

The Song of Swords  
by Fred Saberhagen

Who holds Coinspinner knows good odds,  
Whichever move he make,  
But the Sword of Chance, to please the gods,  
Slips from him like a snake.

The Sword of Justice balances the pans  
Of right and wrong, and foul and fair,  
Eye for an eye, Doomgiver scans  
The fate of all folk everywhere.

Dragonslicer, Dragonslicer, how d'you slay?  
Reaching for the heart in behind the scales,  
Dragonslicer, Dragonslicer, where do you stay?  
In the belly of the giant that my Blade impales.

Farslayer howls across the world  
For thy heart! For thy heart! who hast wronged me,  
Vengeance is his who casts the Blade,  
Yet he will, in the end, no triumph see.

Whose flesh the Sword of Mercy hurts has drawn no breath,  
Whose soul its heals has wandered in the night,  
Has paid the summing of all debts in death,  
Has turned to see returning light.

The Mindsword spun in the dawn's grey light,  
And men and demons knelt down before,  
The Mindsword flashed in the midday bright,  
Gods joined the dance, and the march to war,  
It spun in the twilight dim as well,  
And gods and men marched off to hell.

I shatter Swords and splinter spears,  
None stands to Shieldbreaker;  
My point's the fount of orphan's tears,  
My edge the widowmaker.

The Sword of Stealth is given  
To one lonely and despised;  
Sightblinder's gifts: his eyes are keen,  
His nature is disguised.

The Tyrant's Blade hath no blood spilled  
But doth the spirit carve,  
Soulcutter hath no body killed,  
But many left to starve.

The Sword of Siege struck a hammer's blow  
With a crash, and a smash, and a tumbled wall,  
Stonecutter laid a castle low  
With a groan, and a roar, and a tower's fall.

Long roads the Sword of Fury makes,  
Hard walls it builds around the soft,  
The fighter who Townsaver takes  
Can bid farewell to home and croft.

Who holds Wayfinder finds good roads,  
Its master's step is brisk;  
The Sword of Wisdom lightens loads  
But adds unto their risk.