community inspires itself. However, until this natural  
**continued on next...**

Welcome  
to the  
Brain-child  
Nursery



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momentum kicks in, I will have to be twisting arms to receive contributions. These initial half-baked ideas are required to set the ball rolling. If you are keen on the concept and goal of this journal, then please do your part to ensure its success by contributing one or two “hopeless” ideas from your notebook. You will even be rewarded with free issues! (see details on back) You will see the kinds of things I am looking for with the samples in this issue. These contributors found it rather easy to lend a helping hand for something they wanted to happen. I hope you can join *Half-Baked* as well.

If you are interested in this journal, I encourage you to purchase a subscription for the meager price that it is. If you are not interested, give back this copy...I only printed so many!

## **the Notebook**

*“the Notebook” is the core of the Half-Baked concept. This is where all the half-baked ideas will be published, further divided into types of ideas. Note that each idea is preceded by a three-part number. This is for future reference as (issue)-(section)-(item) to keep track of the inspiration for further ideas.*

### **Sid-Libs - 01**

*This section is a bit of a tribute to Sid Lorraine. It's meant for the jokes, one-liners, and gags that don't have an application in your own act.*

**1-1-1:** A gag line for the dove workers out there. After producing a dove, “Now my little buddy here will help to select the winner of the door prize this evening. He’s been eating all day, so I will just let him fly over the audience and randomly pick the winner in his own special way!” Get ready to let the bird loose...then stop. “Oh...don’t worry. The door-prize is free dry-cleaning!” At this point the audience starts hooting uncontrollably. Shortly thereafter the wildlife protection agency’s owl protection officers will come in to see what all the fuss is about. The eventual fines should run you in the neighborhood of five American pesos

**- Ryan Pilling**

### **Dustbusters - 02**

*We all have a drawer/closet/warehouse full of old magic props we don't use for whatever reason. Here we will feature ideas for presentational twists for common props.*

**1-2-1:**In “Be yourself”, an article I wrote for my website, I explained that a character trait can be used as a presentation idea. I picked ‘worry’ as an example, because it’s a trait that can be quite funny (Woody Allen, for instance). I also had to come up with a presentation to illustrate the concept.

Over the years, I had come up with a number of silly but amusing ideas on how to introduce a person whose name I forgot (one favorite was to launch into spasmodic coughing just after saying ‘John, I’d like you to meet...’, and excusing myself to get a glass of water). From that, I got the idea of worrying about not being able to remember a person’s name.

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A bit more thinking led to the idea ‘the moment I have to make introductions, everybody suddenly looks the same’. I needed a trick in which things that are different suddenly become identical. Professor’s Nightmare came to mind. Perfect!

For the purposes of my article, that was enough. I didn’t take the idea any further, but I think it has potential, perhaps in the form of a simple story with a few well-placed puns.

## Presentations - 03

*This is the place for presentation themes not necessarily associated with a specific prop. Usually these would be lacking in a strict effect or method.*

**1-3-1: “Play-doh”** This is an interesting premise that could use some brainstorming. Anything that you make from play-doh becomes functional. Here is one possibility but I think there are many more. I tell the audience that when I was a kid, I was in Boy Scouts. We would go on camping trips and I would forget to bring lots of important stuff but as long as I brought my play-doh I was OK. I had a great imagination. Other guys would be rubbing sticks together to make a fire and I would just make a lighter from my Play-doh. (You make a rectangular blob of white play-doh around the front of a lighter on a pull) Well it looks like a lighter, doesn’t it? (You push down on the play-doh and a flame pops up! Release the button on the lighter and let the lighter shoot invisibly into your sleeve or jacket. Then tear apart the

play-doh lighter to show there is nothing but the clay!) Whatever story you choose you could make other things happen that make sense. On a camping trip you could make a play-doh pen to write home, that actually writes. You could make a little flashlight that really throws light. Then always show them there is nothing but play-doh in your hands. I am very interested to see what stories and effects you come up with using this premise.

- Kevin James

## Method - 04

*Sometimes methods will be lacking in a presentation or effect. This section will also include any little “finesses” to make other things work better.*

**1-4-1:** Obtain two identical sandcastle buckets and shorten one of the buckets with a sharp knife so that it fits snugly inside the other bucket without protruding from the open end. Spray this bucket with adhesive and cover with a thin layer of sand, similarly try using a tin of Stone Flex paint which would be ideal.

For performance, show the bucket to be empty and turn it upside down on the table, as you feel the sandcastle gimmick fall onto the table pick up the bucket to make the production. You may be able to fit more than one sandcastle into the bucket for multiple productions. Also try producing flags to put onto the sandcastles – you will need to make a hole in the top of the sandcastle first so that it fits.

- Andi Gladwin

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## Effects - 05

*Effect is what most ideas start out as. An image or event that you want to create, but you may not have any ideas for method.*

**1-5-1:** “Stunts with Bikes” This idea has been bouncing around in my head for some time. Briefly, the effect is this: The close-up guy talks about Bicycles, the brand of cards he uses, and offers a demonstration of pure magic. Unlike the magicians who reach in their pocket and pull out the Bicycles, he will produce them out of thin air. He even offers the spec the choice of which color Bikes to produce. Red or Blue? To avoid a nasty argument, he produces at his fingertips, both red and blue bikes. Not the cards. But miniature bicycles.

The 3" bicycles are available from any toy store, are small enough to fit in any pocket, and practically thumb palm themselves by the handlebars, with a bonus action of swinging out to the fingertips. Perhaps only one red bike could be produced, and via pitch and ditch, or some alternate means, could be changed to blue.

The spec could drive the bike across the spread cards for a selection, with comedy interludes like handing him a miniature helmet, leaving tire tracks on the cards, constructing a miniature ramp with the cards and jumping the deck, pulling the bike out of the card case, etc. etc. I believe its limited only by your imagination and hopefully it might inspire you to create your own version and method.

- Terry Linder

**Contributions:** These are accepted from anyone, subscriber or not. Items for “the Notebook” should be kept under 200 words if possible. All efforts will be made to keep them in the authors own words, but may be edited for clarity and space. Each item contributed warrants the author **one free issue**. Multiple contributions will give the author the equivalent number of credited issues commencing from the date the editor receives them.

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