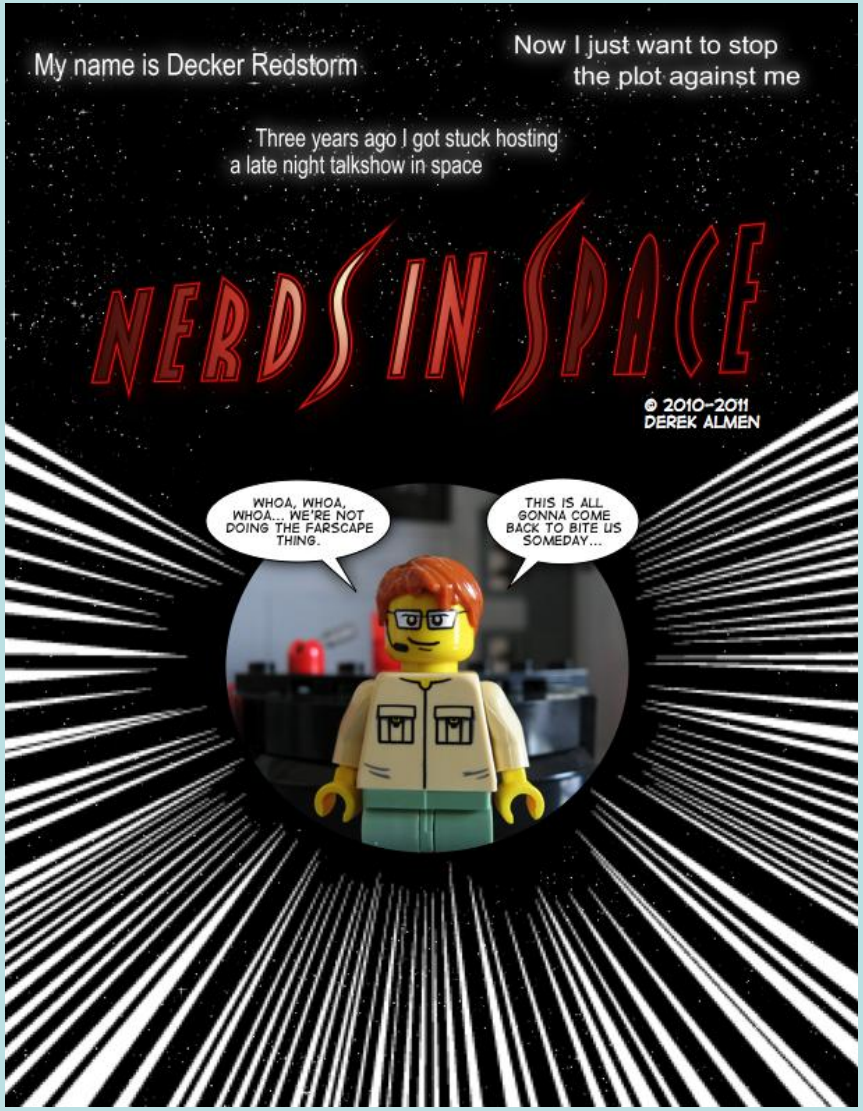
BCN BRICK COMIC NETWORK

Proof that it doesn’t take talent to make comics with Lego!

What is a brick comic?

- It’s a web comic made primarily with Lego bricks, we hope!
- Can be primarily gags or stories
- Doesn’t have to be funny, but usually is
- Can be presented in a variety of formats
- Published daily, weekly, monthly on the web

So, what's in it for me?



- It's fun
- It's creative
- Different aspect of the hobby
- Entertain others
- Helps improve photos of other types of models
- Chance to host presentations at Brickworld
  - » We would hate for you waste that speech class you took in high school!

TRANQUILITY BASE

#118

A DAY IN THE LIFE, WITH A LITTLE HELP FROM MY FRIENDS

VOLUME II

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tranquilitybasecomic.co.uk

What do I need to make a comic?

- Lego (obviously)
- An idea (a joke, a story, etc)
- Knowledge about Lego's Fair Play Policy
- A camera and a steady platform
- Light
- A computer and some basic programs
- A place to publish
- An audience

Creating a comic: Step One

- Write your story.
  - If your strip is going to be based on gags, then write a bunch of them!
- Some authors script all dialogue and action beforehand, others work off an outline and write dialogue on a strip-by strip basis.

Dr. Legostar writes his scripts well in advance – up to a year ahead of the current storyline!

Some authors keep scripts loose to incorporate the latest fads in popular culture . . .

Creating a comic: Step Two(a)

- Characters
  - You don’t need a lot of mini-figs (but it helps)
    - The variety of faces available is a treat for comickers!
  - Try mixing and matching mini-fig parts to get the look you want.
  - Create a visual hook to distinguish characters
    - Handy for distinguishing one smiley face from another

Ewart, from Glomshire Knights, has two looks – the one shown and the other features a helmet and backpack.

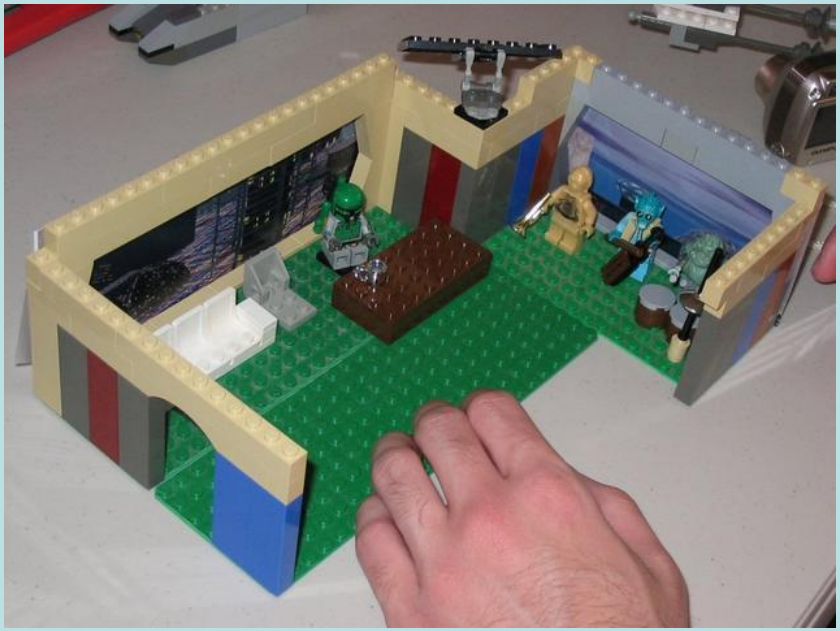
Careful choice of faces can create many looks for a single character!

Factoid Reinfocement: Items can help create a character's identity.

Creating a comic: Step Two

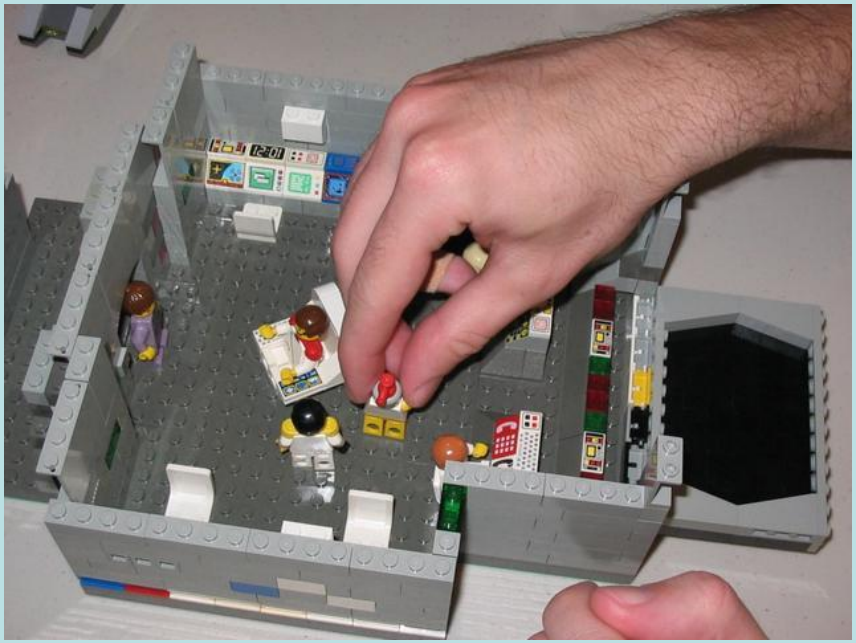
Settings

- This is the easy part: build stuff with your bricks.
- Your models don't need to be complete – build only what the camera will see!
- Build sets with removable walls
- Use computer generated or construction paper backgrounds for sky, distance hills/cities, or space.
- Leave room for characters to move.



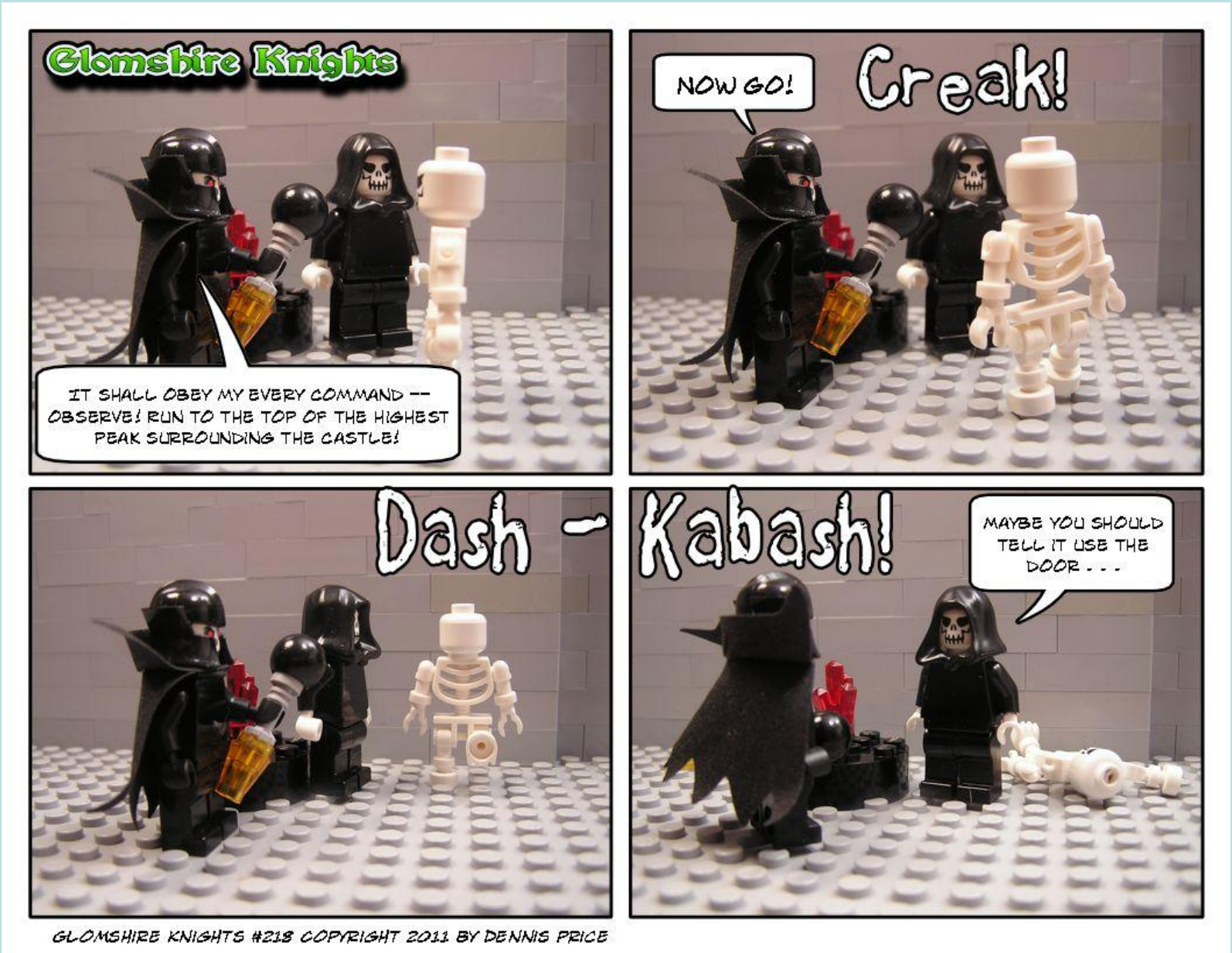
“Late Night With Boba Fett”

Open areas and removable walls make the process of shooting a comic much simpler.



Bridge of the *Muffin.*

The hinged viewer screen allows Dr. Legostar another camera angle and easy access.



This set was a short wall on a base plate. Simple, yes, but also effective.

Creating a comic: Step Three

- Character development
  - Although your characters are made of plastic, you don't want them to seem to be made of plastic (unless that's the joke). Give each of them some distinct personality traits
    - For instance, Skip in Legostar Galactica **talksreallyfast** and Daniel in Brickworld Saga is a bit dense (and a real smart aleck).
    - The trick here is to remember the characters are talking to each other, not at each other.

Small gestures + conversation = believable interactions between characters

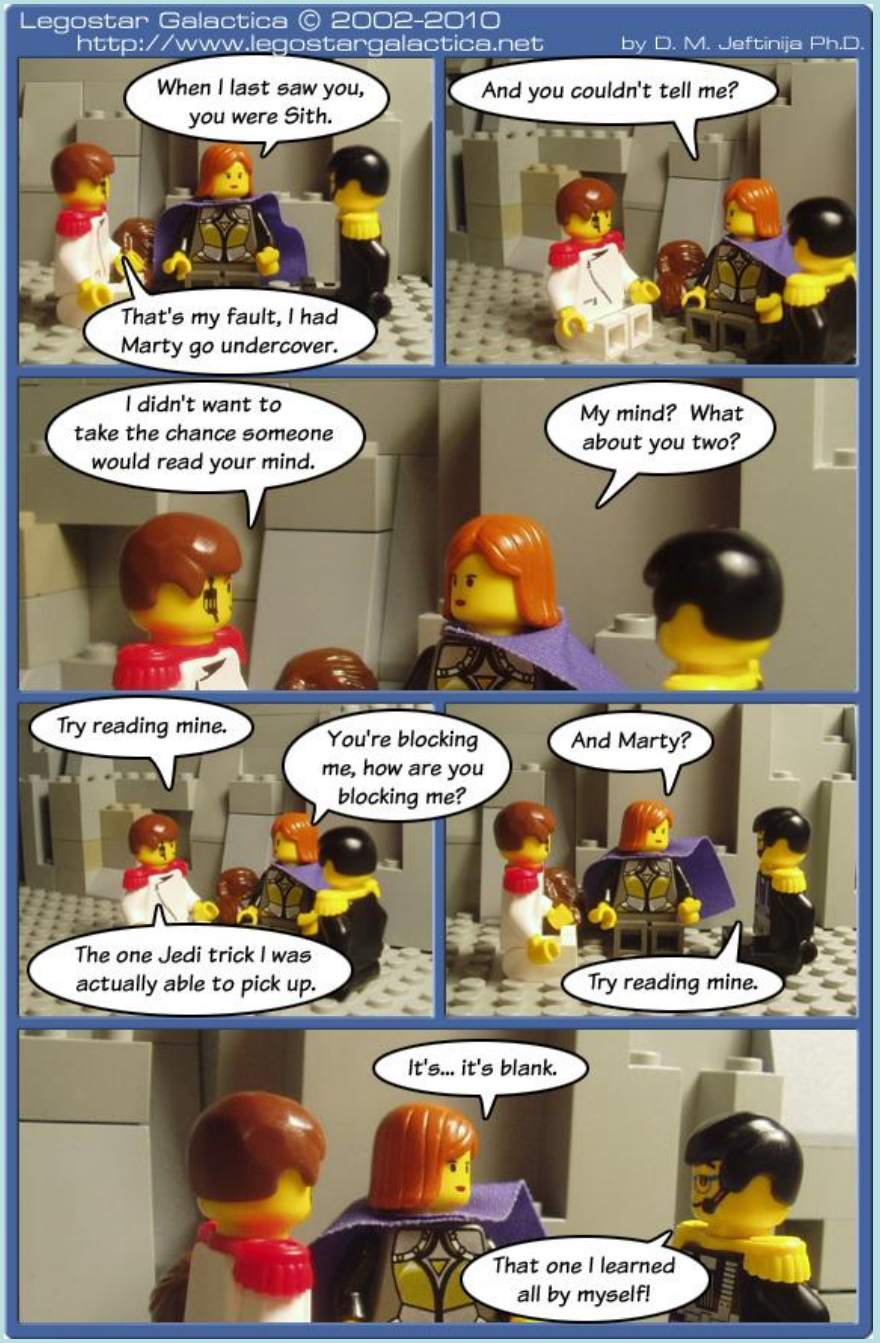
Creating a comic: Step Four

- Decide the look of the strip (and the title)
  - How many panels per page? Will you have a set number of panels or a variety?
  - Word balloons vs. text blocks?
  - Horizontal vs. vertical layout?
  - Create a logo!

Creating a comic: Step Five

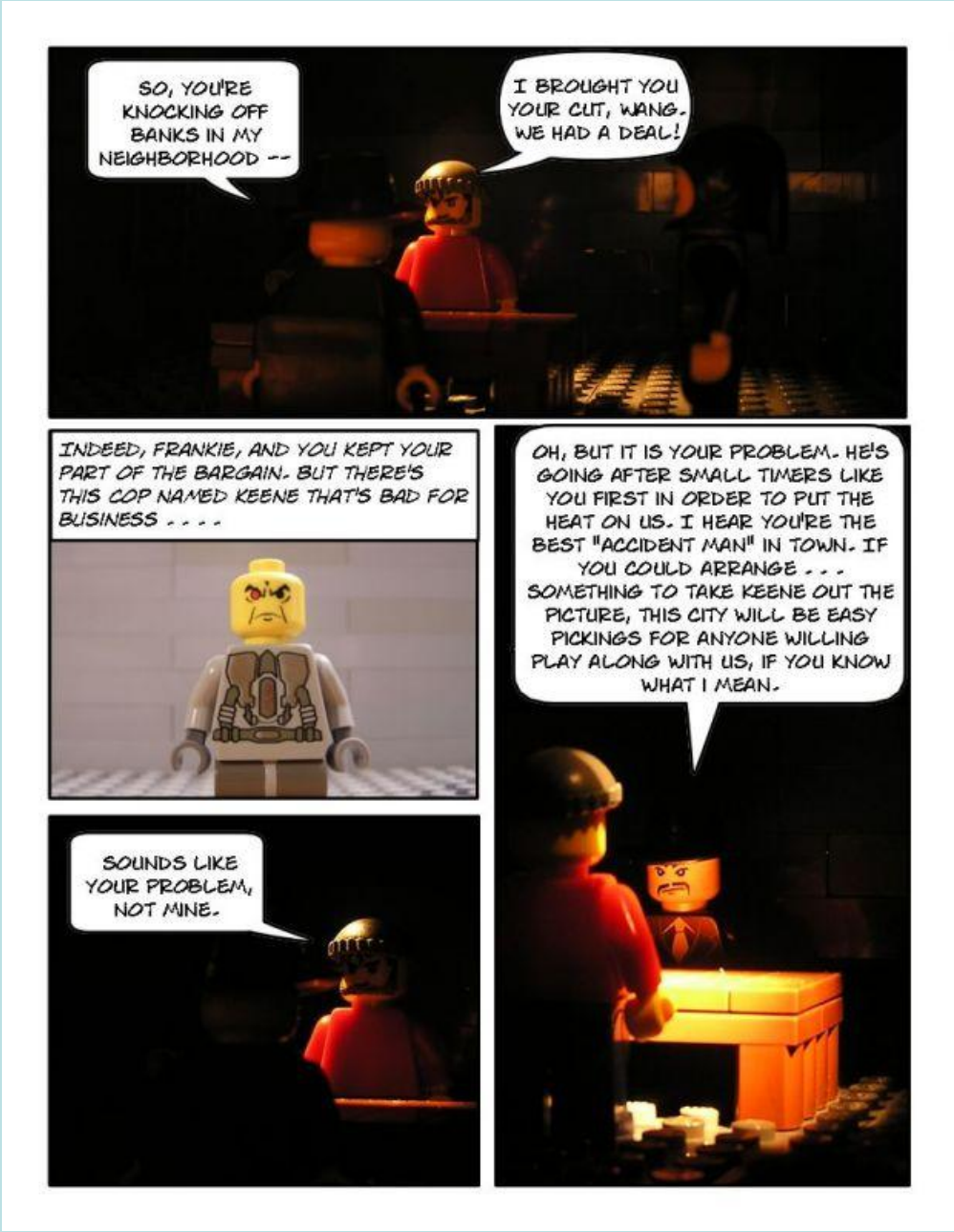
- Photography
  - You don’t need an expensive camera, just one with focus lock and a macro-function
  - You can shoot your comic anywhere you like, but it’s helpful to learn a little bit about lighting (use the internet, the info is out there)
  - Think cinematically
    - Don’t take all your shots from the same angle or position.
    - Use lighting to create mood and tension

Notice the subtle differences in the camera angle or cropping techniques used in this example from Legostar Galactica



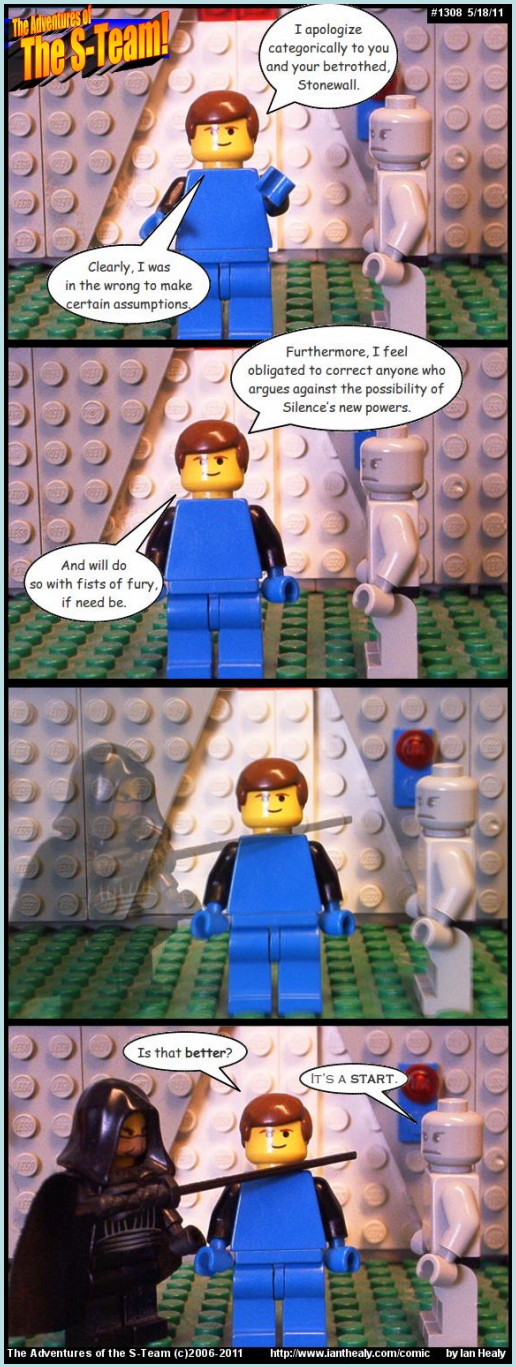
- Don’t just turn on the lights and take pictures – aim your lights!
- You can use bits of cardboard (or wall of out-of-shot bricks) to create shadows.
- You’re telling a story, not showing off a model, so not everything needs to be illuminated.
- Doyle will now explain how he pulled off the shots shown on the right.

- For these shots, I made a hole in the roof and shined a flashlight in … and took a lot of photos!



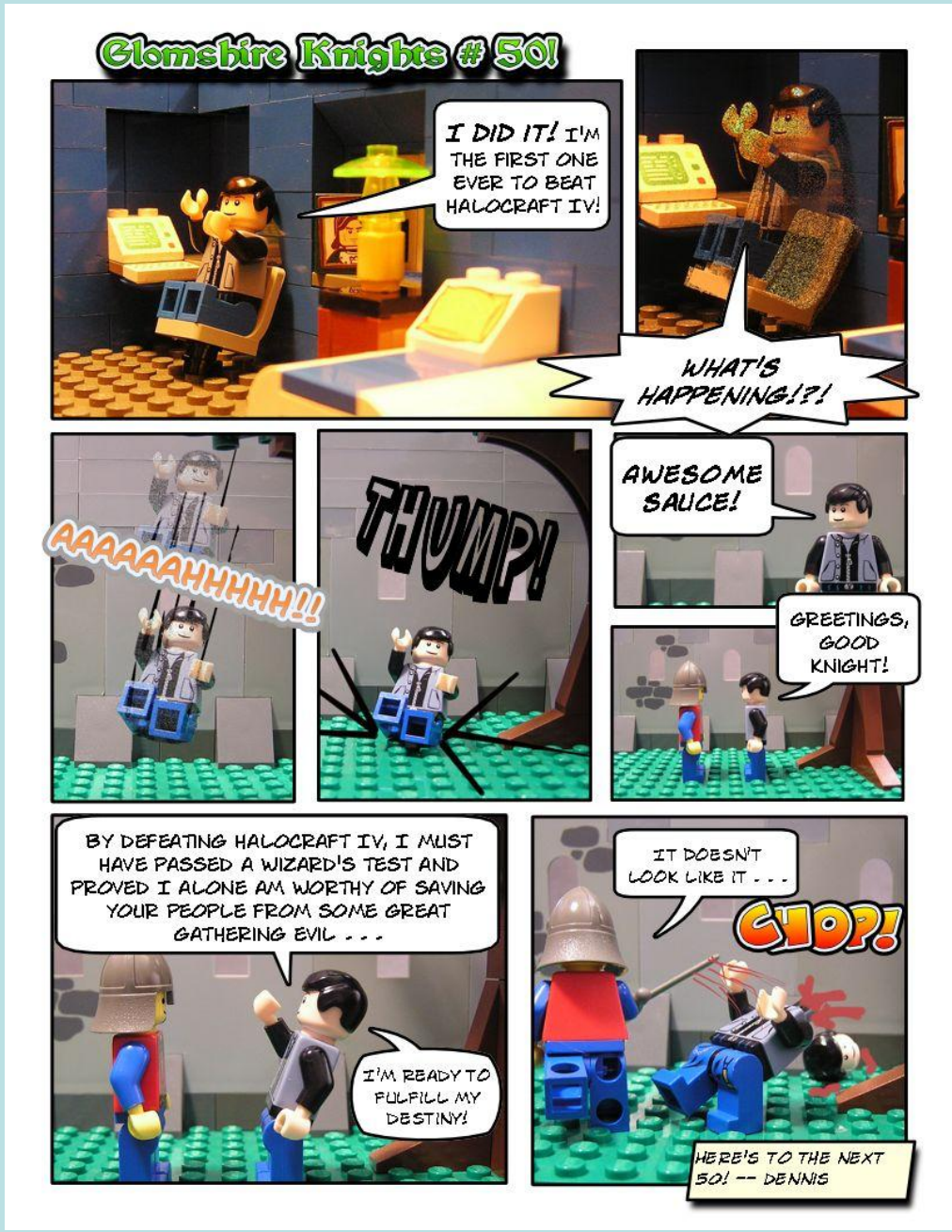
Creating a comic: Step Six

- Special effects – Will you need them?
  - Nearly every comicker uses special effects at some point, but it is always by choice
  - There are a number of programs available to perform special effects. Photoshop Elements is fairly cheap, but GIMP is free
    - There are plenty of tutorials on the web for specific techniques in creating special effects
      - » The next few slides give just a few examples of effects


The Adventures of The S-Team!
#1308 5/18/11
I apologize categorically to you and your betrothed, Stonewall.
Clearly, I was in the wrong to make certain assumptions.
Furthermore, I feel obligated to correct anyone who argues against the possibility of Silence's new powers.
And will do so with fists of fury, if need be.
Is that better?
IT'S A START.
The Adventures of the S-Team (c)2006-2011 http://www.ianthealy.com/comic by Ian Healy

KA-BLAM

PEW!


Glomshire Knights # 50!
I DID IT! I'M THE FIRST ONE EVER TO BEAT HALOCRAFT IV!
WHAT'S HAPPENING!?!
AAAAAAHHHHH!!
THUMP!
AWESOME SAUCE!
GREETINGS, GOOD KNIGHT!
BY DEFEATING HALOCRAFT IV, I MUST HAVE PASSED A WIZARD'S TEST AND PROVED I ALONE AM WORTHY OF SAVING YOUR PEOPLE FROM SOME GREAT GATHERING EVIL . . .
I'M READY TO FULFILL MY DESTINY!
IT DOESN'T LOOK LIKE IT . . .
CLOP!
HERE'S TO THE NEXT 50! -- DENNIS

Creating a comic: Step Seven

- Publish!
  - Why do a comic if people aren't going to see it?
    - Publishing options*
      - **Hosted solution**
        - » **Comic Genesis**
        - » **Keenspot**
        - » **DrunkDuck**
        - » **WebComic Planet**
        - » **ComicFury**
      - **Host yourself**
        - » **ComicPress** / **WordPress**
        - » **LiteDoodle**

*Stolen from BCN forum, info assembled by Louise Dade of Tranquility Base

Publishing isn't the end, it's the start!

Promote your comic on your website, in your signature on forums, on posters stapled in laundry mats, at Brickworld, Brickcon, Brickfair, Brickmagic, Brickanything!

No reason for these examples except the fact they make me laugh -- Dennis

Brickcomicking is simply continuing what we all did as young kids – breathing life into inanimate objects with our imaginations … and sharing it with the world.

Interested in learning more?

Visit us at the

BCN BRICK COMIC NETWORK

http://brickcomicnetwork.com

Author Panel

- Featuring
  - Chris Doyle of “Brick House”
  - Derek Almen of “Nerds in Space”
  - Dennis Price of “Glomshire Knights”

  - And hopefully some special guests live via webchat