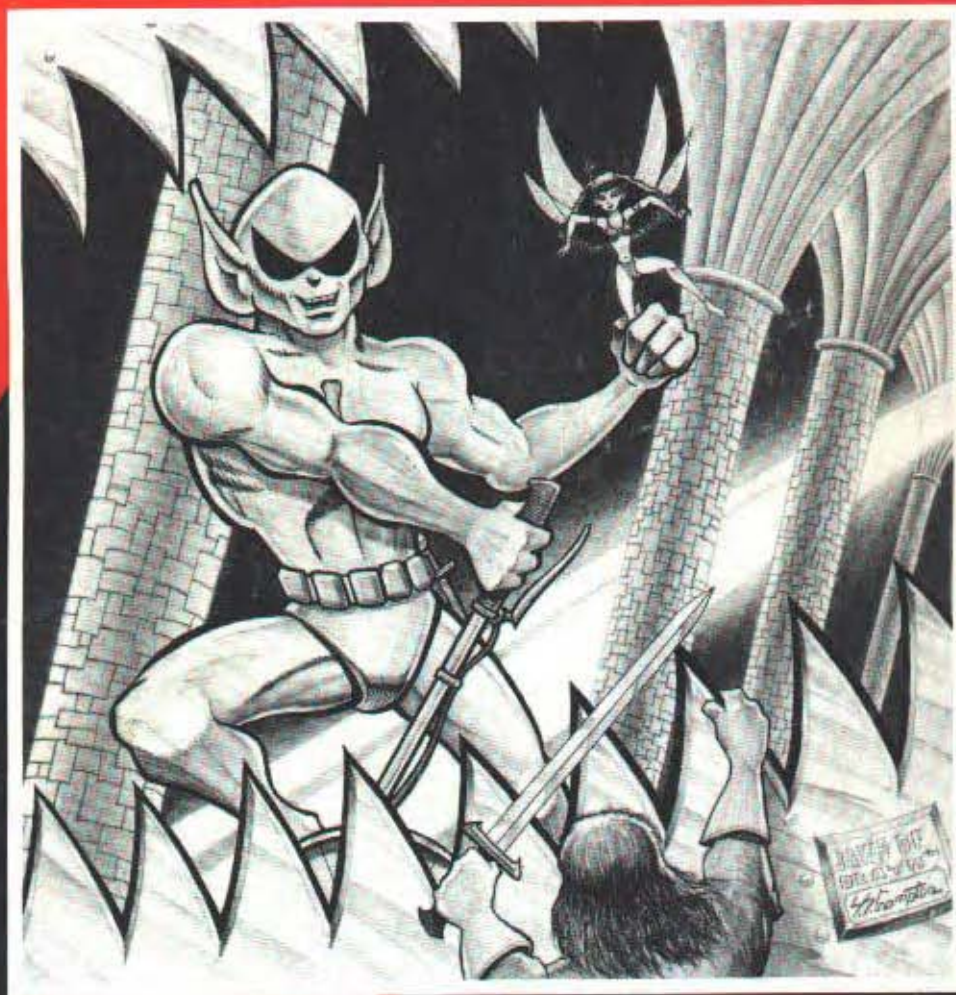


Grimtooth's

TRAPS ATE!

a game-master's aid for
all role-playing systems



Even more traps
for use with any
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All-System
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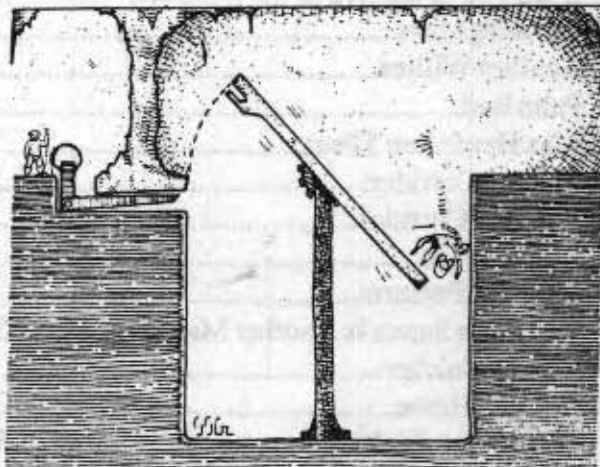
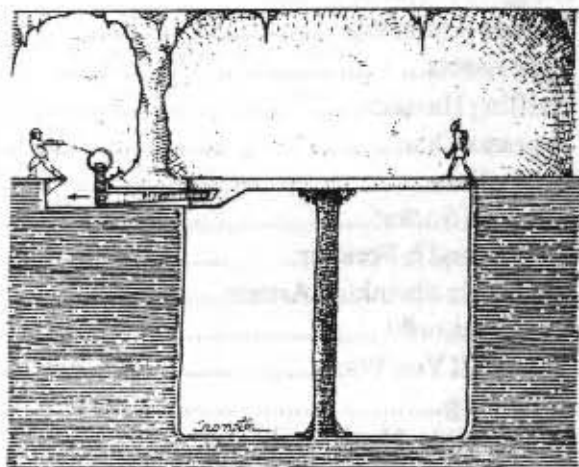
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TROLL TALK

It's been awhile. I thought by now you clowns would have had enough. All I get is negative reviews from pinheads and mamby-pamby pleas to clean up my act. Listening to you humans squawk, you'd think I'd made the Ten Most Wanted List.



Somebody must be reading me. The three previous volumes of my peerless series have spawned a number of degenerate cults, and every once in awhile a fan letter finds its way to my cave demanding more traps, more insults, more violence, and more Steve Crompton artwork!

And it has been a while since my last book...

Tough. The Troll marches to the beat of his own drummer. You'll take what I give you and like it!

While cursing me out one side of your mouth, you've all clamored for more from the other, and believe me when I say the mere mortals at Blade and Task Force have not been deaf to your cries. But the Troll doesn't work cheap, and I've enjoyed my life of semi-retirement, so as much as the world has needed another TRAPS book, you've all had to do without. I'm dying for you guys. I really am.

It took awhile, but the publishers finally forked over enough maidens and mead to get my attention, and the result is TRAPS ATE--Now let's get one thing straight! This is my fourth book of traps. Everyone bought





GRIMTOOTH'S TRAPS and TRAPS TOO. There was a third book of traps, but the less said about that fiasco the better. A couple years ago I gave you TRAPS FORE, and now you have TRAPS ATE. Clear? Good...

...because I'm sick of all you provincial bozos complaining that my books aren't numbered as humans render counting. It's a wide world, you know, and not everyone counts consecutively. If you human zombies all want to count the same way--four follows three follows two follows one--that's your business, but don't expect Grimtooth to shuffle lockstep into oblivion with you!

Right! On to business. Within this volume you'll find all the mayhem you've come to expect, and not a few good ideas besides. As before, I've provided no feeble "game stats" for any of my traps--if you want to know how many "dice" damage the **Delvermatic Pinsetter** does, then round up some trolls to bowl a few frames and decide for yourself. As much as it may scare the milk out of you, I expect my fans to do a little honest creative work now and then, and that means modifying my already perfect designs to suit your needs. To get you started in the right direction, I've provided ample note space on each page, and all my traps have a "deadliness rating" in the form of skulls...the more skulls you see, the deadlier a trap is. So no more whimpering! Take responsibility for your own worthless lives, and for the way you use my traps!

Long time fans of this series (those few they still allow on the streets) will notice a chapter new to this volume. With a title like TRAPS ATE, a "Food" section seemed in order, but be warned! Don't expect trite little recipes for dragon wine or basilisk pie--that stuff is for girlscouts! This is the real thing, boys and girls, and that means a collection of traps that either kill you with food or turn you into the same--frequently both!

So strap on your lobster bib and ask mom for a sharp knife. It's time to take a bite out of TRAPS ATE. Hold hands and don't get separated, and be sure to sign the release before you read any further. It used to be I could poison a gamer every now and then and get away with it, but lawyers are ruining all my fun. In my next volume of traps, you can expect whole chapters devoted to barristers and insurance brokers, but for now its hack and slash time!

Screw up your courage and leave your stomachs by the door.
Anyone who faints gets left behind!

--Grimtooth, Somewhere In The Toxic Wilderness

P.S. DO NOT FEED THE MONSTERS!!!

Grim





1

Room Traps

Far be it for me to lecture you lot on room traps. I've seen the average gamer's room, and I wouldn't dare venture inside without a pack of my mates at my side. As bad as old pizza and smelly socks can be, there isn't a one of you who couldn't do without a pointer or two on the fine art of building a room trap. It isn't enough to simply smash a delver flat with a 10,000 pound weight, although it might hold your attention for a century or two. To build a truly memorable room trap, remember Grimtooth's Three Rules:

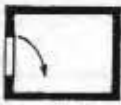
1) MAKE IT BIG! How much can another few squares on the grid paper cost? Think SCOPE!

2) MAKE IT WEIRD! Never use an orc where a moose will do. Make sure your victims remember your trap, and have something to tell their pals when they're killing time up in heaven (or in that other place).

3) MAKE IT VIOLENT!!! No half measures! Crack some skulls! It's a new decade, and it's time to make it count!

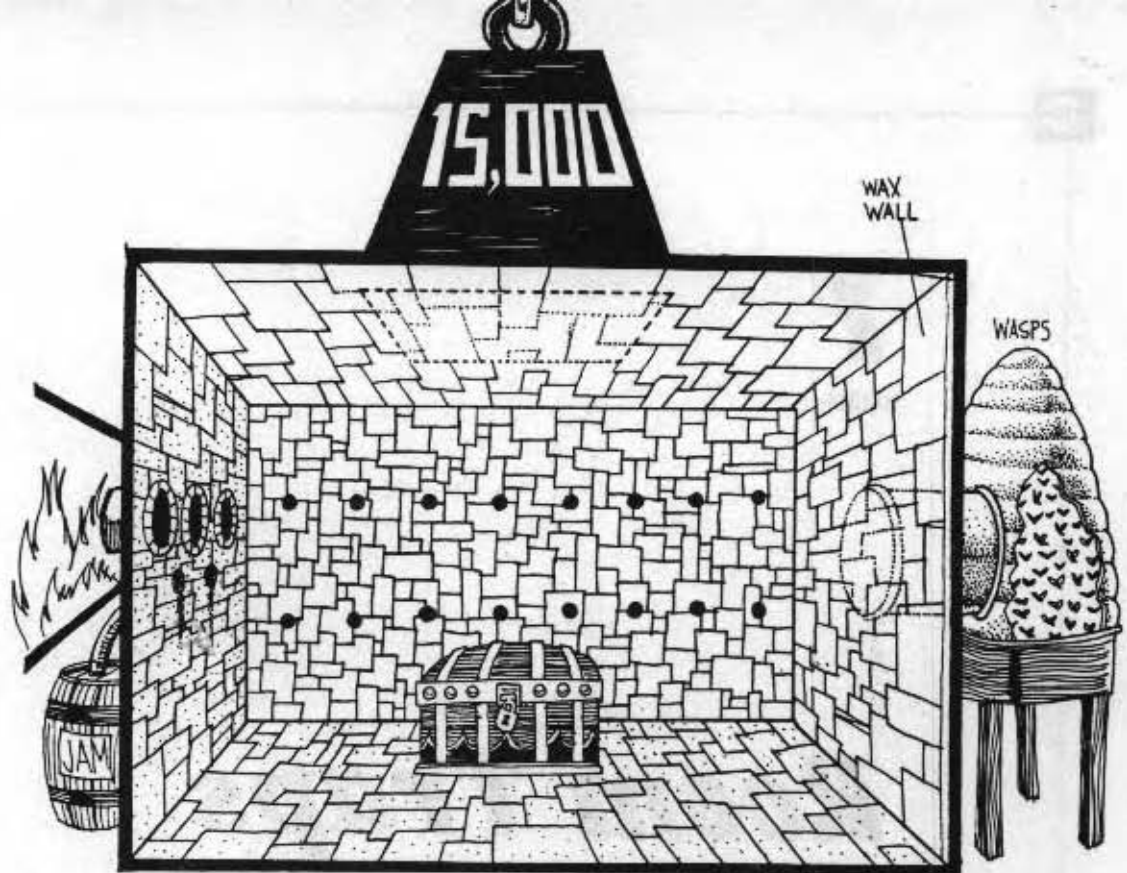
Got it? Good. Now listen up and watch your hands and fingers.





Room Traps

- NOTES -



Brian Lawton identifies himself both as "Thorgrim Ghastlybeard" and the "Homicidal Bugbear of the Year" when introducing his submission. I'm afraid there is nothing I can do for you, Brian. Perhaps having your trap published will bring you great fame in your native land of Scotland, and help you raise funds to purchase the spare parts your head requires.



Brian calls his first trap **The Danger Room**, a title with which I have no problem. It wouldn't do to call this "The Rumpus Room", or "The Dining Room", or whatever-Brian's title is understated, but it works. What it is, Brian.

As with so many room traps, this place screams "trap" to anyone with half a brain in their skull, which means most delvers will blunder right into it. Characters are presented with a room containing the ubiquitous treasure chest. Observant individuals will notice rows of holes on the walls directly behind and to the right of the treasure.

The fur begins to fly when a pressure plate located just inside the door is activated. A shower of spears then fly from the upper row of holes opposite the door. A standard dungeon delver drop drill will dodge the spears, but the characters aren't out of the woods yet. When the spears hit the wall surrounding the door through which the characters entered the room, a concealed 15,000 pound lead weight is released to crash through the ceiling and land on the treasure chest (and maybe on a greedy delver or two). Simultaneously, a second volley of spears is released from the lower row of holes, which should upset anyone who avoided the first volley by dropping to the ground.

Brian's not done. The lead weight oh-so-subtly triggers yet another pressure plate, causing great gorgs of raspberry jam to eject from holes on the left wall...the room should shortly be sticky with the stuff. This is followed by gouts of flame also issued



from the left wall, the purpose of which is to melt the wax facade on the right wall--behind which is a tank of killer wasps.

Thus speared, crushed, gorged, and stung, the characters should be about done. Brian suggests that if anyone survives this treatment, they find the treasure consists of a single gold coin guarded by something small and gruesome and toothy. Those Scots are crabby, aren't they?

Brian's next room trap is a tasty entry probably better suited to one of Carl Jung's dream journals than a trap manual, but we're running short of ideas, so what the heck. **Tongue In Cheek** should be placed near a location where the characters are likely to be bleeding, as the trap requires blood to operate. May I suggest locating it near the delvers' accountant's office, especially if it is tax time? Orcs are nasty, but if you really want to open a vein, consult the IRS.

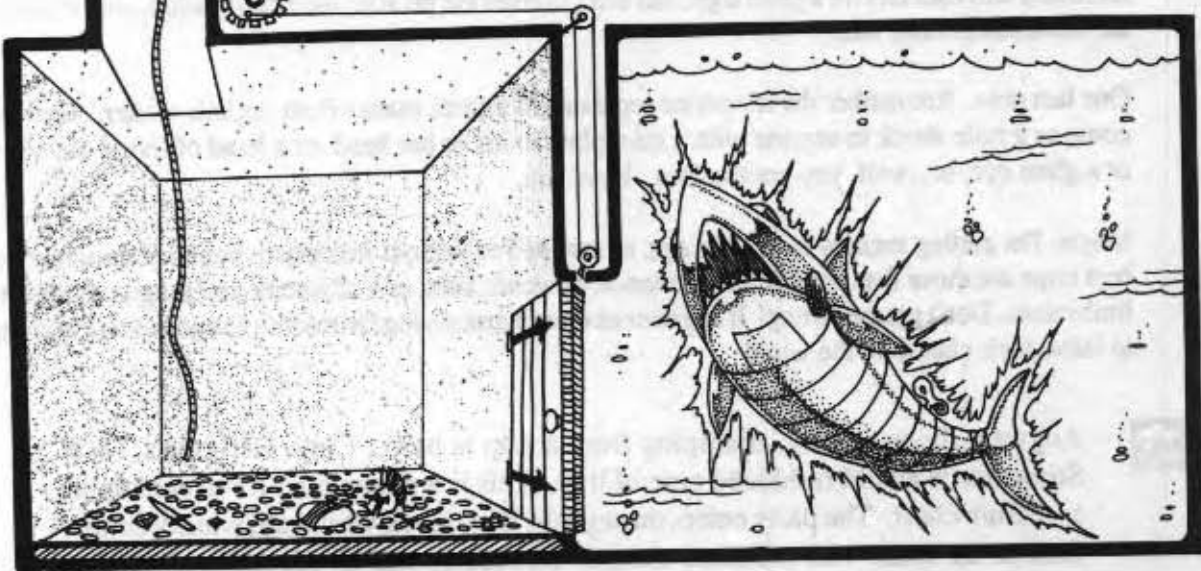
At first this appears to be a lavishly decorated room with an intricate red mosaic on the floor. One wall is perforated by two rows of holes, which should make everyone nervous, particularly if they've already faced Brian's "Danger Room". With any luck, the delvers will elect to crawl across the floor to avoid the holes, and that's when the fun starts!

The floor is actually a large mass of tongues. All together, now...YUCK! The tongues love blood, and will latch onto any bloody bit of flesh that slithers by. Think of all those bloody hands and knees, and all those tongues. Hard to keep your mind on business, isn't it?

So where is the trap? I suppose that's up to you. Some folks like tongues more than others, and I refuse to take a stand on such a ticklish subject. It's worth noting the tongues start to flip like fish out of water if gorged with enough blood, so using the holes to pump the room full of the red stuff will make for a memorable experience. And remember, kids--don't try this at home!

Eric Watkins offers the **Electric Shark Trap** for your abuse. This room is located at the bottom of a drop shaft, so characters will have to find a novel way of descending to their own deaths. The floor of the room is littered with treasure--real or worthless, it really doesn't matter. What does matter is the floor of this chamber is insulated, which will probably escape the notice of anyone twisting with the greeds from all the loot lying around.

The trap is activated when someone opens the door leading from this room. Metal shears





Room Traps

- NOTES -

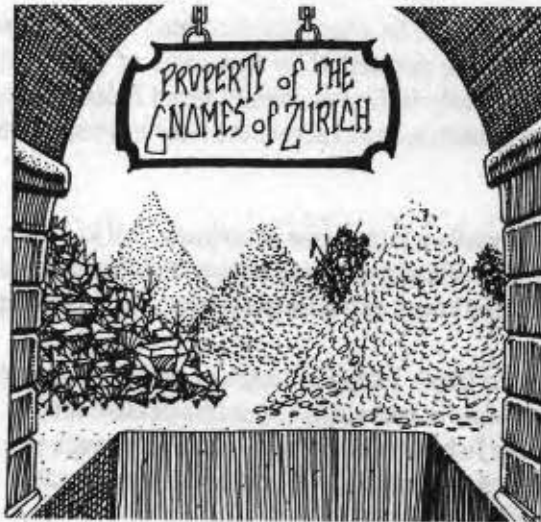
spring across the drop shaft, neatly severing any ropes the characters may have secured behind them to provide for their escape. Behind the door is a room filled with water, which will quickly flood into the room at the bottom of the drop shaft. It's unlikely anyone will drown, but they're in the soup when the electric shark residing in the watery room is released into the chamber. The mechanical fish isn't very well put together, nor is it insulated, but the occasional 2000 volt electric bursts the beasts emits should finish anyone floating in the water...anyone not wearing rubber armor, that is.

Wait a second. Rubber armor?!? Exactly what game are you playing, Eric??



No doubt you've heard of the Gnomes of Zurich? Some say they control all the world's commerce. If you have any gold, the chances are excellent one of the Gnomes has handled it at one time or another. I suspect Doug Jacobs is closely affiliated with the Gnomes, if indeed he is not one himself. I hope Doug is at least on good terms with the Gnomes, as they are going to be very upset for his revealing the details of their **Treasure Sorter**.

This is a room entirely filled by a seemingly bottomless pit, on the far side of which is a visible



treasure chamber. The treasure chamber is protected by an invisible wall. Within the chamber piles of treasure are in full view. The treasure is neatly sorted into piles—gold, silver, copper, gems, weapons, and armor each have a separate pile. A plaque near the edge of the pit reads, "Property Of The Gnomes Of Zurich".

The pit is a teleporter. Anything entering the pit will vanish amid a cloud of magical blue sparks. The

teleporter automatically separates organic and inorganic matter. Treasure is sorted by type, while the organic matter carrying the treasure (the character) is teleported elsewhere in the dungeon. Doug teleports the character a respectful distance down the hall. I suggest teleporting them into the "Lobster Trap" from the original GRIMTOOTH'S TRAPS, but then again I'm cranky.

To complete this trap, after a character vanishes into the teleporter, an illusion of that character happily looting the treasure chamber is projected on the invisible wall. Hopefully other party members will take this for a good sign, and elect to enter the pit after their companion, only to suffer the same teleporting fate.

One last note. Remember the teleporter separates inorganic matter from organic matter. This can come as a rude shock to anyone with a steel plate in his or her head, or a hand of living diamond, or a glass eye, or...well, you get the idea. Have fun.

Maybe I'm getting mellow in my old age, or maybe I'm just old fashioned, but it seems to me the best traps are those that provide some chance, however slim, of a character escaping with life and limb intact. Don't get me wrong! If anyone out there starts saying Grimtooth has gone soft I'm going to leave their cheese in the wind!



Anyway, dying is easy. Escaping from a trap is hard. Chris Herborth's **Thief Squasher** is an old fashioned type of trap. This is a rectangular room containing a treasure chest. The party enters through the door in the west wall, while a similar door in the south wall promises escape. Inspection will reveal the south door is

locked, however, as is the treasure chest. Especially sharp characters might locate the secret door in the north wall, but will find that it opens onto a blank wall--there is no room or corridor beyond.



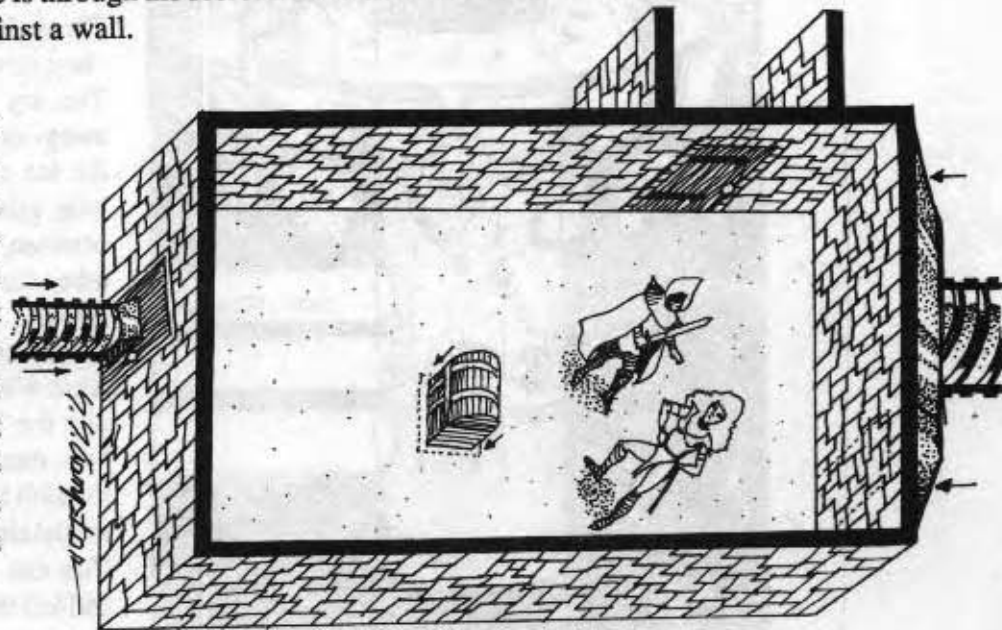
Room Traps

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The fun starts when someone tampers with the chest. First, audible clicks will be heard from the west and south doors. The west door is now locked, while the south door is unlocked. Next, the treasure chest slowly sinks into the floor. The chest is itself made of solid wood, so there's no way someone can open the chest and hide inside. Simultaneously, the north wall begins to ever so slowly inch toward the south wall. The motion of the wall and the chest are synchronized such that the chest will drop all the way into the floor seconds before the wall passes above, meaning there's no chance the characters can use the chest to somehow jam the approaching wall.

Opening the south door just makes things worse. The entire door is in fact a spring loaded ram which will pulp anyone trying to open it against the approaching north wall. The only way to escape is through the secret door in the north wall, which itself now no longer backs up against a wall.

Once through the secret door, the party will notice two things. First, the treasure chest has risen from the pit to resume its original position. Second, the secret door is of the one-way variety--characters can pass through it from the south, but it doesn't exist at all from the north. Observant characters will also note the west door is once again unlocked.



If the party wants to leave now, they are free to do so. I know it hurts to let them get away, but there are lots of fools in the sea, and you'll have another chance to get them if you're dungeon is worthy of the name. If, however, the party gets greedy, and tries to mess once more with the treasure chest they already know is a trigger, then they deserve what happens next.

No proper trap is without a means of resetting itself. After pressing against the south wall (and thus resetting the ram in the south wall, if it was sprung), the screw powering the north wall will operate in reverse after someone mucks with the chest. The treasure chest will once again sink into the ground to allow the wall to pass above, but this time there is no escape. Without the secret door to scuttle through, the party will be crushed to death by the north wall as it returns to its original position. Try this one and see if you don't agree a trap is all the more insidious when it offers a whiff of freedom, then takes it away again.

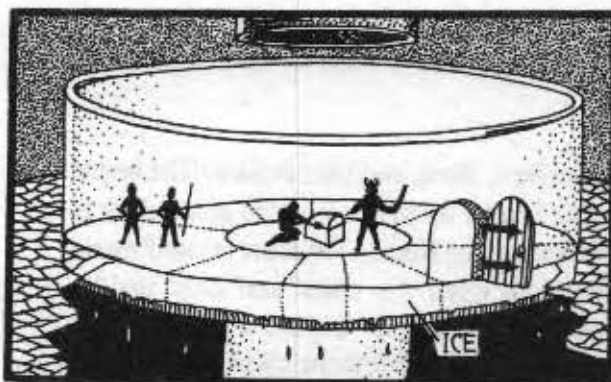
If arbitrary death and destruction is more your style, try Ian Milham's Ice Cube Lube Tube. As with the previous trap, a chest provides the trigger, but that's where resemblance





Room Traps

— NOTES —



ends. The trap begins as a round room with a treasure chest in the center. The floor is a solid block of ice, which should make everyone think "trap", and at least give them some chance to take precautions about what happens next.

This time, opening a treasure chest seals off a round room, and simultaneously isolates one or more characters standing by the chest with an entirely new ring of walls. Shortly thereafter, the floor beneath the surrounding section of walls falls away, dropping anyone standing therein into whatever predicament you desire.

Those characters that remained near the chest now have problems of their own. The icy floor section rapidly drops away--only several chains attached to the ice check the party's fall down a long tube. A few feet of clearance between the icy floor section and the tube allows the characters to see what awaits. It's a pool of molten lava! It doesn't take much intelligence to figure what will happen when the slab of ice hits the lava. If the characters don't have much intelligence, let the edges of the slab begin to melt away as the slab drops into the lower reaches of the tube. You can drop everyone into the lava and kill them out of hand, but it's more fun to allow the party to escape through a series of tunnels branching off from the main tube.



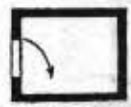
Anyone who has ever lost their chariot keys has experienced the frustration of Jersey Turnpike's Oh There It Is Room. Working with the theory of parallel dimensions, Jersey has found a way to transfer small items from one realm to another, much to a delver's chagrin.

Jersey uses a domed circular room roughly thirty feet across as the location for his trap. The floor of the room is filled to knee height with a clinging mist. The room is occupied by innumerable invisible magical sprites. The sprites delight in assaulting anyone who enters the room, doing their level best to steal weapons, jewels, helmets, and basically anything that isn't tied down from the characters.

The sprites drop anything they grab, and when something drops into the mist cloaking the floor of this room, it disappears to an alternate dimension. Simultaneously, an object of approximately the same mass comes over to our dimension from some other, effectively replacing the object that was lost.

If a delver loses something of value in this room, they're likely to crawl around in the mist trying to locate it. With a little bit of creativity, you can have a lot of fun with this room. Say someone drops a magic shield

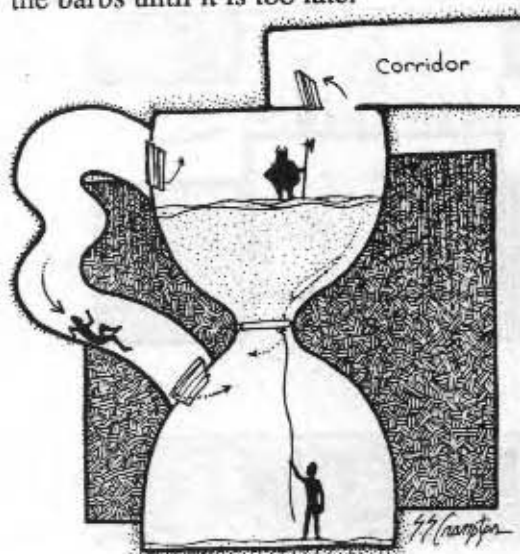
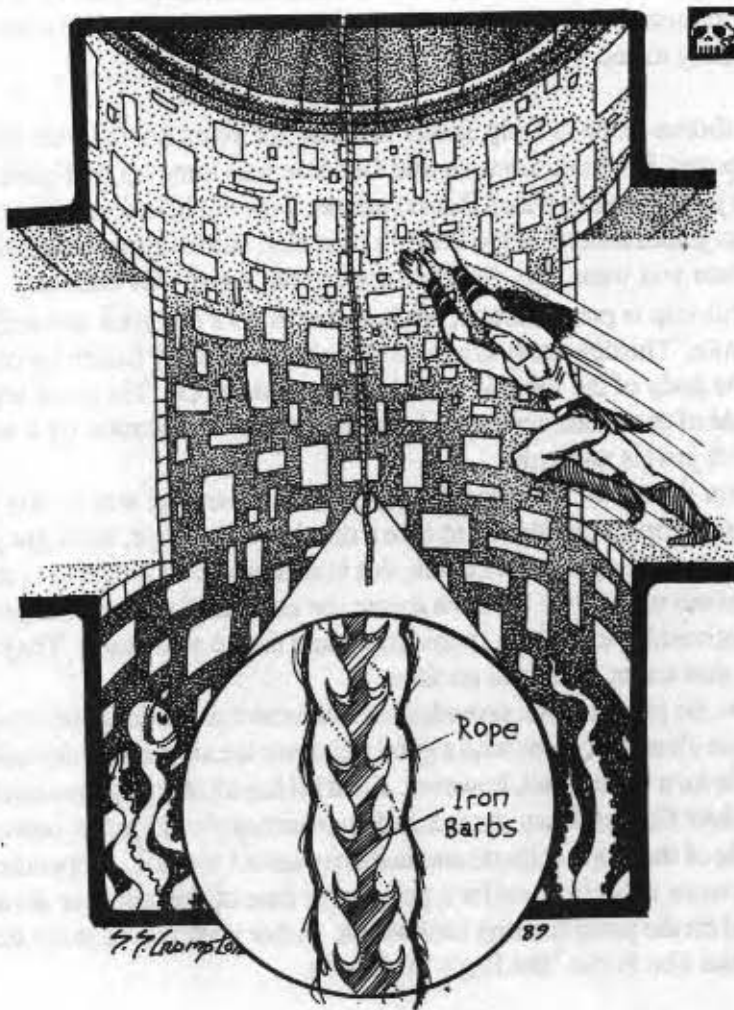
through the floor...why not replace it with a bear trap ready to spring shut? If you maintain a list of everything a party loses in this room, you could possibly return those items during a later visit to this place--or you could continue to torture the characters with all sorts of odd and lethal artifacts from some other realm. If you aren't certain how to work one of my many item traps into your dungeon, this is your cue. Oh, and by the way...if you find my chariot keys, please forward them to one of my stooges at Blade.



Room Traps

- NOTES -

Andrew Bander offers **Permanent Rope Burn** as a means to foil would-be Tarzans in any dungeon party. Place a room or chasm placed somewhere in your dungeon athwart the likely line of advance. Hanging over the abyss is a rope. The most obvious way to cross the chasm is to leap out and grab the rope, but those who do are in for a nasty surprise. The rope is in fact tightly wound around a barbed steel cable. The barbs stick up at a ninety degree angle, and the rope sheath surrounding the cable is very loose and thin. The results for anyone trying to hang onto this horrible thing should be obvious. If this trap is placed in a sufficiently dark location, you may not even need to disguise the cable. From a distance, it will be impossible to spot the barbs until it is too late.



The Sands Of Time, by Joseph Yeager, is a classy room trap that properly foreshadows what will happen to anyone caught in its deadly embrace. This trap is a two story room entered from the top through a trap door. The floor of the upper room is filled with fine sand, and should seem slippery and treacherous enough to make the party feel this sand is in fact the entire trap. Perceptive characters may notice this chamber is shaped something like the inside of a bell, but with the floor of the chamber covered in sand, the exact dimensions are impossible to





determine. A careful search will reveal a secret door at ground level, behind which is a slick slide spiraling down. Anyone traveling down this slide will be disoriented, and should have a hard time determining exactly where they end up. In fact, the slide lets out into a dark bell shaped room directly beneath the first--a room which forms the lower half of a huge hour glass. The only feature of this room is a rope hanging from a cork in the ceiling. Pulling the rope frees the cork, and permits sand from the room above to flow into the lower chamber, suffocating anyone within.

While this may at first seem a painfully obvious trap, remember tumbling down the slide will disorient most characters, and few will understand they are in fact directly beneath the sandy room. Furthermore, never underestimate a delver's curiosity. Someone is bound to pull on the rope, even if only to see what it does.

Osborne Lone is a big sports fan, and for years his favorite show was ABC's Wide World Of Sports. It wasn't so much that Osborne was hung up on figure skating and gymnastics--mostly he just wanted to watch that ski jumper wipe out in the opening credits. In recent years the network has jerked around Wide World's time slot, and its almost impossible to see that great ski accident when you want. So, Osborne created the **Agony Of Defeat**.

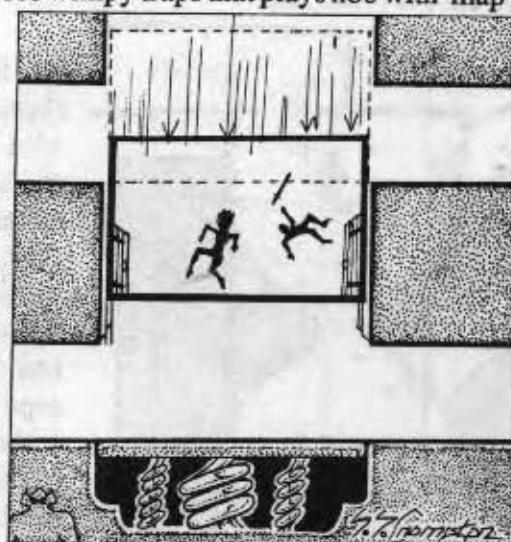
This trap is preposterous, but install it in your dungeon and maybe some maniac will give you a smile. The delvers find a huge chamber artificially frozen by cold spells and captive elementals. The body of the room is filled by a steep ski slope. The slope terminates in a ski jump--on the far side of the room, separated from the character's location by a wide chasm, is a warm cave filled with jewels and gold.

Near the top of the slope the party will find several sets of skis plunged half way into the snow. If someone were foolish to take a run down the slope, he might just be able to clear the chasm by going off the jump. Of course, this is an almost certain ticket to death, but consider all those riches just out of reach in the cave across the chasm. If you want to provide the players with additional motivation, lock them in this room and create a blizzard. They'll start looking for a way across to that warm cavern in no time.

The ski jump is safe, provided the characters pack along their own skis. A skilled ski jumper can even clear the chasm with a good run down the slope. Anyone using the skis provided in this room is in for a violent end, however. Each ski has a hidden magnetized core of opposite polarity. When a skier flashes down the run and approaches the ski jump, powerful hidden lodestones on either side of the slope activate and instantly attract the skis. Depending on which ski is on which foot, a victim will either suffer a permanent case of the splits, or abruptly helicopter around in the air and hit the jump running backwards. Either way, you've in for the thrill of victory as your victims make like Eddie "the Eagle" Edwards.

Jersey Turnpike's **Free Fall Room** is one of those wimpy traps that plays hob with map making attempts and disorients delvers, when it really should be busy breaking heads. To each his own.

The party finds a normal dungeon room at the end of a featureless corridor. Within the room is a sign reading, "Warning! Room subject to periodic bouts of anti-gravity!". The floor is heavily padded, and the walls are supplied with a number of hand-holds. Padding and hand-holds? What is this, Jersey, a filthy pleasure cruise?! I bet you sanded all the corners off your table





when your baby sister started to walk, too.

Anyway, the "action" in this place is something as follows. Sensible delvers will either flee the room altogether or ready themselves for a bout of "anti-gravity". Sure enough, within a few minutes the door to this room slams shut, and the entire room drops down a shaft to the next level of the dungeon, although to delvers isolated in the room it may very well seem that gravity has abruptly gone away.

Put away any images you may cherish of elevators plummeting out of control. Mr. Turnpike, weenie that he is, has even designed a shock absorbing spring for the bottom of the drop shaft to cushion the room's fall. The delvers are now free to leave the room through a corridor every bit as featureless as the one through which they entered, although they will now unknowingly find themselves on a new dungeon level.

All at once, now...oooh! Scary! I'm sure you'll agree with me this trap is improved by a troll laying in ambush in the lower corridor armed with a crossbow ready to blow the delvers' fool heads off. † My mother kept a meticulously clean house. She was always scrubbing or sweeping or wiping or dusting, and absolutely every day she vacuumed. For dear old mum, however, the more she vacuumed, the more discouraged she became. Our cave had a deep shag carpet--quite a luxury, in those andedevulian days--and bits of crud and flesh were always hidden in the roots. It wasn't mom's fault. With a litter of trolls running around the house, we were always dragging some kill or another across the carpet, and stuff just got ground into the rug.

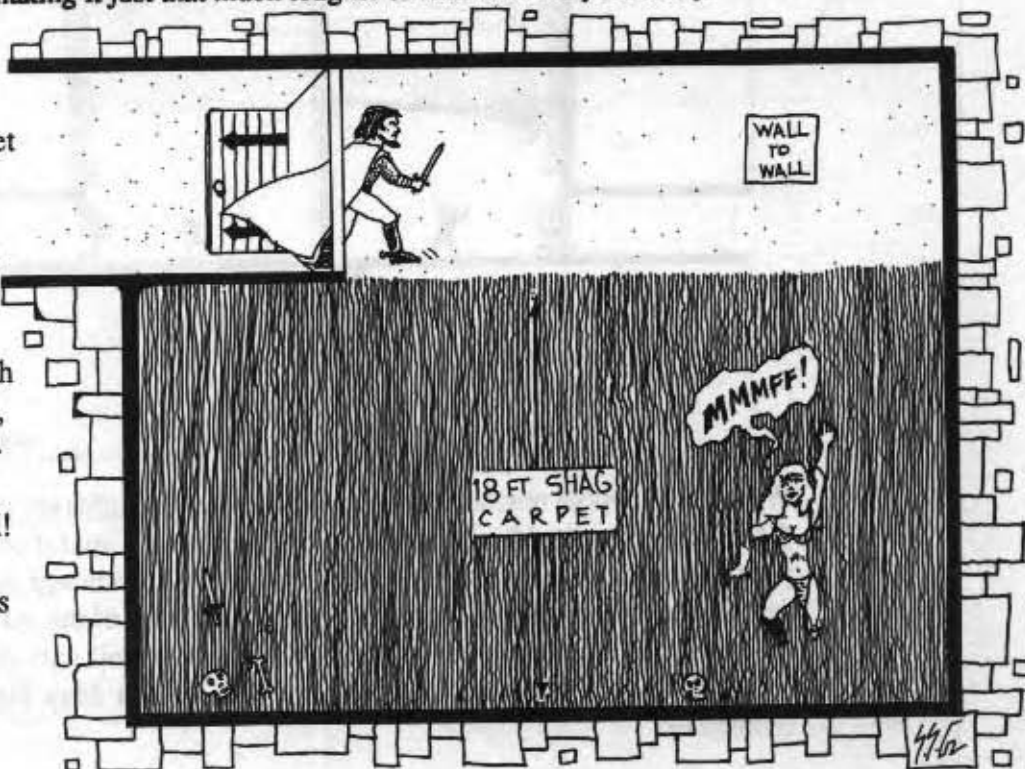
Anyway, I well remember mom vacuuming away to beat the band, working up a crimson sweat on her craggy brow. Every time the story would be the same. No sooner would she cease vacuuming than one of our pet hellhounds would wander by, stop, sniff suddenly at the carpet, and then eat something too small for us trolls to see. Mom's vacuuming always brought up goodies from the roots of the carpet. No matter how hard she cleaned, it only got worse.

You might encounter similar troubles should you install Dave Logans' Eighteen Foot Deep Plush Carpet Trap in your dungeon. From the door, this room seems trimmed with a deep rich carpet, and it is. Unfortunately, the carpet is eighteen feet deep. Anyone stepping into the room will vanish amid the carpet's roots, there to thrash and struggle along with crumbs and bits of flesh and everything else you find in a well-used patch of shag. Furthermore, a great section of the carpet extends under the corridor leading to this room, making it just that much tougher to find one's way to safety.



A true nerd might suffocate in the carpet before escaping, but it's a lot more fun to let my mom come in and vacuum him up. Even if the old Hoover doesn't punch the character's ticket, the ever hungry hellhounds that trail in my mom's wake will!

Molly Ringworm has insomnia, and one night when she was unable to sleep she



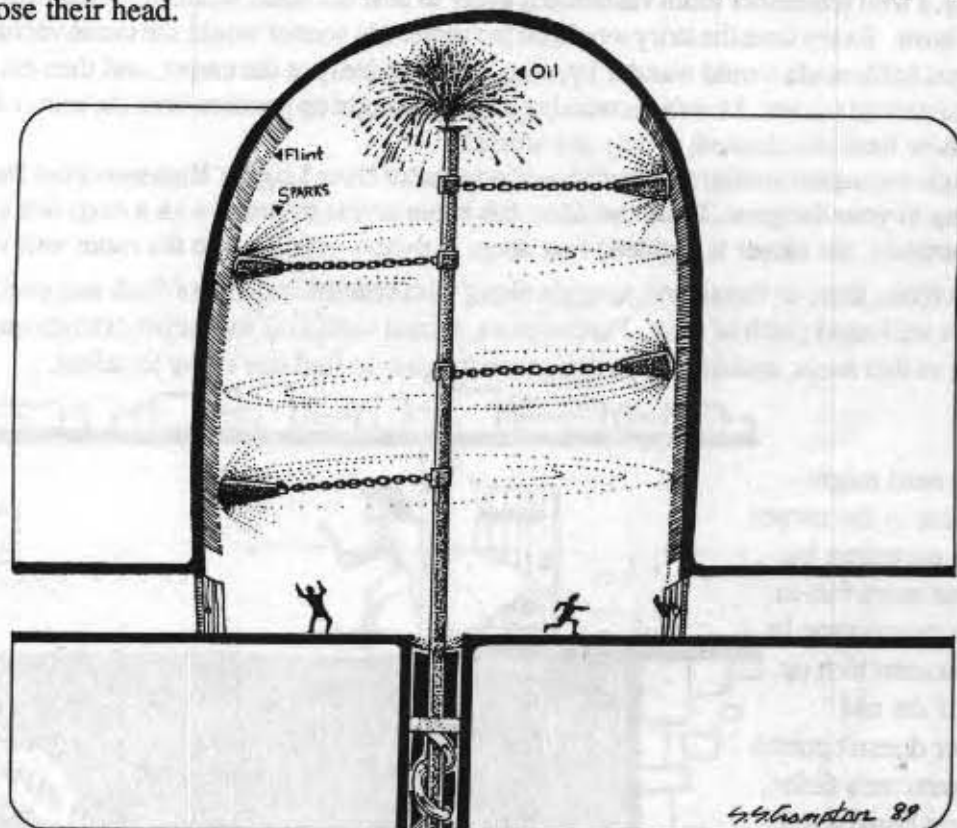


conceived of CycloneThe Deadly May-pole. Some of the best traps flow directly from the subconscious when the mind hovers between dreams and waking, as this design clearly attests.

A tall circular room is accessed through one or more corridors. The floor is vaguely slippery, as if oil has recently been spilled on the flagstones. High up on each wall are continuous bands of black stone that look something like flint. The bands are regularly spaced, and run all the way around the room as they march toward the ceiling. There appears to be some sort of circular depression directly in the center of the floor.

When anyone enters the room, all the doors slam shut and lock. A tall maypole then rises from the circular depression mentioned above. Hanging from the maypole at several different levels are long chains, at the end of which are heavy steel weights.

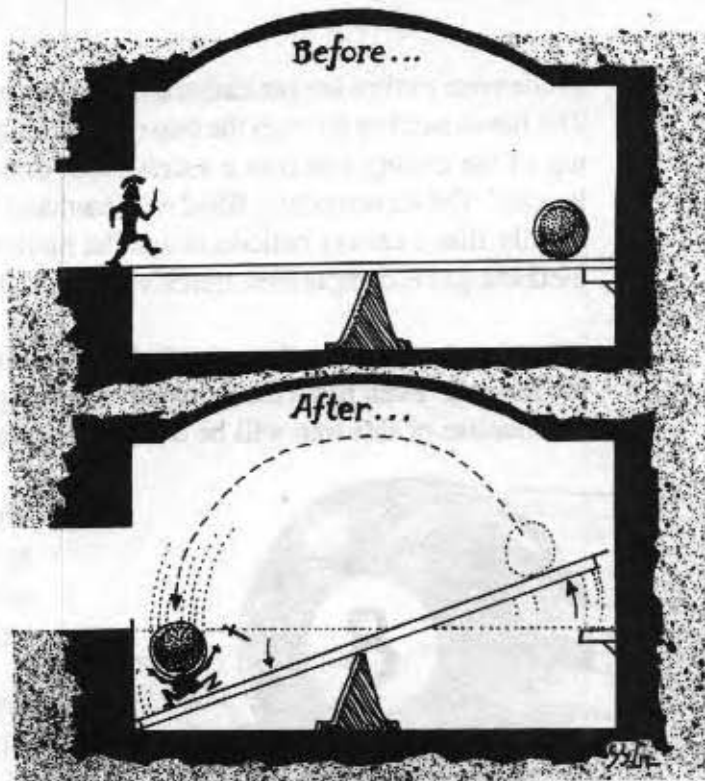
No sooner do the characters take all this in than the maypole begins to rotate. Centrifugal force causes the steel weights to fly up and away from the maypole, and in short order the chains and weights are whirling around the room perpendicular to the pole. Unless the party hits the deck in a hurry, someone is going to lose their head.



When the maypole reaches its top speed, the steel weights are brought level with the multiple bands of flint running around the room. Great showers of sparks appear where the weights strike the flint. Then, just when things seemingly can't get any worse, flammable oil begins to gush from the top of the maypole, showering everyone and everything in the room. Combine the oil with the sparks and the lethal motion of the steel weights, and you have a May Day celebration to remember!

Napoleon Bonaparte revolutionized the use of artillery in warfare, and Osborne Lone takes the Little Corsican's principles to their logical limit with his **Indirect Fire Skullcrusher Ha Ha trap**. Actually, anyone who has ever stepped on the blades of a rake or messed around at a playground has already encountered this simple trap, but simple designs are less likely to malfunction, so expect to nail a high percentage of delvers with this one.

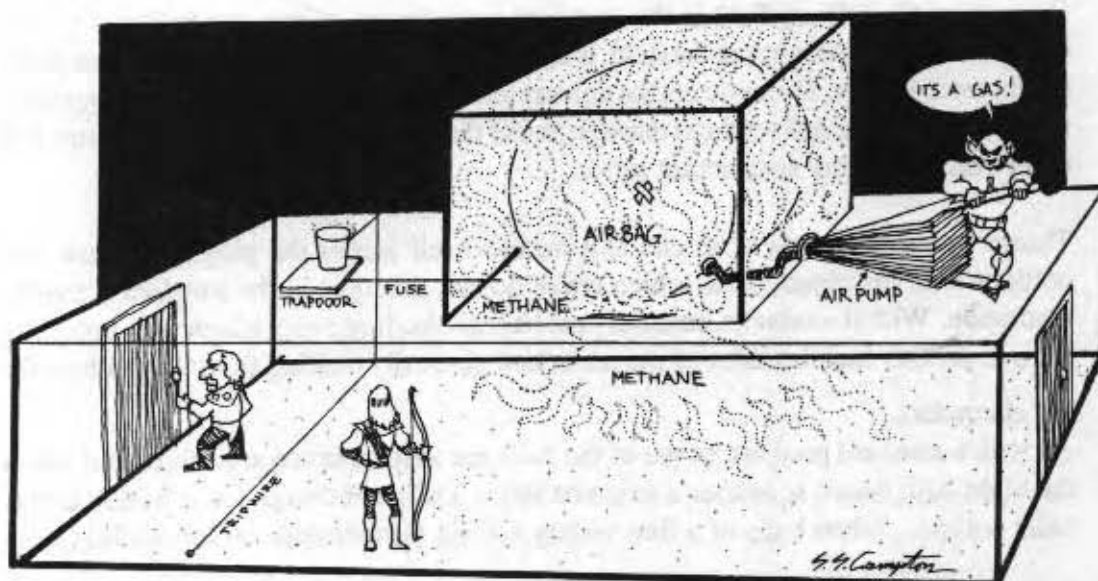
From the threshold, this room appears to be nearly featureless save for a single cannon ball sitting opposite the door. Midway across the room is a low wall that does not entirely bisect the room. The ceiling also has an odd arc up and away from the floor. What the delver



cannot see is the middle section of the floor is actually a teeter-totter. Anyone walking into the room directly from the door will depress the near end of the teeter-totter, sending the cannon ball flying up into the air. The odd arc to the ceiling allows the cannon ball to follow a lobbing trajectory over the wall and onto the head of whoever stepped on the teeter-totter, thus illustrating the essential principles of indirect fire. Next, we invade Russia.

Fritz E. Voss lives in Nebraska, which is nowhere near the top of the world, so he must have gotten the idea for his **Midnight Sun trap** from a dream. I understand Fritz runs a very dark dungeon, so maybe this is just a good hearted attempt to provide delvers with a source of light but somehow I doubt it.

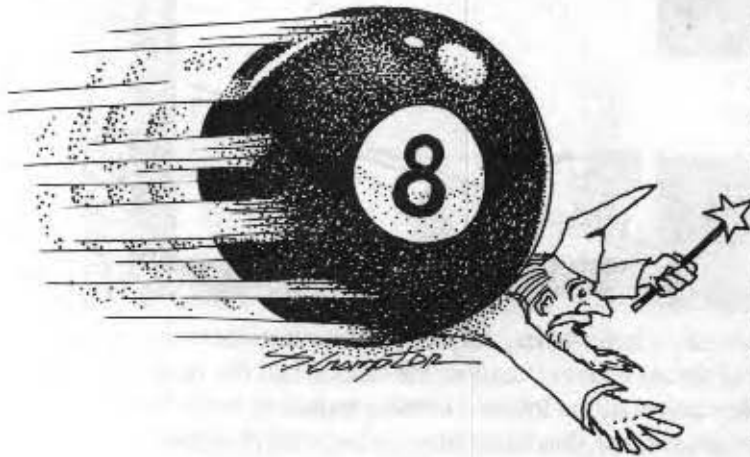
This long dark room has an entrance at one end and a false door on the opposite wall. Anyone approaching the false door stands a good chance of triggering the trip wire that stretches across the floor. The trip wire is very hard to spot in the darkness. Tampering with the wire tips over a bucket concealed on the other side of the ceiling, and dumps a ball of white phosphorus and oil through a trap door and into the room. This will at best produce a weak lick of flame that might hurt someone standing directly beneath the trap door, but in all likelihood the delvers will figure the trap has misfired.





While your victims are yucking it up, the real mechanism of this trap kicks into motion. The flame passing through the trap door will light a fuse that quickly burns across the top of the ceiling and into a secret room directly above that in which the party is located. The secret room is filled with methane. The fuse activates an air pump, which rapidly fills a canvas balloon inside the hidden room. As the balloon expands, the methane gas is compressed, quickly causing a loose plank in the floor to break away.

With the plank removed, the methane gas can flood into the room where the delvers are located. Even just a feeble patch of burning oil left over from the original trigger mechanism of this trap will be enough to ignite the methane, filling the room with



bright light and intense heat. It's not quite so hot as a sun, of course, but most delvers will be flash fried so quick they won't be able to tell the difference.

When I was a wee troll, the noble game of billiards was all the rage, but in the last century or so its been impossible to raise a decent game of snooker. Kids these days have no sense of what's important. Instead of hanging around smokey pool

halls and engaging in criminal activities, everyone runs off to libraries and class rooms and concert halls. What is the world coming to?



Chips White obviously loves a good game of eight ball, otherwise he'd never devote so much of his dungeon space to the **Giant's Pool Table**. If giants might use the standing stones of Stonehenge as dominoes, imagine a pool table built to the same scale. You can place the table indoors, or locate it in some secluded glade...if you're really ambitious, consider using a spare plateau as your pool table. The surface should have six pockets in the usual places, and green felt is recommended for the playing surface. Really huge tables might benefit from a field of natural grass.

Occupying the billiard field is the standard compliment of one cue ball and fifteen object balls. Also occupying the field, if this is to be any fun, should be at least one party of dungeon delvers. How you get the delvers there is your problem. I suggest you either teleport them in, or deliver them through one of the many slide traps detailed in this and other volumes of my spectacular series.

Things get moving when the cue ball hurtles itself across the playing surface and collides with the object balls, which are of course arranged in the standard diamond formation. Within moments, colossal pool balls are hurling every which way, bouncing off one another and the sides of the table, and generally making things hazardous for the characters.

As with a standard pool set, seven of the balls are stripes, seven are solids, and one is the eight ball, which is neither a stripe or solid. Different things occur when various balls collide. When balls of a like variety collide (stripe/stripe or solid/solid), both



explode, sending lethal shards of stone speeding across the pool table. Should a stripe and a solid knock together, one or the other of the balls will change type, either becoming a stripe or a solid, just waiting for the chance to strike another of its ilk and explode.

The cue ball is the scratch ball, and the only thing really working in the delvers' favor on the table. When the cue ball hits something--another ball, or a delver, or whatever--that thing disappears. Utterly. If the delvers are lucky, the cue ball will clear the table before too many balls explode, thus considerably increasing the delvers' life expectancy.

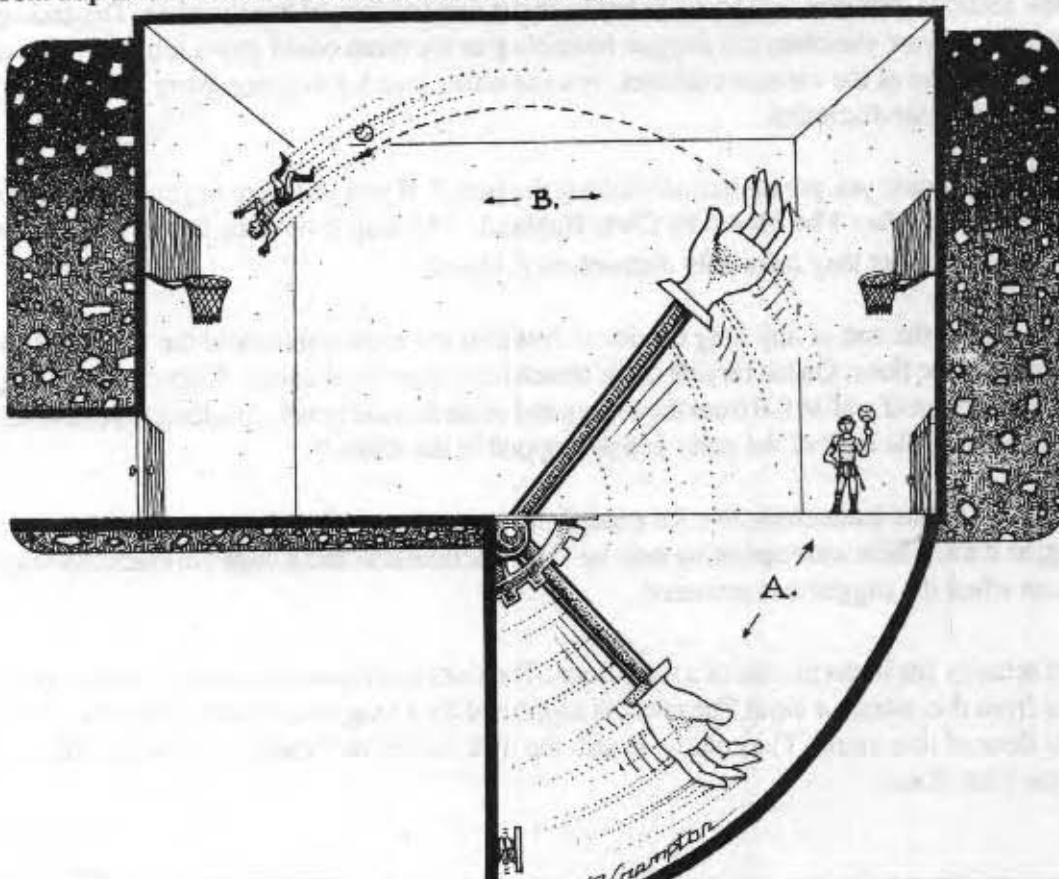
It isn't enough to simply duck and cover, however, as there is still the eight ball to be reckoned with. The eight ball is intelligent, and it will pursue the nearest delver with horrific speed. A smart party may be able to manipulate the eight ball using bait and switch tactics, maybe even getting it to strike the cue ball, which would end the menace of the eight ball altogether...but with things exploding and bouncing every which way, who is going to think of that?

This is a terribly lethal place, and if the delvers have any sense they'll leave. Getting off the table is tricky if it entirely fills a room, or is positioned atop a high mountain plateau. A desperate delver can find temporary safety in one of the side pockets, as each features a delver-sized cubby-hole at the bottom, but when a ball rolls into the same pocket the character will be entombed beneath its great mass. There's no way for the delvers to get a ball out of a pocket once it has come to a rest. I suppose a really dim fellow might try to knock an opposing ball into the one sitting in a pocket, but imagine how little would be left of anyone trapped underneath a ball after it blew up!

The easiest thing for the delvers to do? Die. The second easiest? Stay light on their feet until all the balls stop moving, or blow up, or come to a rest in a pocket. Good luck.

The Kareem Abdul-Jabbar Memorial Sky Hook Trap by Molly Ringworm is kind of a weak design, but it is dedicated to one of my all-time favorite humans, and thus deserves a place in my book. Most dungeons already have a gymnasium in the lower levels, so it shouldn't be hard to include this well-deserved tribute somewhere in your tunnel complex.

This room trap takes the form of a basketball court completely filling a room. Doors access the court





Room Traps

- NOTES -

through walls directly under each basket. There is nothing dangerous about the court. If you like, roll out a ball and let the delvers shoot some hoop...maybe even some full court action with a squad of giants is in order.

After the game, any delver trying to exit the room via the door opposite that through which he entered is in for a rude surprise. Turning the door knob triggers a spring loaded arm hidden beneath the floor. The arm will quickly shoot from the floor, gently catch the delver in the palm of its mechanical "hand", and launch its victim toward the basketball net on the far side of the gym.

Anyone who has ever seen Abdul-Jabbar shoot the Skyhook knows it is the most gentle of shots, and if the character doesn't panic he'll land on the basketball rim with minimal damage (or even pass all the way through, if he's tiny enough). Most characters will thrash about as they fly through the air, however, which will lead to a painful encounter with the backboard. If your victims complain about their treatment at the hands of this trap, you can always threaten them with the Wilt Chamberlain Memorial model--the one that reproduces Wilt's powerful slam dunk from the night he scored 100 points in a single game...



M.A. Harris uses air pressure to interesting effect with his **Vacuum Chest trap**. This appears for all intents and purposes to be an ordinary treasure chest sitting in the middle of a room. Paranoid characters might notice the doors leading to this room are unusually thick, and in fact the entire room is air tight.

The chest will prove incredibly difficult to open. The chest is itself fixed to the floor (for reasons that will shortly become obvious), so any attempts to open the thing will have to take place within the room. The chest is secured by no visible lock or latch, so delvers trying to open it are in for some frustration.

In fact, the chest acts as a giant valve for an airless chamber located beneath the one in which the characters stand. The powerful suction of the vacuum is what makes it so difficult to open the chest. Should the party manage to wedge the chest open just a little bit, the room in which the delvers are located will quickly lose all of its air. It is also likely anything the delvers are carrying--and maybe the characters themselves--will be sucked through the open chest and into the chamber below.

After a few seconds, pressure will equalize between the two sections of the chamber. Depending on the size of the vacuum chamber, the oxygen remaining in the room could prove too thin to breathe. By adjusting the size of the vacuum chamber, you can either knock a dungeon party senseless or kill them outright, at your discretion.

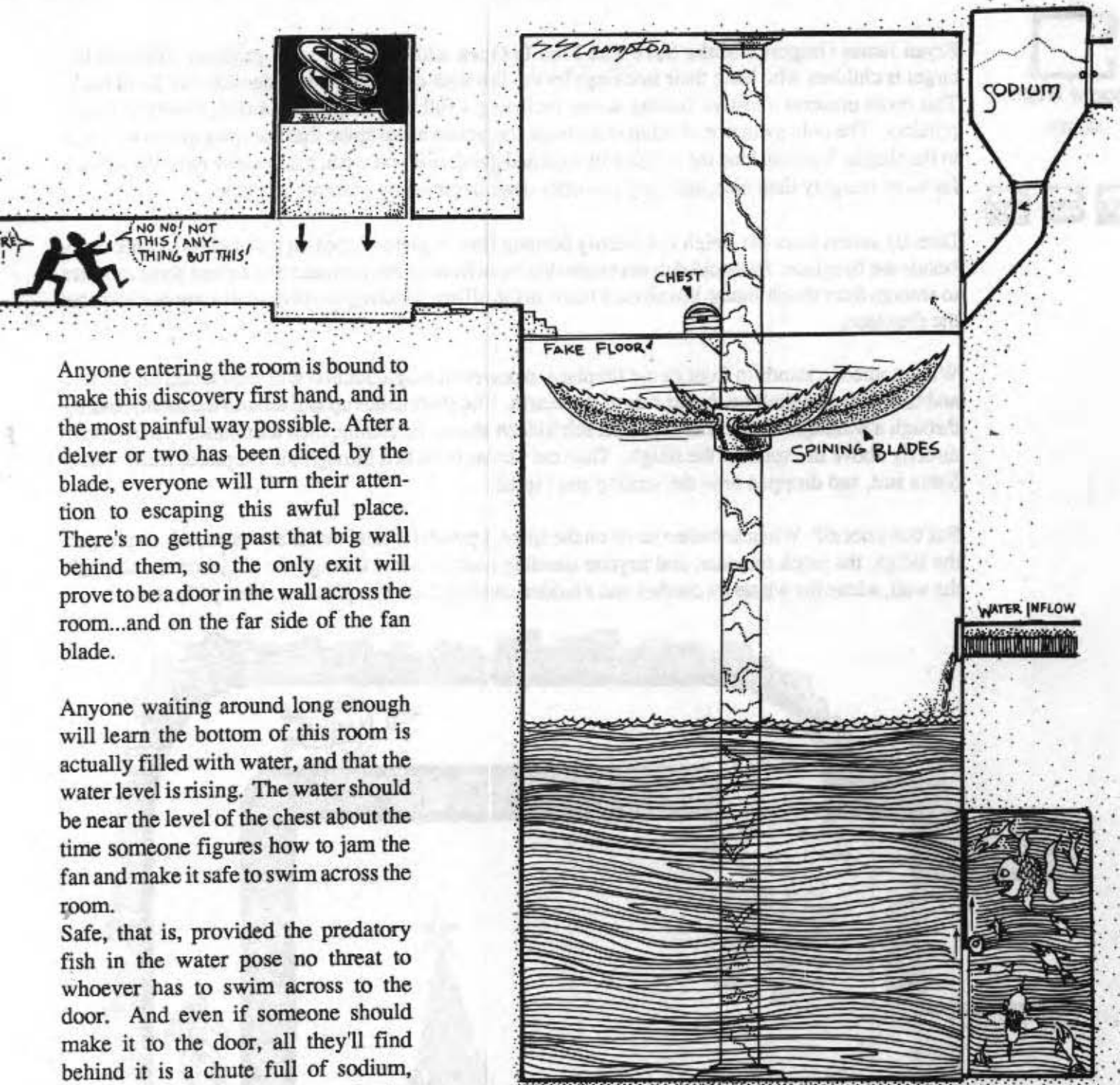


But why, really, should you put off actually killing the party? If you just want to punch some tickets, sink your teeth into **After The Flood**, by Chris Hubbard. This trap is obvious from a distance, so if the party gets wiped out they have only themselves to blame.

Locate this trap at the end of any long corridor. Just past the room's threshold the party will see a shallow trench in the floor. On the far side of the trench is a trigger mechanism. Stepping on the trigger causes a huge section of wall to fall from the ceiling and settle into the trench, crushing anyone standing there, and ensuring the bulk of the party is now trapped in the room.

The room itself seems featureless save for a single treasure chest. Alert delvers might detect a faint humming, as if a machine were operating near by. The machine is in fact a huge fan blade that whirled into motion when the trigger was activated.

The chest actually sits in the middle of a false floor. The floor can be an illusion, but it less expensive to build it from thin wood or cloth. The chest is supported by a long column which reaches down to the actual floor of this room. The column is also the axle for the fan blade, which whirls about just beneath the false floor.



Anyone entering the room is bound to make this discovery first hand, and in the most painful way possible. After a delver or two has been diced by the blade, everyone will turn their attention to escaping this awful place. There's no getting past that big wall behind them, so the only exit will prove to be a door in the wall across the room...and on the far side of the fan blade.

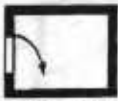
Anyone waiting around long enough will learn the bottom of this room is actually filled with water, and that the water level is rising. The water should be near the level of the chest about the time someone figures how to jam the fan and make it safe to swim across the room.

Safe, that is, provided the predatory fish in the water pose no threat to whoever has to swim across to the door. And even if someone should make it to the door, all they'll find behind it is a chute full of sodium, which will produce an explosive chemical reaction when it hits the water. After the flood, there should be little left of the party, and all you need to do is replace the false floor to make this trap ready for the next batch of suckers.

Nothing brightens up a room like a fire. In the dead of winter, when long shadows stalk across the floor of my cave, I like to hurl a couple elves on the fire and gather the family around the hearth.

In the old days we used to suck smoke, then some bright boy came up with the idea of a smoke hole. From this developed the chimney, a terribly unsafe innovation that allows large men in red suits unrestricted access to your home.





Room Traps

- NOTES -

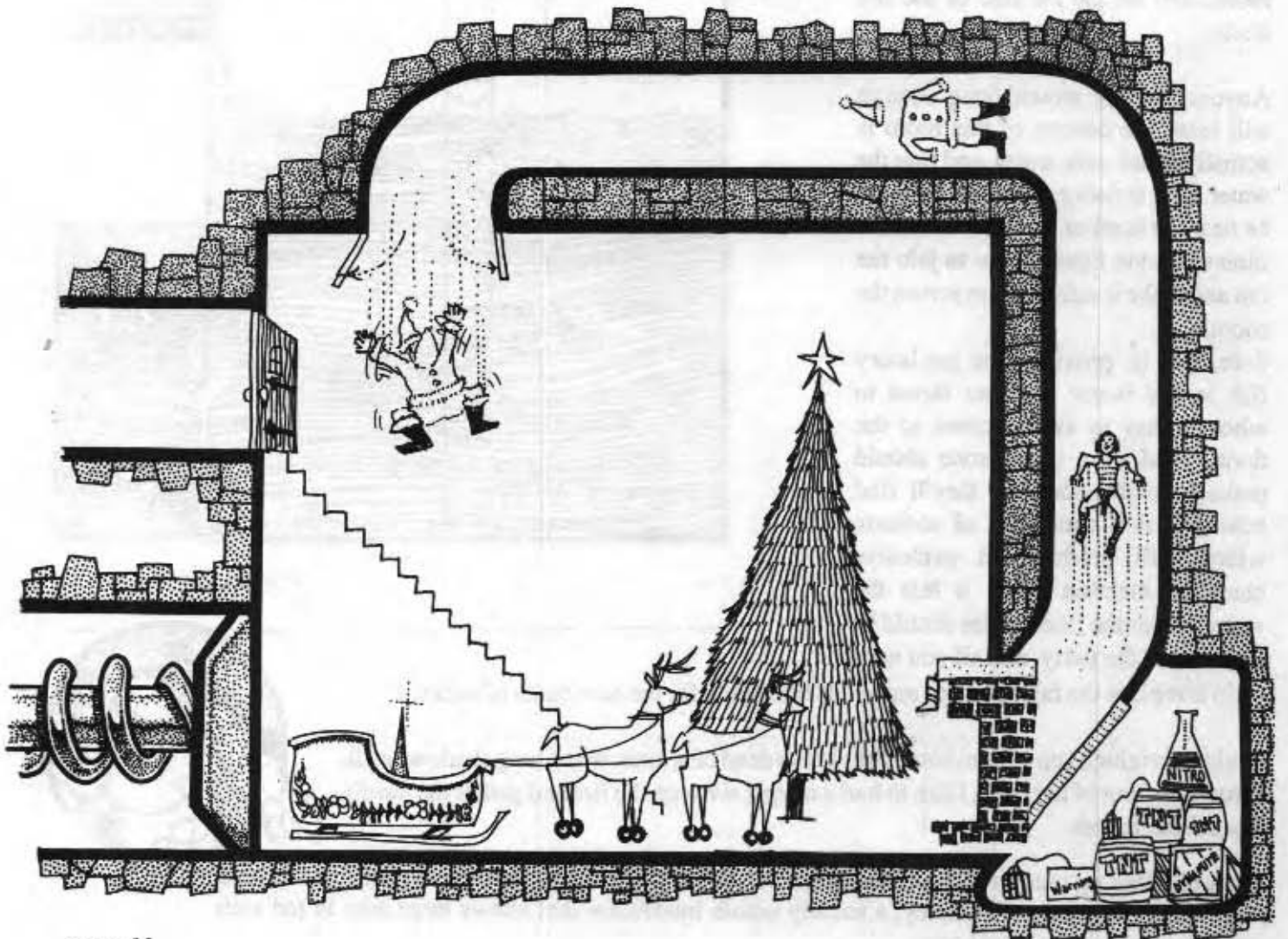


Bryan James Gregory's **Make Sure The Flue Is Open** addresses this same problem, although his target is children who hang their stockings by the fire with care, rather than devilish old Saint Nick. This room presents a festive holiday scene, including a full size sleigh with a compliment of mock reindeer. The only evidence of a trap is the huge sharpened metal spike that occupies the driver's seat in the sleigh. You can load the sleigh with toys and goodies if you wish, but I'm sure most delvers are far more naughty than nice, and they probably don't deserve any presents this year.

Directly across from the sleigh is a merrily burning fire. A plate of cookies and a glass of milk waits beside the fireplace. Paranoid delvers might deploy in front of the fireplace and expect some monster to emerge from the chimney, but no such fun is in the offing. Nothing happens until someone inspects the fireplace.

When someone stands in front of the fireplace, a powerful magic suction will snatch him off his feet and bear him up a shaft on the far side of the hearth. The shaft bends up and around the room, passing through a waiting one-size-fits-all Santa suit hidden above the ceiling, then terminates in a trap door directly above the spike in the sleigh. Thus the victim is sucked through the fireplace, fitted with a Santa suit, and dropped onto the waiting steel spike.

But that's not all! When someone lands on the spike, a powerful steel ram is activated, which plunges the sleigh, the mock reindeer, and anyone standing near the same through the fireplace and through the wall, where the whole lot crashes into a hidden chamber full of explosives. Merry Christmas!





1. first teleport your victim...



Anyone who has ever tried to do an entire term paper in one night will appreciate Rowdy Rhodes' **Deadline trap**. This insidious design pits individual characters against a freakish yet true statistic, and is really more of a curse than a trap. Save this one for somebody very special.



Your victim must be teleported into this trap, so call up a demon who owes you a favor, or use one of the many teleporting traps in this or other volumes of my series. After a brief period of disorientation, the victim finds himself in a long room that seems to stretch to infinity. In the dim distance, the character can just perceive the horizon curving up, further adding to the alien atmosphere of the place.

The noise in this infinitely long room is deafening. It sounds as if thousands of rocks were being continually bashed together. The noise rings in your victim's skull to the point he will want to drill a hole in his head to let the sound out. Sorry. That would be too easy.

The walls of this gallery are lined with tier upon tier of wooden benches, and seated on the benches are millions of monkeys. Each monkey furiously pounds away at a manual typewriter--hence the deafening noise. None of the monkeys will pay any attention to the character. The sheet of paper rolled into each typewriter--and all the various sheets of paper stacked around this room--are covered with random flurries of keystrokes.

Directly in front of the character is an uncomfortable office chair, a low table, and a golden typewriter. Beside the typewriter is a digital clock that reads, "Deadline: The Rest Of Your Life". A piece of paper is rolled into the golden typewriter, and one line is already typed upon it: "The Complete Works Of William Shakespeare, Reproduced From Memory By (followed by the character's name)."

The character must remain here until he reproduces exactly word-for-word the life's work of the western world's greatest author. He has the rest of his life to do so. Of course, the character is doomed. An ironic twist is provided by the odd statistical fact that some day, some how, the monkeys will eventually complete the same task...entirely at random.

When the character finally dies, he changes into a monkey and takes a seat with his brothers. How's that for deadline anxiety??



2. Deadline Anxiety. . .





2



Corridor Traps

Since long before my first book of traps was published back in 1981, corridors have been dangerous places. I once saw my aunt and uncle come to blows over how they were going to paper a hall in their cave.

For whatever reason, corridors are dangerous places, and I'm sure I don't have to belabor the subject. You can read all about targets being lined up in a pretty little row in my other books. My only suggestion this time around is that you not locate these corridor traps in front of someplace you want the delvers to go--like a carefully constructed room trap. Corridor traps are killers, and if you locate them at every turn, the delvers are going to take their toys and go home. Wouldn't that be a shame?





To start, let's reprint an old classic: an entrance trap by Rick Loomis that was first printed in Wargamers Information in December 1976. Actually, this trap is built by a critter called a "Fairy Basher", which hangs around the entrances of dungeons, citadels, and abandoned castles. Fairy Bashers are usually found in groups of 1000, and they build sophisticated air blowers that will knock fairies and other insects out of the air and onto the floor. When a Fairy Basher sees a fairy which has fallen onto the floor, he comes running out of his lair and stomps on the fallen creature with his big feet, and then eats the remains. Fairy Bashers are very fast: if you kill one, two more instantly take its place. If the delver tries to carry a fairy into the dungeon in



his pocket or knapsack, the Fairy Bashers smell it, and run out and start gnawing at the delvers feet in an attempt to get at the little critters. The amount of damage done to the delvers feet and legs depends on how much you (the gamemaster) hate fairies, and how long the delver stands around trying to fight the Bashers off instead of running away! (The Fairy-Bashers just hang around entrances and do not follow anyone into the dungeon or castle.)

Molly Ringworm, a very dangerous lady indeed, is the sick genius responsible for the **Jade Juggernaut**. This is an extensive trap around which a complete dungeon level, if not an entire dungeon, must be constructed if it is to be used to best effect.



The first step is to establish a continuous track running all through your dungeon. The track should run through a series of corridors all its own, intersecting normal dungeon corridors and rooms as you desire. The special corridor should be of magical green stone, and the corners must be rounded smooth like a bobsled track. A foul brown stain of unguessable origin runs down the middle of the special green corridor.

Patrolling this special corridor system is an infernal mechanical device known only as the Jade Juggernaut. The Juggernaut is a vast statue made entirely from one piece of jade, and all by itself it would be a priceless treasure. The Juggernaut rapidly swoops along its corridor in a continuous direction and at a constant speed on hidden wheels--not too fast, but not so slow that an average armored delver has any chance of outrunning it. Anything struck by the Juggernaut will have several bones broken, before being ground beneath the statue's base (hence the ugly stain on the Juggernaut's track).

If you have any sense of style, you'll clue the party into what's happening by having the Jade Juggernaut flash past one of the intersections with a normal dungeon corridor. Their curiosity aroused, a dungeon party should pursue the Juggernaut down one of the green corridors. Depending on where they enter, the party could find



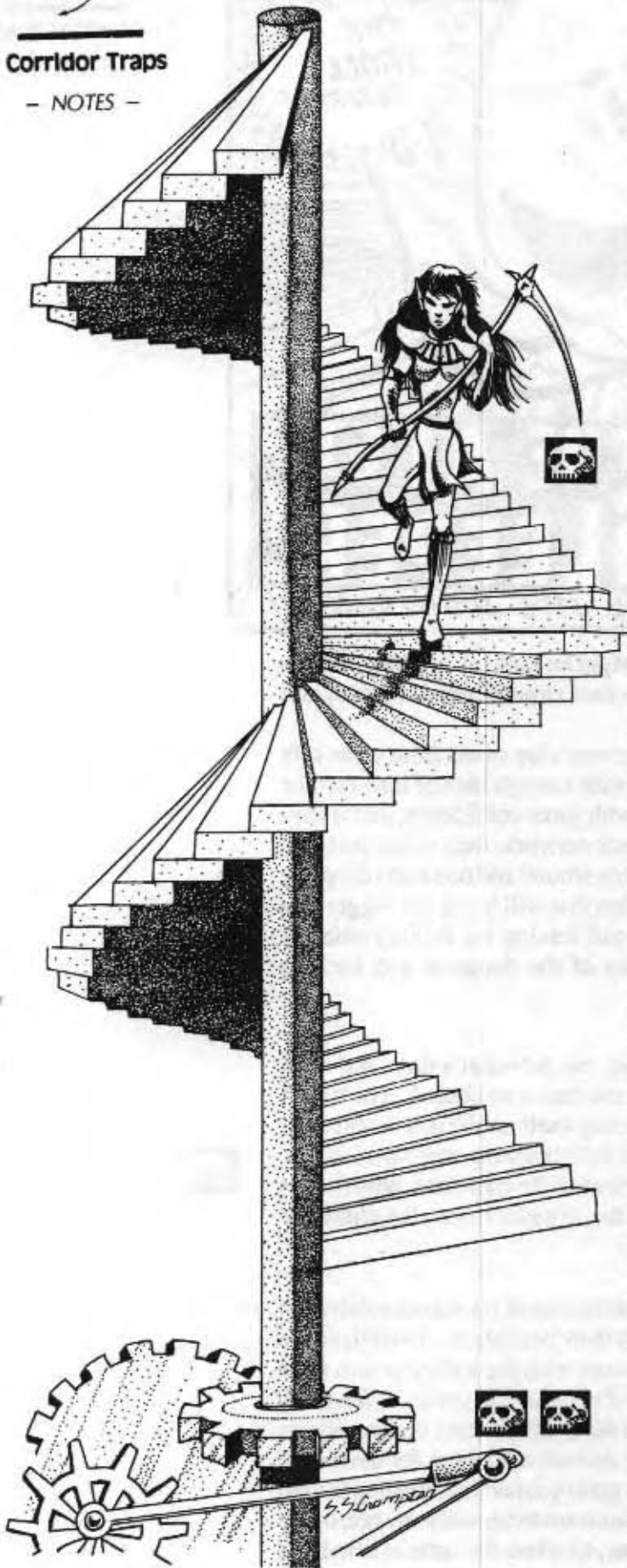
an exit to some other part of the dungeon, or they might be trapped in a long section of track when the Juggernaut completes a lap and comes around behind them again!

The only way to defeat this thing is to time the Juggernaut's lap speed from some safe vantage point. When the characters have come up with a rough idea of how fast the Juggernaut moves, they can venture onto the track with some confidence, and if they charge directly into the heart of the Juggernaut's track network, they might just find the engine's hidden control room before the device laps around and threatens the party again. Inside the control room are levers and switches that will bring the Juggernaut to a halt, putting an end to the thing as a menace, and leaving the delvers with the puzzle of finding a way to carry its vast bulk out of the dungeon and back to civilization, where it should fetch a hefty reward.

Dave Logans' **Statue Trap** is designed to snare only one delver at a time, but I can forgive him because what it does to the character it catches is so absurd. The trap is activated by a sensitive pressure pad designed to spring itself on the rear member of a party. The victim vanishes through a trap door and strikes a teleporter pad, sending him or her to whatever reward you devise. The motion of the trap door, however, is enough to rotate a generic stone delver statue into the corridor where the character formerly stood.



While the features of the statue will not exactly match those of the missing delver, it is likely other party members will overlook this in their confusion. Doubtless the party will decide they're being stalked by some creature with the ability to turn flesh to stone, which will lead to some anxious moments if not outright panic. If the party really buys this simple deception, and if they hold their unfortunate companion in high esteem, they might even lug the useless statue around with them for the rest of the adventure. Ultimately, they may waste perfectly good gold or magic trying in vain to return their friend to his or her "normal" form. If you want to be really savage, make the statue a gorgon that has itself been turned to stone, so when the curse is lifted, the well-meaning party is stoned for their trouble!



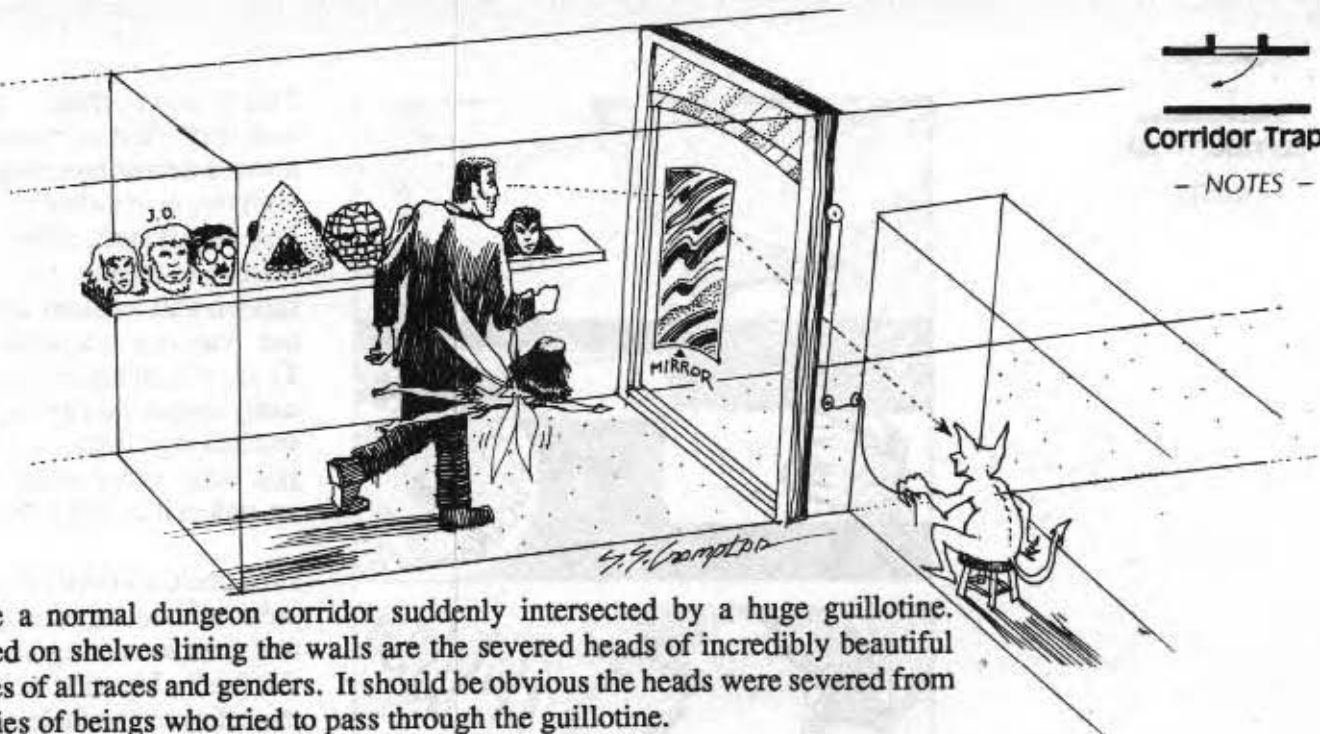
Not every dungeon can afford unlimited floor space and infinite depth. Especially in the case of modest tunnel complexes constructed beneath old castles, there is only so much room to go around. In this day and age, with megacitadels growing ever larger, and giant new dungeons opening at every hand, old establishments may have a hard time attracting new victims to explore their mysterious depths.

This really is a shame, as it is usually the oldest dungeons that have the most to offer. One way to "expand" an old complex with space concerns is to provide an illusion of size. Tyrone Shoes' **Spinning Spiral Stair** is just the thing for desperate dungeonmasters on a budget.

Locate this stair anywhere you want to hint another dungeon level exists, without actually wanting to build the level. For all intents and purposes this seems a normal spiral staircase, but when the party travels half way along the stair, the whole structure begins to turn. The turning motion is subtle and imperceptible--when the party stops moving, so too will the stair stop turning. The stair always turns in the same direction the party is moving, so this trap works whether the party is moving up or down.

This amounts to a treadmill stair that endlessly turns under the party's feet. If you carefully synchronize the rotation of the stair with the motion of the party, the characters will think they've stumbled upon an incredibly long staircase that leads to heaven knows where. Eventually the party will give up in its quest to reach one end or the other of the stair and retrace their steps, in which case you should reverse the motion of the stair to simulate an equally long return journey. The result is the characters' perception that a separate level of your dungeon exists where there is nothing at all. If you get lucky, some genius may even try to blindly teleport to where he is "sure" a dungeon level exists...and instead wind up in solid rock.

Molly Ringworm is a fine trap designer, but she is a very ugly woman. As a friend of mine might say, she could scare dogs off the back of a meat truck. That's a shame, because Molly is a fine person...which might have something to do with why Molly titled this next trap **Beauty Is In The Eye Of The Beholder**.



Imagine a normal dungeon corridor suddenly intersected by a huge guillotine. Arranged on shelves lining the walls are the severed heads of incredibly beautiful creatures of all races and genders. It should be obvious the heads were severed from the bodies of beings who tried to pass through the guillotine.

While the party is trying to decide what to do, a deep voice speaks from the darkness. "Only ugliness will I destroy--if you are fair, you need not fear my blade. Step across the threshold and be judged." The wise thing to do is to run the other way, but if something suitably important is on the other side of the guillotine (such as the exit from the dungeon), you should be able to harvest a few heads.

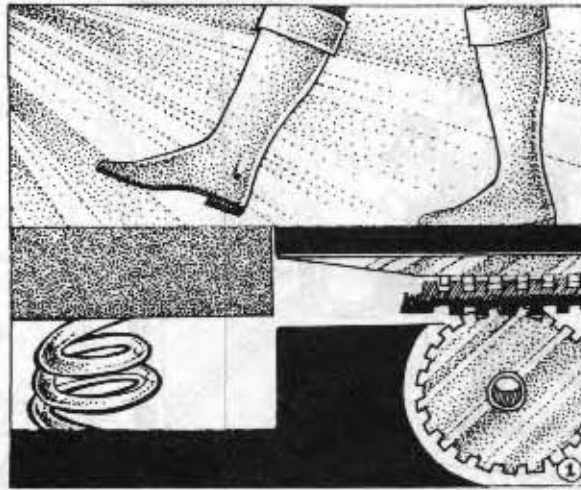
Characters inspecting the guillotine will notice there is a mirror hung near by, and that the mirror is distorted like something you'd find in a funhouse. The mirror is angled such that it faces around a bend in the corridor on the far side of the guillotine. No light or image can be seen in the mirror. Some indication might also be provided that the guillotine is triggered by someone sitting around the corner...right about where the mirror faces.

Characters tempting the blade will learn that turnabout is fair play. A vicious little gremlin sits on the far side of the corridor, his finger just itching to pull the trigger on the guillotine. His standards of beauty are conventional, but he is positioned such that he can view the characters only through the distorted glass of the funhouse mirror. As a result, beautiful characters will appear ugly, while ugly characters will appear beautiful. The gremlin will act appropriately when someone tempts his blade, pulling the trigger on a beautiful character, but allowing an ugly one to pass by...because beauty is in the eye of the beholder.

Tom Keefer, the scientific genius who brings us the pressurized corridor trap found elsewhere in this chapter, takes issue with the ubiquitous **Glowing Moss** that seems to light so many dungeons nowadays. For whatever reason, dungeonmasters are loathe to light their tunnels with torches and lanterns, preferring instead to provide light from a more nebulous source.

According to Mr. Keefer--a physicist at Hilario University in Los Gatos, California--the glowing properties of moss can only be accounted for by radioactivity...specifically radioactive uranium. Uranium in trace amounts is sufficient to cause cancer, but when the uranium glows bright enough to see by--say to the tune of 10 billion times a safe exposure--Tom assures me the result is instant mutation!





This is a true thing. You can look it up. And we're not talking about a delver fathering a baby with two heads after receiving a dose of this stuff, either. Instant mutation means just that...a sudden and random change in the victim's physical form. Thus, if a dungeon party suddenly sprouts odd limbs, antlers, and leaking blisters, explain that you don't know what is going on, unless it is a trick of the light.

How could a TRAPS book go to press without at least one trap that does something horrible to the feet? My first volume of traps devoted a whole subchapter to "Step & Die" traps! This volume has but one, but it is such a ferocious design it should be more than enough to satisfy all you foot freaks out there.

Andrew Bander's design could indeed be the source of Achilles' Willies. The trap requires a large trigger pad to operate, so it is best located in the midst of a mosaic, or some other floor type that easily hides lines and shifting surfaces. This trap also requires that its victim step directly onto it to function, so you can improve your batting average by locating several of these in close proximity to each other.

The illustration pretty much tells the tale with this trap. The downward motion of the foot pad brings the victim's foot into line with the horizontal blade. A character stepping full into this trap will have his foot severed. If the victim only partially strikes the pad, he may still lose some toes before he can fully remove his foot. Don't forget it will be almost impossible to walk after suffering any sort of severe foot injury, so springing this trap on someone deep in a dungeon could ensure the victim never limps out to tell the tale.

It's a shameless terrible old groaner of a pun, and we've all heard it a million times before, but Rowdy Rhodes' sheer audacity forces me to publish this next trap. I apologize in advance for what's about to happen.



A party traveling down any normal dungeon corridor discovers an unusual sight. Before them rises a fantastic wall inscribed with gold moons and stars. Characters with scientific knowledge will notice the wall diagrams depict with astonishing accuracy the movement of local celestial bodies. The wall is a work of art, and the

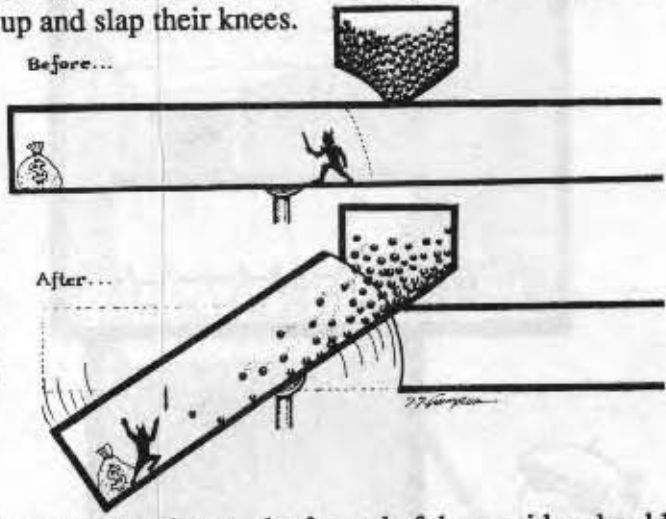
region positively glows with magical energy. At the center of this cosmic masterpiece is a hole about the size of a closed fist. When the characters draw near, a ghostly voice seems to speak from beyond the heavens. "The mysteries of the universe lay open before me. Within my heart there are no questions, only answers. **If you would know your fate, step forward and have your Palm Red.**"

It's one of the oldest jokes in the book, but I bet you someone will fall for it. Anyone inserting their hand in the hole will feel cold and wet for a moment--when the hand is withdrawn, the victim will find it is stained with a rich red paint. Peals of hysterical laughter will issue from behind the wall, and I have no doubt a similar chorus will shortly spring up from the victim's fellows. Palm red! What a jerk!



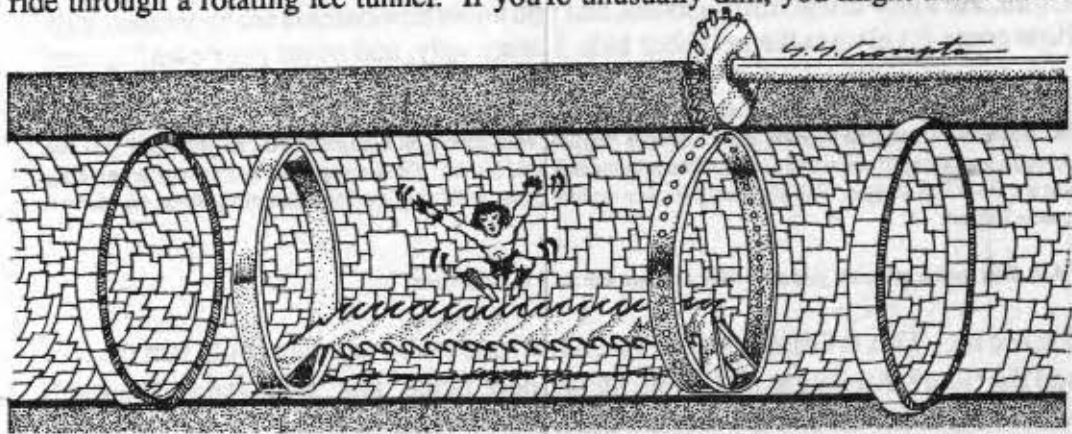
Has there ever been a bigger flash in the pan than Max Headroom? Norm Strange gives the poor fellow a shot at a comeback with his **Max. Headroom, Five Feet trap**. Any corridor can be improved by this simple trap. Hang a sign on one wall reading, "Max. Headroom, 5' »", with an arrow pointing in the direction of the supposed obstruction. Anyone looking down the corridor won't see anything blocking their path...but that's because the obstruction is an invisible wall! The wall hangs down from the ceiling such that anyone five feet or taller will walk right into it face-first. Shorter characters can yuck it up and slap their knees.

While many traps rely upon incredible complexity to operate, it is the visual simplicity of Brian Lawton's **Tipping Corridor** that wins this next design a place in this volume. This trap can turn any dead end corridor into a truly dead end corridor, and you won't even need to rip out a bunch of walls to make it work.



Lure your victims into the dead end with any suitable bait--a treasure chest at the far end of the corridor should do the trick. When the party walks sufficiently past the fulcrum hidden beneath the corridor floor, the whole corridor tilts down, revealing a secret reservoir of whatever you like within the ceiling. Bowling balls should do nicely. Even if the characters survive the initial action of the trap, they may still find themselves entombed behind the simple sliding surfaces of this design.

After examining M.A. Harris' **Rotating Corridor**, I am led to wonder if he has ever visited Universal Studios in California. One of the tour's attractions is a cheesy tram ride through a rotating ice tunnel. If you're unusually dim, you might think for a

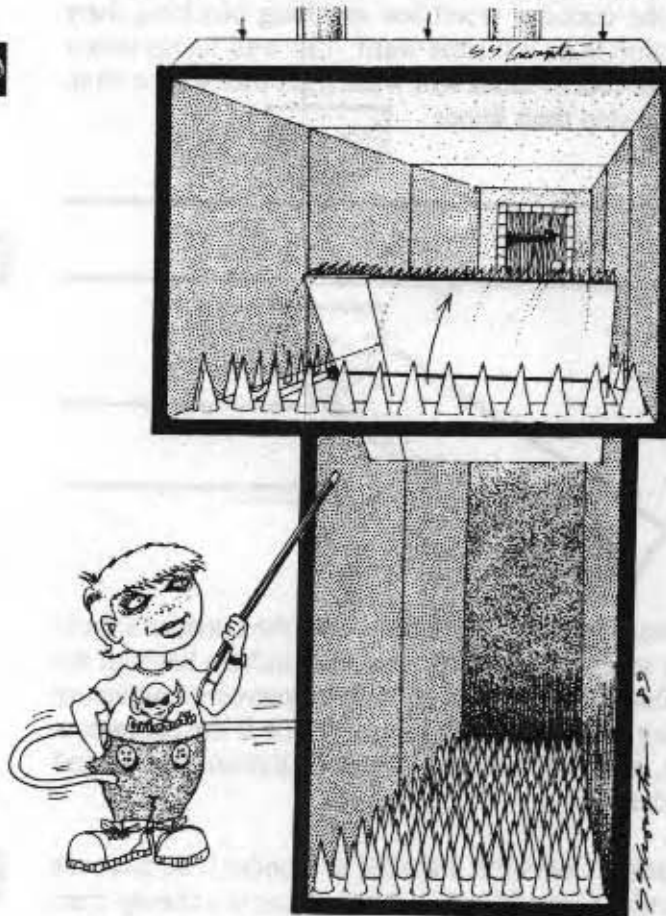


moment that you were spinning around, rather than suffering visual disorientation from a moving surface.

That silly tram ride would be a lot more exciting if some of Mr. Harris' design ideas were implemented. Place this trap in any circular corridor. There isn't much subtlety to this trap, but in my mind that makes things just that much more fun. The delvers will know they've found a trap when they see two steel rings set roughly forty feet apart from each other limiting access through the tunnel. The rings are connected by an obvious steel blade...the rings rotate at a constant rate, and the blade sweeps around and around the perimeter of the tunnel, sort of like a jump rope.

The motion of the blade is regular and easy to time, encouraging delvers wishing to pass by this thing to make a break for it. The entire length of this section of tunnel is pressure sensitive, however, and when a delver comes into range, the motion of the blade becomes erratic--first it is fast, then it is slow...first it turns clockwise, then

counterclockwise. It's tough enough to skip over a jump rope when it moves in a predictable fashion, but when the rope starts going all crazy, just forget it! Unfortunately for the delvers, and fortunately for you, this blade is no jump rope. The corridor should be littered with hands, feet, and legs in short order.



Brian Lawton offers **Instant Mash**, a device with which he is obviously quite pleased. His description positively dotes over this trap designed to smash those creeps who have an answer for everything. I'll step aside for a moment and let Brian take over. Be kind

to him. He's new at this troll business, and you know how parents are about their kids. How come it's always the neighbor kids that are ugly, and never your own? Brian?

"Ahem. Thank you, Grimtooth. And now--my trap!

"At first glance, my trap appears to be a simple corridor with spikes on the floor. 'Ah, no problem!' you say. 'Anyone in plate mail can crawl across without being injured.' Not so! The passage is bound by two large springs and the floor is a trigger. The slightest pressure on the spikes will bring the roof slammung down on whoever crawls below!

"Ah! But wait a minute!' you say. 'We can jam the roof and the floor!'"

Excuse me. This is Grimtooth again. Did anyone really say they could jam the roof and the floor? Anyone at all? Well, humor poor Brian. His face is red and he wants so terribly to be liked. Play along a little, okay? Back to Brian.

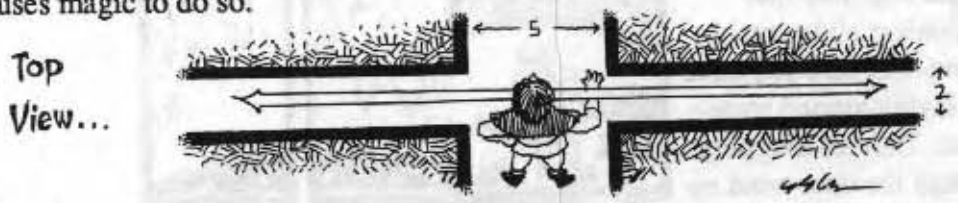
"As I was saying...you can't wedge the ceiling. A staff or roofing beam would shatter beneath the terrific force of the ceiling, showering everyone with splinters. A metal bar is equally useless—it will merely punch through the ceiling when the trap is activated, doing nothing to save anyone on the spikes.

"Give up yet? You should. Those of you with a sticky head-foot similar to certain mollusks may try to climb along the ceiling to avoid the spikes. Sorry. Mid-way through the corridor is a loose section of roof designed to break away beneath any weight, dropping the delver onto the spikes, and a previously unseen trap door! Ah! Ah! But! But! Some characters can fly, or cling to walls like those sticky rubber octopi the Japanese manufacture from industrial waste! Sorry once more—when the trap door is struck, it pivots around on its fulcrum, and is released to pursue its victim to the bottom of the pit.

"Ultimately, an enterprising party could shoot a line down the corridor to the door on the far side, then crawl across like vermin on a ratline. That's up to you—I suggest you let the door explode, or have someone open it when the party is halfway across the corridor, letting the fools sag onto the spikes despite themselves. Take my advice...find another way in!!"

Thank you, Brian. You can stop sweating now. Someday you might be a troll, but in the meantime, don't give up your day job.

The enigmatic Norm White is responsible for the subtle **Phantom Polearm Through The Head** trap. A normal corridor is intersected by a narrow two foot wide tunnel. If the party is not alert, they may not even notice the intersecting corridor. An invisible plane of magical energy occupies the narrow corridor, entirely crossing the normal passage. The magic plane cannot be detected unless the party specifically uses magic to do so.



Nothing happens until someone tries to walk through the magic plane. Then...BAMMO!...polearm through the head! Whoever steps into the plane will find a ten foot pole arm complete with barbed head has passed all the way through his or her head. Remarkably, the character feels fine. In fact, they will experience excellent radio reception should your dungeon support advanced technology. Receiving the polearm through the head in no way injures the victim. You can safely think of the polearm as an unusual set of antlers rooted to the character's head.

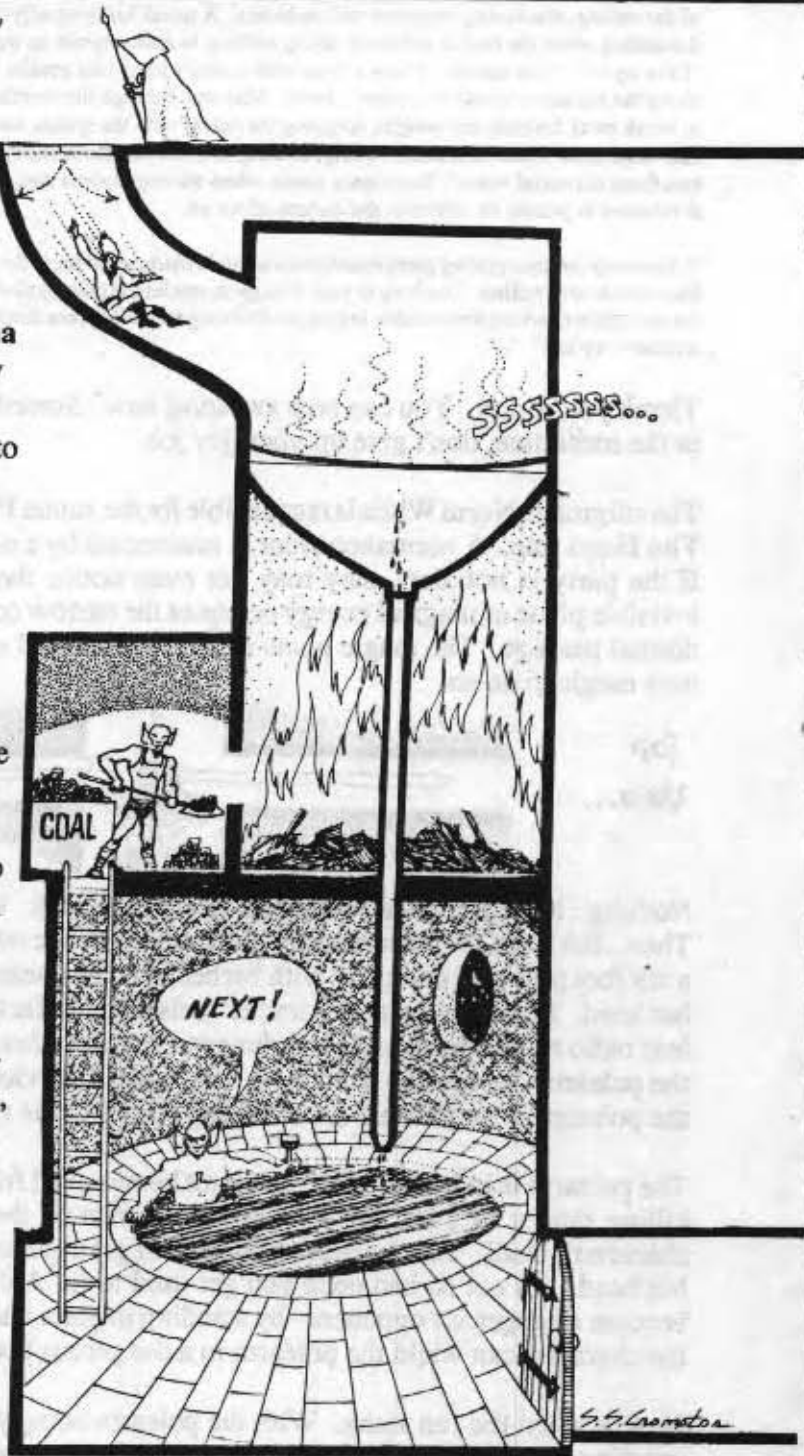
The polearm is indestructible. It cannot be removed from the victim's head without killing him or her, nor can it be cropped down on the sides to lay flush with the character's skull. The character will have to get used to having a pole through his or her head. It's not so bad once you get used to it. A dexterous character can even become a dangerous opponent—by standing in place and spinning in a furious circle, the character can wield the polearm in a dangerous fashion.

Now is when the fun starts. With the polearm occupying the length of the narrow crossing tunnel, the character is going to be hard pressed to free him or herself and continue down the corridor. The ceiling does not provide sufficient clearance to let the character twist out of the narrow corridor, and it's impossible to turn in place more than a few inches without the polearm bumping up against a wall. Only magic or brute force will solve this predicament. The dungeon walls encumbering the character can be demolished with proper dedication. A teleport spell might also come in handy.

If the victim manages to escape from this corridor, things really get interesting. It's tough enough to carry a polearm indoors, let alone walk around with one through your head. The thing is terribly heavy, & it's a real production to fit through stairs. Phone booths are an ordeal, & spiral staircases are out of the question. Even death is no escape. Where'll you find a coffin big enough to bury someone with a 10' wide head?



I'm sure everyone is familiar with the old saying, **One Orc's Sauna Is Another Man's Body Liquid.** Brian Lawton has taken this aphorism to heart with this trap designed to combine work and play for your dungeon's orcs. The adventure starts with a simple trap door and frictionless slide combination--I'm sure you have one laying around someplace. Delvers dropping through the door wind up on a hot steel sheet, from which it is exceptionally difficult to escape (they were delivered here by a frictionless slide, remember?). Slow death results, as it only gets hotter, and sooner or later the delver will sizzle away to a burning little mass of thick liquid and steam. This byproduct drips through a funnel and into the secret room beyond, where weary orcs can enjoy a relaxing sauna before resetting the trap.



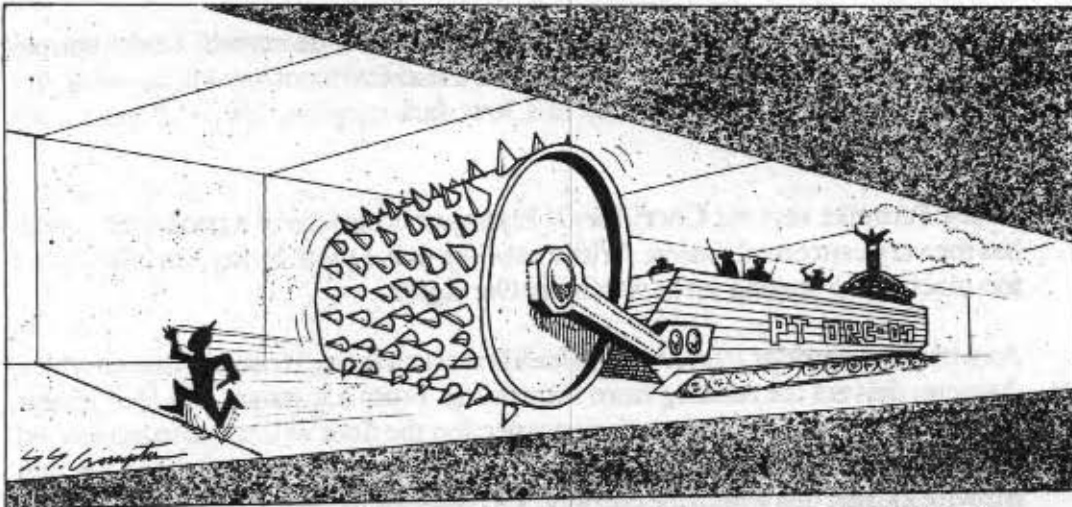
Mike Patton has found a better use for a common gardening implement with his Delver Mulcher. This massive device is designed to supplement your dungeon's normal orc patrols. Instead of arming your hard-working guards with sticks and stones, try this engine of destruction.

This is basically a big cart pushed by a crew of orcs. Supported in front of the cart is a huge spiked cylinder, designed to slowly turn as the cart is pushed along. In the bed of the cart are several orc warriors armed with spears.



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This device is best employed in a corridor just barely large enough to house it. When presented with an oncoming spiked cylinder, characters will either run the other way (and hopefully into another of your traps), or attempt to climb or spring over the cylinder. Should someone manage to get past the spikes...well that's what the orc warriors are for.

Stealing Home by Rick Martin isn't especially deadly (rats!), but it is painful, which is the next best thing. With this trap, the "treasure" is itself a snare. Take any standard dungeon corridor and liberally coat it with diamond dust. Make sure the dust adheres to the corridor, resulting in a very gritty sandpaper-like finish. While your average greedy dungeon delver is trying to figure a way to collect the diamond dust, tilt the corridor down at about a forty-five degree angle. The entire party will find themselves sliding into "home" like Jackie Robinson down a surface that will prove unkind to armor and downright cruel to exposed flesh. And what is at "home"? Mike suggests a pile of salt, to irritate the myriad cuts the victims acquired during their long painful slide.



Striding down a corridor is one thing, but ask a delver to crawl through a narrow passage and even the most heroic will come down with a case of the wiggles. Octavio Ramos, Jr. offers one possible reason with his **Snakes Into Sticks** trap. For best effect, this trap must be located in a low corridor through which delvers

must crawl. In the middle of the corridor the characters will find a simple bamboo tube fixed against the ceiling. The characters can't see through the tube, indicating something is within. The tube is positioned such that it would command an impressive line of fire, if it contained a missile weapon.

In any event, the delvers are likely to tap or prod the tube, or maybe even stick something into it, either out of curiosity or as some feeble attempt to spring the trap. So much the better. Sleeping inside the tube is a poisonous



snake, which will not take kindly to having its slumber interrupted. Under normal conditions, a competent delver could handle a snake without breaking a sweat, but trapped on one's hands and knees in a low dark corridor, it's a different story altogether.



Jersey Turnpike says the **Corridor O' Flypaper** is his idea of a good time, which has me very concerned indeed. With a title like that, I think Jersey has been losing too much sleep staying up to watch the Orc fights.

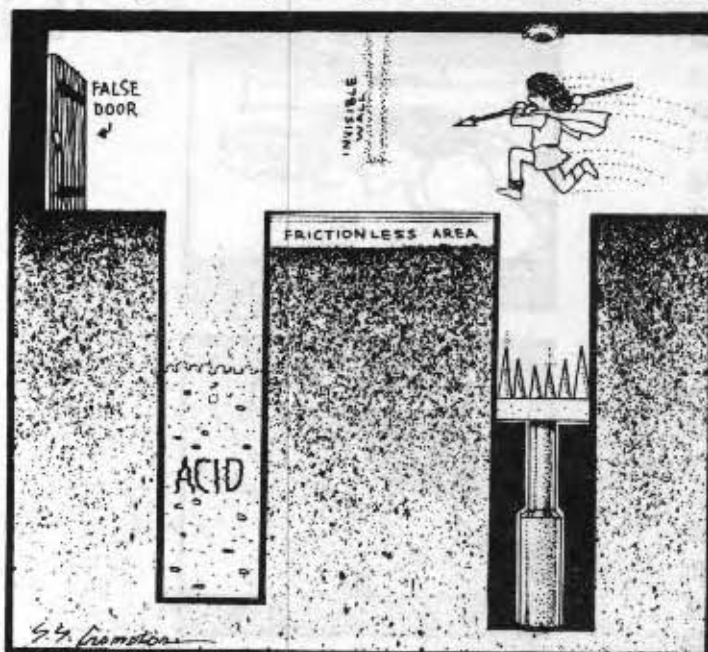
As with most corridor traps, Jersey's idea is most effective if used in an area where dungeon delvers are running from something. From a distance, this will appear to be a normal corridor, but on closer inspection the floor will prove to be covered with regularly-spaced white squares of paper. Even harder to spot is the thin tripwire located just within the corridor. Of course, if the party is on the move, they aren't likely to take much note of this, let alone care.

The paper squares are, of course, pieces of flypaper laid sticky side up. Anyone running through the corridor will pick up several pieces of the stuff on their boots, and if someone is sent sprawling by the trip wire, they'll be papered from head to toe. As anyone who has ever seen a comedy from the silent movie era can attest, it's deuced impossible to remove flypaper from one part of your body without having it stick to another, especially if you are impatient or in a hurry.

Notwithstanding the humiliation any proud delver would feel after being wrapped in flypaper, Jersey's design does have a dark side. You see, this is magic flypaper, and any piece of armor to which it is stuck is temporarily nullified. Think of the paper squares as little windows through which armor is breached...if a square is stuck to someone's breast plate, and the victim receives a spear thrust to that region, it's skewered delver time! Where did the spear come from? Why do you think I said the delvers should be fleeing something when they encounter this trap, Holmes?



Brian Lawton makes no excuses for his outrageous puns, but he does offer us a **Tale of Two Pitys**, a dastardly corridor pit trap. The party should know something is up when they see a spiked pit blocking the corridor before them. Directly above



the pit, looking down into its dark depths, is a genuine living eye...the glassy orb alternatively rolls and stares, keeping the party in view.

A living eye in the ceiling is going to unnerve everyone, but the safest thing to do is destroy the eye by blade or fire. Otherwise, the eye is going to watch as the characters try to cross the pit...and will trigger the spring loaded ram beneath the spikes at the

bottom of the pit. This will cause the spikes to slam up to the ceiling--but note the gap in the spikes, designed to protect the eye should it still be alive when the spikes are activated.

After a casualty or two, the delvers should feel confident they can get over the pit...but the ground on the far side is a frictionless slide, and anyone landing upon it will lose their footing and slip into a waiting pit of corrosive acid. If someone takes a really long jump, they will collide with the invisible barrier hanging from the ceiling, and then probably slide into one of the pits despite his best intentions. Flying characters are also likely to run into the invisible barrier.

Should the party avoid both pits, the frictionless slide, and the invisible barrier, they will find a door at the end of the corridor. Opening the door triggers a trap door beneath the character's feet, dumping him or her into the acid pit. Behind the door is...a brick wall. Pity.



With **For A Case Of Fire**, Drew Deitz puts a twist on the old "I dare you to throw this lever" routine. This is a good trap to spring on paranoid characters, because if your victims just sit on their hands and do nothing, then their goose is cooked!

Hitting a pressure plate in the floor activates a thirty second time delay trigger. Unless the party is very observant, no one is likely to notice a pressure plate has been triggered. Chances are the characters will be occupied with inspecting a lever sticking from the wall. Beside the lever is a sign reading, "For A Case Of Fire, Don't Pull Lever".

If someone pulls the lever within thirty seconds, the time release trigger is neutralized and the trap is disarmed (drat!).

If no one pulls the lever, walls slam down before and behind the party, and the corridor is sealed off from the rest of the dungeon. Simultaneously, the whole floor section near the level plunges down into a hidden reservoir of oil. Hidden tubes are also activated, spraying the closed off section of the corridor with oil. Finally, flame jets open up from the ceiling, ensuring this section of the corridor has indeed become "a case of fire". Remember, he who hesitates is toast!



Like so many little pink humans, Colin Everett was raised on fairy tales, and one that obviously made an impression on him was Jack and the Beanstalk. At least, I assume it was that tall tale that inspired Colin's **Cracked Back And The Beanstalk** trap. This trap is absurd, inefficient, and a lot of fun --my favorite combination.

Locate the trap at the end of any corridor. Unbeknownst to the party, the last twenty feet of the corridor is actually a plank that extends out over a hollow section of the floor. From a distance, all the party can tell is the corridor obviously ends in some sort of drop shaft.

Fearing a trap, most heroes will send someone toward the shaft to investigate, perhaps tying a rope or line of some kind around the brave soul's

waist as a precaution. A scout should just about be able to reach the end of the corridor before his weight will cause the floor to sag, bending down something like a diving board. If the whole party heads down the corridor, the plank bends just that much faster. As the corridor begins to sag, characters should catch a glimpse of the bottom of the pit. It is filled with a rich dark earth, and several large seeds lay on the surface.

As soon as the corridor starts to move, powerful magnets are activated under the floor, urging the corridor section to sag all the way down to its lowest position. This will both tumble characters on the moving section of corridor into the pit, and will activate a contact switch.

The contact switch causes a spring-loaded blade to flash down from the ceiling, maybe splitting a delver, but more likely severing any ropes a safe member of the party might maintain around someone snared by this trap. Simultaneously, a trap door above the drop shaft opens up, dropping a torrent of water into the bottom of the shaft.

By now anyone on the sagging section of corridor should have lost his footing and tumbled into the pit. A long fall into rich soil now turned to mud will bruise more egos than backsides, but this trap hasn't delivered its punchline yet. The water and the soil mix with the magic seeds to sprout a beanstalk...a beanstalk that grows with lightning speed up the shaft, through the open trap door in the ceiling, and into an expanse of solid rock beyond. Anyone in the pit will get a rocket ride atop the beanstalk, and can look forward to a cracked back (at the very least) when they smash into the ceiling. I guess Jack's "magic beans" weren't such a bad investment, after all!



Tom Keefer is part mollusk, as hinted by the prolonged periods of time he spends underwater. During one of his many scuba diving expeditions through the briney depths, Tom came up with the idea for his **You See A Bends In The Corridor** trap.

Tom uses this corridor as the sole means of escaping from the lowest level of his dungeon, which lies several miles beneath the surface of the earth. The corridor is actually a series of corridor sections, each connected to the next by an air lock. The corridor slopes sharply upward. All doors in the corridor sequence are of the one-way variety, allowing delvers to travel up the corridor, but not back down again.

The purpose of the airlocks is to ensure each section of corridor maintains an atmospheric pressure five times greater than that outside the dungeon. In the first section of corridor the pressure is the same as that at the dungeon's lowest level, and each section thereafter subtly increases the pressure. If the corridor is sufficiently long, it will be possible to build your way up to a crushing five atmospheres with the delvers feeling nothing more than a mild sting in the ears.

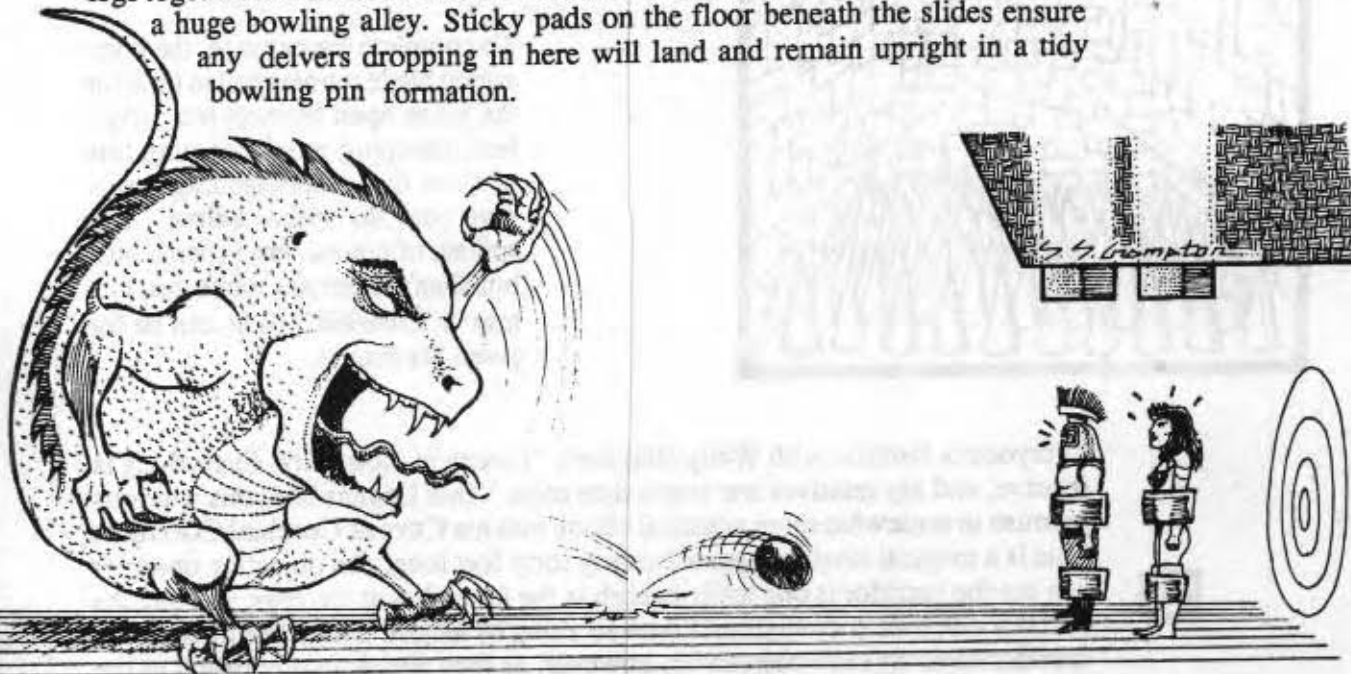
When the delvers finally reach the end of the corridor and arrive again at the surface realm, they'll be in for a nasty surprise when they open the last door. A normal body will be hard pressed to compensate for the sudden change in atmospheric pressure, likely suffering a case of the bends, a deadly affliction most commonly experienced by divers using ill caution in rapidly returning from the ocean floor. Expect nitrogen bubbles to form in the blood stream, exploding in the heart, brain, and veins. Tom says at least one victim can expect to have his eyes pop out of his head! While the delvers are flipping around on the ground,

maybe its time to send along an expedition of wandering monsters from your dungeon. If nothing else, they can collect whatever valuable treasure the party recovered from the bottom level of your dungeon. After all, a long pressurized corridor is expensive to maintain, and the delvers can't expect to use it for free!

Osborne Lone obviously enjoys bowling a frame every now and then, or he would never have come up with his **Delvermatic Pin Setter**. This trap starts off innocently enough as a corridor floor abruptly dumps away to a hidden slide, hopefully netting an entire dungeon party in the process. After a rapid plunge into the depths, the slide separates into several different chutes, each of which is large enough to permit one delver to pass at a time.



The delvers thus sorted, they find themselves dropping down an ever-narrowing chute, the sides of which draw uncomfortably close. Near the bottom of these chutes the delvers are bound by constricting steel bands that should neatly trap legs together and arms overhead. The slides terminate above the business end of a huge bowling alley. Sticky pads on the floor beneath the slides ensure any delvers dropping in here will land and remain upright in a tidy bowling pin formation.



With the victims lined up, it's time to knock 'em down. Once the word gets around you should have no trouble recruiting monsters for your dungeon's bowling league. The very idea of hurling heavy objects at helplessly bound dungeon delvers should send them running from miles around.

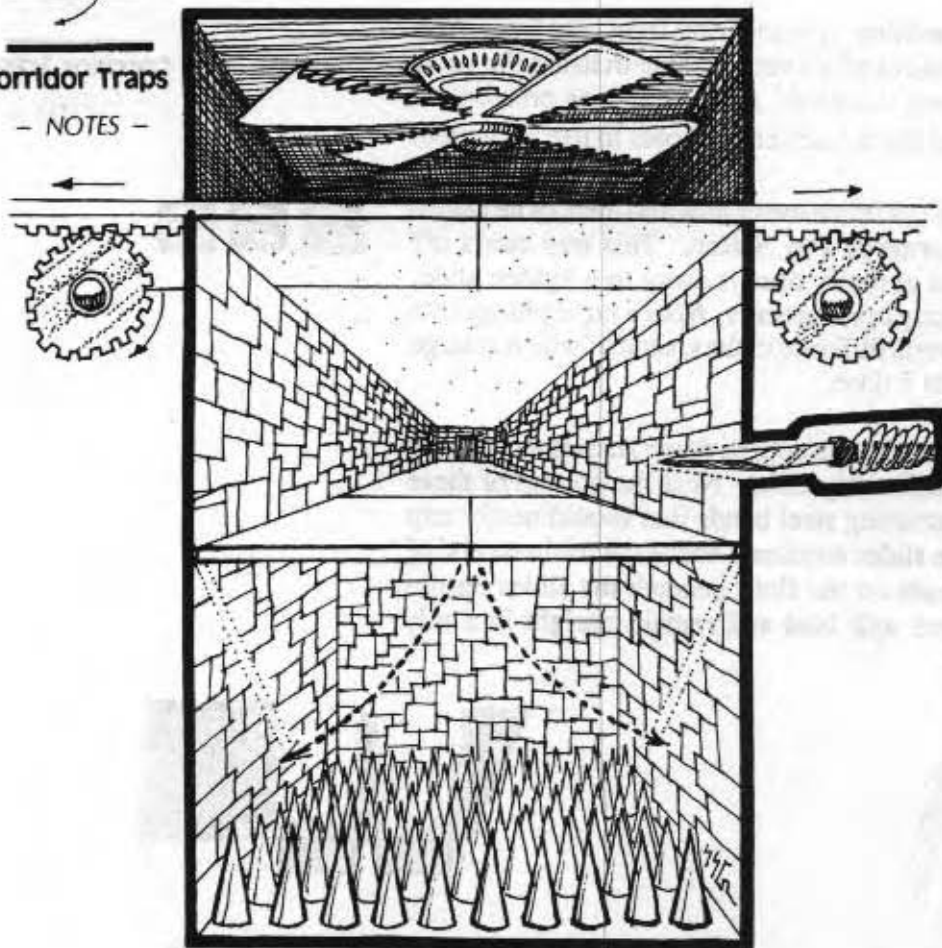
As the victims of this trap will learn, bowling styles differ among monsters. Trolls bowl overhand, which is deadly enough, but it lacks a certain elegance. For this trap I think I prefer leaving the bowling in the hands of living skeletons, who can do little more than roll the ball down the lane--but to delvers helplessly bound at the far end, what could be more horrible than the deliciously distinct sound of a rolling bowling ball growing louder, and ever louder, and louder still...**STRIKE!!**

Remember when slowly revolving Casablanca ceiling fans were all the rage? Well, Sidney Greenstreet wouldn't dare sit under the fan in this next trap unless he wanted the top of his head removed. Dan Logans is responsible for the **Triple Trap Tunnel**, a terribly lethal corridor trap in the grand old fashion.



The trap is triggered by a pressure plate. Things happen almost too fast to follow. First, a long blade springs horizontally across the corridor. Dave says the blade

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should travel at 184 miles per hour, but my own tests have shown considerably greater velocity is possible if a properly large spring is used.

No sooner does the blade strike home than the ceiling is rolling away, revealing the furiously rotating fan. Engineer Dave claims a top speed of 9,835 rpm for the fan, but once again I think there is room for improvement. The ceiling fan descends to head height. The fan should rapidly dispose of the upper half of anyone impaled by the blade.

To complete the carnage, the horizontal blade retracts just in time for the pit to open beneath the party's feet, dumping any struggling bits of flesh that otherwise might survive onto the spikes below. The spikes, of course, are superfluous, but Dan's alternate name for this trap is "Overkill", so he can be forgiven his excess.

Everyone is familiar with Wally Blunder's "Theory of Relativity: Everything is relative, and my relatives are worse than most." Dan Logans uses this spurious premise to somewhat more practical effect with his **Cursed Comical Corridor**. This is a magical corridor approximately forty feet long. An objective observer can see the corridor is one tenth so high at the far end as at the near, and that the corridor narrows to its slightest width all along its length. Travellers through the corridor have no such objectivity, however, as they shrink in proportion to the corridor with each step they take. Thus, a character normally standing five feet tall would find himself only six inches tall (or one tenth his normal height) when he reached the narrow end of the corridor. Of course, because the delver's surroundings shrink right along with the delver, it will be all but impossible to notice the change. Moving from the narrow to the tall end of the corridor returns a character to normal size.



This trap is not in itself lethal, but it can certainly lead to trouble, especially if the short end lets directly into the rest of the dungeon. Even puny terrors such as rats and spiders will now tower above the delvers, who will likely assume they've stumbled into a giant's palace, rather than realizing they themselves have been shrunk. Imagine the party's surprise should they find a way to the surface without returning through the magic corridor, where they will find the world ten times bigger than they remember it!



We've all seen giant wheel traps before, but Tyrone Shoes puts a new twist on an old theme with his **Wheel of Misfortune**. Spring this horror on a party traveling along any sloping corridor section in your dungeon. The party's worst fears are realized when a huge wheel appears at the top of the slope, bearing down directly on the characters.



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You can always let the delvers run away, but that's boring. Far better to point out the wheel is not quite so wide as the corridor, and that a deft delver might avoid doom by pressing flat against a wall and letting the wheel roll pass. Armored characters are likely to take this option, as we all know how hard it is to flee when clad head to toe in gleaming plate mail.

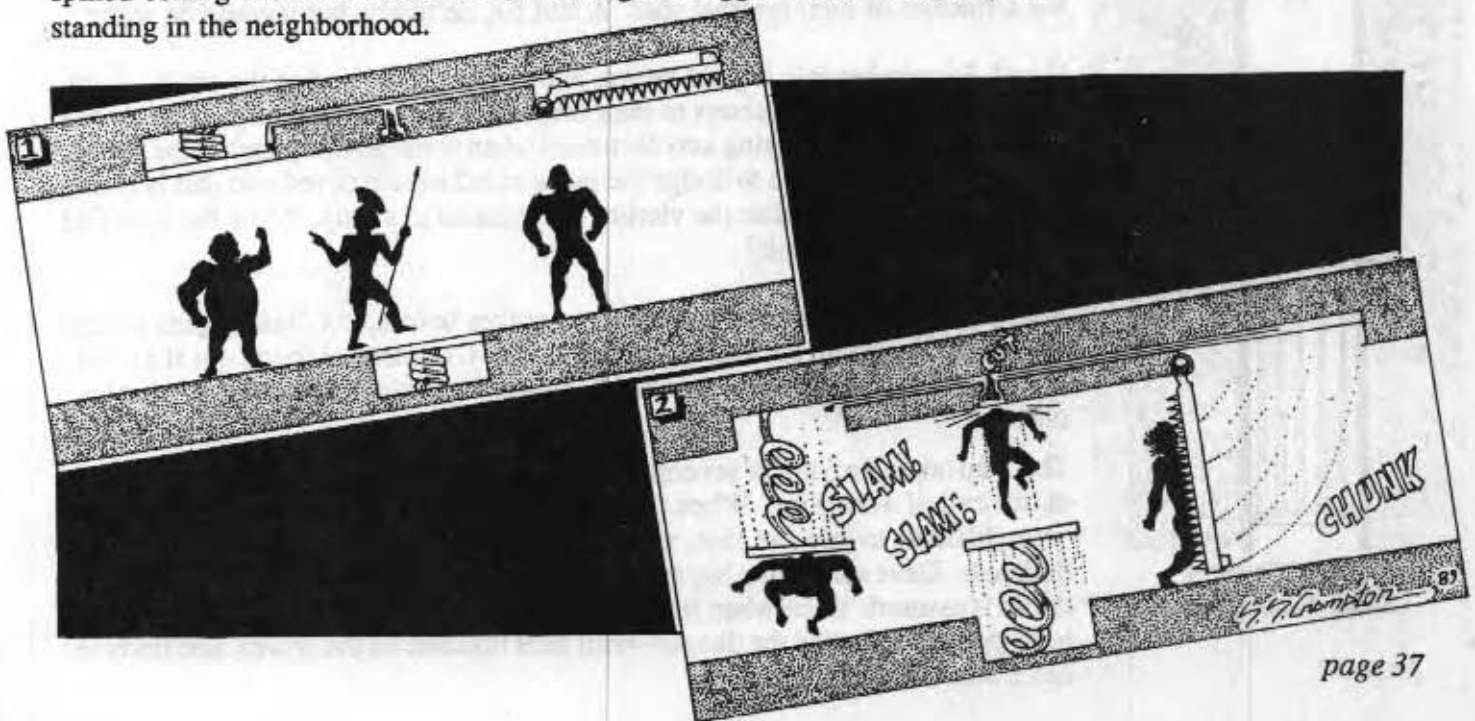
As soon as the armored characters bail for the wall, their doom is sealed. The wheel will indeed roll past without striking the party, but the interior of the wheel is itself a powerful magnet. Armored characters will get stuck to the side of the wheel straight away, while unarmored characters should lose their weapons at the very least.

Thus stuck to the wheel, trapped characters will find themselves rotating around and around as the device speeds down the corridor to whatever doom you devise. Abruptly reducing the width of the corridor neatly solves the task of having to remove delvers from the wheel by hand.

Once upon a time, I journeyed the world in search of the meaning of life, and after a series of incredible trials, I found myself kneeling at the feet of a wise masked guru. He explained to me that if you could take all of life and bake it in an oven, you would eventually burn away the falsehoods that interfere with a proper understanding of existence. After a century or so of slow baking, an extremely potent and powerful brick would result--and that brick would be professional wrestling.



Shane Wilson's **Body Slam** trap certainly hints at pro wrestling roots. Once again, the trap swings into motion when the party leader steps on a pressure plate, triggering a spring-loaded section of floor. The trapped floor section slams up into the ceiling (squashing anyone unfortunate enough to be standing on the same). This triggers yet another release, and a trapped section of the ceiling slams down to the floor, which should finish off just about anyone still standing in the party...all except the leader. While it might prove more cruel to let the party leader live with the knowledge he got all his friends killed, Shane prefers to stick it to him. After the two trapped sections of the corridor have slammed into place, a spiked ceiling section slashes across the original trigger area, nailing anyone standing in the neighborhood.





A pack of scum represented by Erik Noble contributed **Pinheads R Us**, a magical device that ensures even if a delver escapes its deadly embrace, he won't be half the man he used to be. In fact, merely having your head shrunk might seem like a bargain to a victim of this trap.

The trap is triggered when any section of corridor abruptly dumps away into a slide. One or more characters will tumble down the slide...it's okay to get the whole party, but it's a lot more fun to let a few dopes escape, to make sure there's someone on hand to see what happens next.

Anyone looking down the slide after the heroes who vanished will see a glowing tunnel that obviously radiates magic. The tunnel tapers away into the depths of the dungeon, and casual observation will show the tunnel narrows as it drops away from the corridor. The exact perspective might be difficult to judge, but it should seem the tunnel is ultimately too narrow for the characters who tumbled into it to safely pass.

And what of the missing characters? They find themselves in a normal sized room at the end of the long sliding tunnel. The victims of this trap will have experienced no difficulty passing down the chute, although they may detect the presence of strong magic. The only feature of the room in which the delvers are trapped is a big red button on one wall.

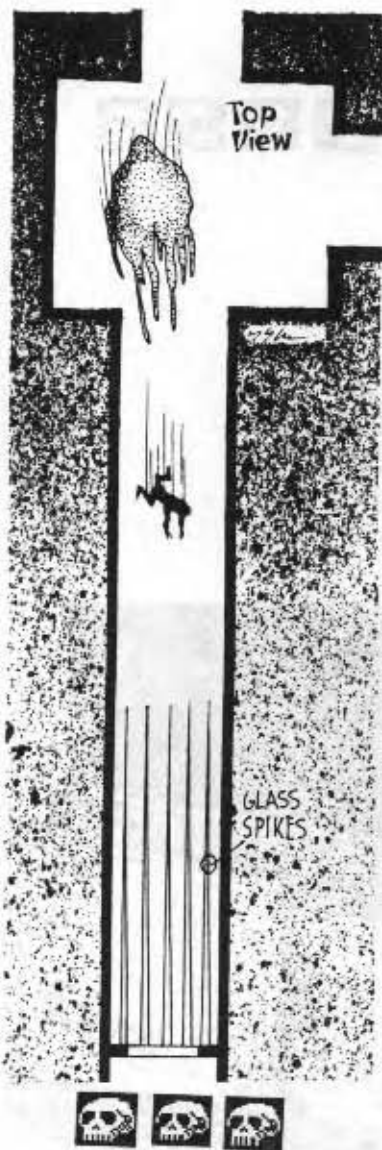
What's going on here? The tunnel is enchanted to shrink anything that falls through it to a fraction of its original size. Delvers dropping into the chute shrink at a constant rate as they tumble down the chute...a victim should be unable to determine he is changing size, as it will seem to him he is simply falling down a long slide.

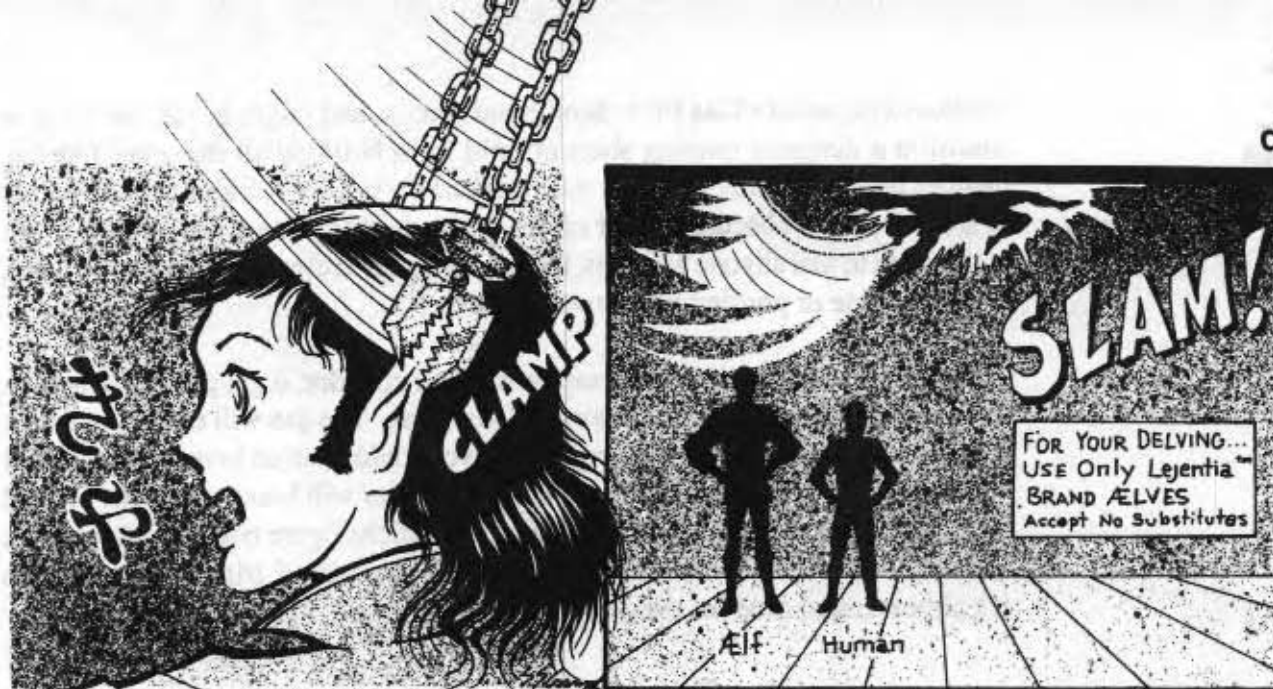
Characters viewing the chute from the corridor might figure out what's going on, especially if they drop something down the chute and watch it shrink. Rescuing friends from the bottom of the slide will prove difficult, as any ropes or poles lowered into the tunnel will shrink, thus requiring an incredibly long rope to actually reach the bottom of the shaft. The magic is also one-way...that is to say, delvers crawling up out of the shaft will not grow, but will instead find themselves but a fraction of their original size. A bad fix, certainly, but it could be worse.

How? Remember that big red button in the room at the end of the shaft? Well, pushing it restores the delvers to their original size...in a room only a few inches square. If anyone is peering into the tunnel when some genius punches the button, be sure he gets a chance to dodge the pressurized stream of red goo that is bound to spurt of the tunnel after the victims are reduced to a pulp. More fun than Old Faithful, don't you think?

We've all seen delvers impaled on sharp spikes before, but Dan Logans pumps some new blood into the idea with his **Heart of Glass** trap. I found out at a young age how sharp glass can be--my daddy hurled me through a plate glass window, once.

This trap takes the form of several very long and flat glass spikes affixed to a wall at one end of a corridor. When viewed point-on from a distance, the spikes are very difficult to see...at best, a character might see something shiny in the darkness. Have something big and mean chase a delver toward the spikes and his doom is assured. Even when right on top of the spikes a potential victim will be hard-pressed to notice the danger--until he is impaled on the spikes, and finds he has a heart of glass.





Odd Norm Strange strikes again with **Lose The Spock Ears, Clyde**, a trap designed to rid dungeon parties of elves, fair geeks, and Trekkies. This trap takes the form of two stiff metal rods, at the end of which are vicious metal clamps. The trap is activated by a pressure plate, causing the two stiff rods to flash down from the ceiling and whiz past the average delver's head. The metal clamps engage when the rods reach where the trap estimates the target's head should be located. The margin for error with this trap is very slight, and it might not work when you try it, but it's the thought that counts. Your average dungeon delver probably won't get hit by this thing, but will instead suffer an uncomfortably close call as the dangerous clamps whiz over his or her head. Elves, however, are a different story. Where I come from, Elves are taller than the average Joe, and they have those freaky long pointed ears...just long enough to give the clamps a target. With a bit of luck, the clamps will catch an elf by the ears and yank the little bugger right off his or her feet, slamming the filthy cuss into the ceiling. Slapped into the roof by the ears --how is that for a special kindred bonus?!



Rick Martin's **Flipside** trap probably won't kill anyone, but it does lead to an interesting problem. Hide a metal section of floor in the middle of a normal dungeon corridor, painting it to resemble stone. Armored characters walking on the steel plate will notice a change under foot, but by then it's too late to do anything but curse.



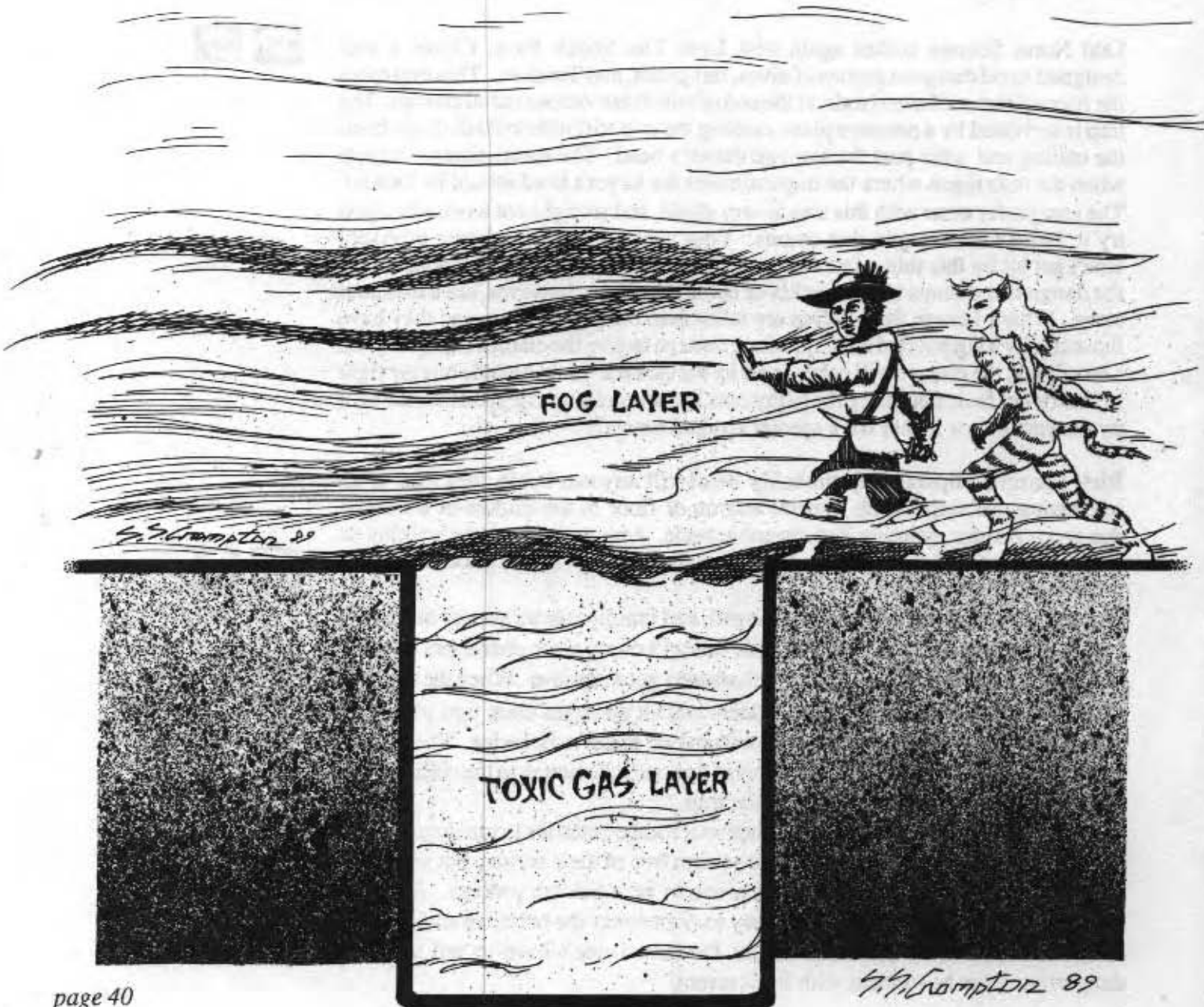
The metal section of the corridor is hinged, and rapidly rotates around on an axis parallel with the line of advance. While this will dump some characters onto the bed of spikes hidden below, armored characters get a reprieve. When the corridor flips to its upside-down position, hidden contact switches click into place, and current flows through the floor section from two massive batteries. The result is a potent electromagnetic field that adheres armored characters to the ceiling of the secret room reveal by the motion of the trap.

Characters stuck to the ceiling can either wait for the batteries to run down (which takes a LONG time), or they can try to squirm free of their armor...but with a bed of spikes awaiting below, that could prove to be a ticklish process. Someone surviving a fall onto the spike might try to disconnect the batteries and thus free someone captured by the magnet, but I'm sure I don't have to tell you how dangerous it can be to mess with live current.



Stephen Fitzgerald's **Gas Pit** is simple and deadly, and might be just the thing to install in a dungeon running short of gold from building all the other hideous devices detailed in this volume. All you need do is fill a corridor to knee height or so with a thick obscuring layer of gas. This gas needn't be toxic--in fact, if you really want to nail anyone with this, it might be better to cloak the true trap by using a fog machine or pouring water over dry ice.

After you've set up a suitably moody and foggy corridor, dig a pit somewhere in the middle. Fill the pit with a heavy and toxic gas. The gas will remain in the pit if it is thick enough, as the swirling fog above should form an inversion layer that will seal the pit. Anyone walking down the corridor will blunder into the pit, and probably choke to death before his or her companions figure out what's happened. Best of all, this trap doesn't rely on any sort of mechanical trigger to operate, so it's almost impossible for the design to backfire.





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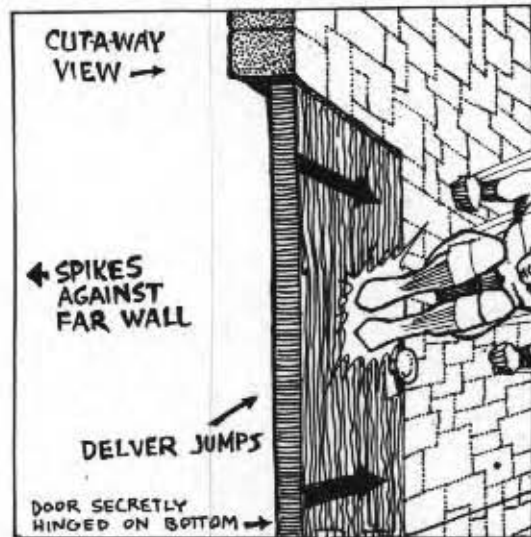


Door Traps

No one has come up with a really good new door trap idea since Monty Hall went off the air. Remember the time he zonked the big hot dog with a gorgon behind door number two? That guy really broke me up.

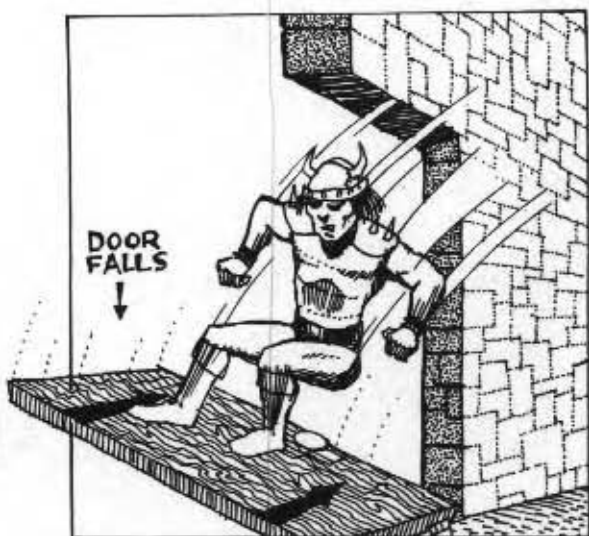
Alas, Monty has been reduced to hawking timeshare castle condos on late night TV, so it's up to us to carry on in his stead. A good door trap is worth its weight in gold, but don't expect to see me paying up for the submissions presented below. These designs are good, all right, but the Troll doesn't pay for trap submissions. Understand?





Springs 'N Spikes is Drew Dietz's contribution to this volume's door traps chapter. I liked this trap so much I've made it an event for this year's Orc Olympics, replacing the very silly but less lethal triple jump event.

This door seems wedged shut, and the characters should realize nothing short of ramming it down with a shoulder or forehead will get it open. When struck with sufficient force, the door--which is hinged on the bottom--will fall away, and the delver should land atop it. The original hinge disengages, and a new hinge snaps into place at the top of the door, turning the door into a primitive catapult when the spring on the far side of the door engages. The final result? One hero hurled onto spikes!



Jon Hancock uses the Heisenberg Effect to excellent effect with his **Boojum Trap**. This trap is literally what the characters make of it. The trap takes the shape of a simple closed door that exudes magic. The door is in fact an illusion. If someone decides it isn't there, then it isn't. The trap becomes whatever the players say it is--even a heaping chest of gold, if you feel generous.



You'll have to carefully listen to your players to get the most from this trap. If someone says, "I suppose the door is locked," and tries the knob, then the door is indeed locked. If someone says, "I saw this in TRAPS TOO, and I think there's a pit trap on the other side," then make his worst fears come true. The trap is actually easy to defeat unless the players assume the worst. When was the last time you met an optimistic dungeon delver?

Eric Taylor is responsible for **Draw!**, a shabby pun that should frustrate any party that takes themselves too seriously. Eric is almost apologetic about this trap, seemingly upset that it only toys with a character's mind, but I've found human brains every bit as much fun as superballs, and much larger besides.

The characters are confronted by a metal door inscribed with the image of a giant eye. Written above the door is, "Draw your weapons and show them to me!" Any attempt to open the door with force or magic meets with failure. If someone

follows the door's instructions--drawing a weapon from its sheath and brandishing it before the door--a jolt of electricity will burst from the eye, which will annoy everyone.

The answer, of course, is for each character to physically draw their weapons on a piece of parchment, then show the drawing to the eye. The eye will blink and the door will open, after which you can smile knowingly when the party tries to make literal sense of everything they read for the rest of the expedition. It might be worth testing the waters with a door marked "Cut your throat." Hey. You never know.

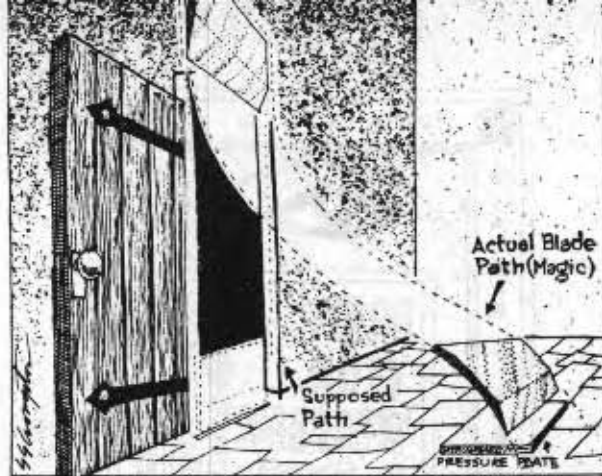
We've all seen the old routine where someone bangs their shoulder against a locked door a few times, only to tumble helplessly through to the other side when that same door is suddenly opened. Molly Ringworm uses this idea to savage effect with her **It's Open!** trap.

Locate this door at the end of any hallway. Delvers approaching the door will trigger a pressure plate in the floor, although nothing will happen as a direct consequence. The door is stubbornly locked, and will resist any attempt to batter past it by force. The door should give just a little, however, to encourage the victim to keep battering away.

Your average dim delver will figure he needs to take a longer run at the door to make it give, and will retreat back up the hall to gain some running room. This will trigger the pressure plate for the second time, which unlocks the door. When the character rushes down the hall and hurls himself against the formerly unyielding door, the door will fly open and the delver will hurl across the threshold...and into the bottomless dropshaft on the other side!

Lee Russell lives in Phoenix, Arizona, a town I affectionately refer to as the Devil's Armpit. Thus it's easy to understand how Lee came up with her **Sweaty Door** trap. This is as much an environmental condition as a trap. In any region of suitable humidity, wooden doors will swell to fill their jambs, becoming difficult if not impossible to open. If the party closes a wooden door behind them, and the room in which they find themselves suffers a sharp rise in humidity due





to magic or mechanical means, the characters could find themselves trapped. Lee assures me they will swelter to death. Having spent a night or two at the old castle when the swamp cooler wasn't working, I can assure you that isn't a pleasant way to go!

The next time you want a door that will **Cut Them Down To Size**, try this trap by M.A. Harris.

Not only will this trap nail whoever is foolish enough to lead the way through the door, it also has an even shot at the brave heroes who trail in his wake.

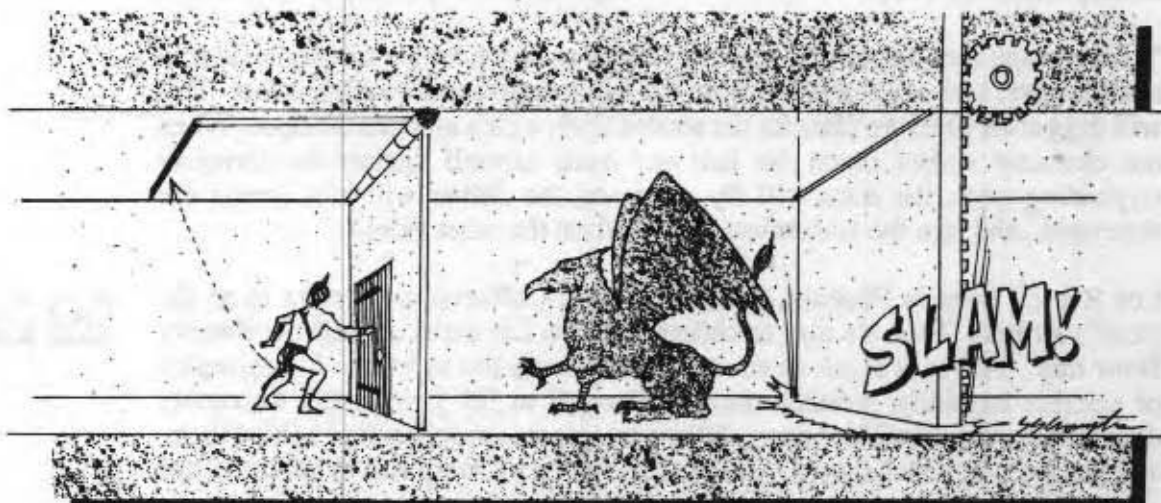
Upon first inspection, this appears to be a standard guillotine door--the door jamb is even grooved to permit passage of a blade. Indeed, a careful inspection will reveal a trigger mechanism hidden in the floor just before the door. Feeling that they've avoided this trap, most parties will carefully step over the trigger and pass through the door.

The trigger and the groove in the door are intended to misdirect attention from the true threat. A genuine trigger is hidden just a few strides inside the door, and when activated the true nature of this trap becomes painfully apparent. A guillotine blade does indeed flash down from the top of the door, but it's path quickly changes to send it flashing into the backs of the dungeon party, sawing most normal sized characters clean in half. With your adversaries now reduced to a manageable size, it should be easy to deal with them as you please.



Swing Shift is another clever door trap from Mr. Martin, although it is unfortunately not nearly so bloodthirsty as his previous offering. This is in fact a false door fixed into a false wall at the end of a corridor. The door will not respond to a push, nor will the knob twist or turn, but if someone pulls on the doorknob, they'll get more than they bargained for.

The false wall and door are attached to the ceiling by a hidden hinge. When someone pulls on the door, the whole wall swings up toward the ceiling like a garage door. Simultaneously, a counter-balancing wall drops into place behind the "door" through which the characters originally wished to pass. In fact, once the door is given any sort of tug at all, the trap is going to swing into motion regardless of what the characters may desire.



The counterbalancing wall blocks off further travel down this corridor, and also reveals whatever horrific monsters you've positioned behind the door. This is a good opportunity to employ one of your stupider or more cowardly monsters, as having a wall dropped into place behind it should provide ample motivation for the monster to charge into the midst of the party.



Mike Patton offers a pair of interesting door traps. First is the **Guillotine Portcullis**, a deadly little barrier that smart characters will just leave alone. This is a simple heavy portcullis, remarkable only in that it seems constructed of two separate halves, with a brief gap between the two. The separation, of course, permits a guillotine blade to flash down if someone tries to lift the portcullis, severing limbs or at least fingers. Mike suggests placing a false winch (presumably controlling the portcullis) in whatever room this trap guards, to encourage characters to wiggle under the barrier.



Mike's other trap is the **Mock Padlock**, a device that can be used on any door, or even on treasure chests. This is simply a lock containing a wax covered gelatinous acid membrane. Anything inserted into the lock--such as a thief's tools, or a pesky magic key--will rupture the membrane and be ruined. The lock itself is false, so while releasing the acid will destroy it, the party will be no closer to opening the door or chest, but they will have ruined their tools.



This next trap only loosely qualifies for the "Doors" chapter, but as I don't have enough submissions to form a "Telephone Booth" chapter, we'll recognize delvers must pass through an odd door to spring this trap and leave it at that. Besides, good advice is hard to come by these days, so when Osborne Lone says **If Cthulhu Calls, Don't Answer**, I think we should take him at face value.



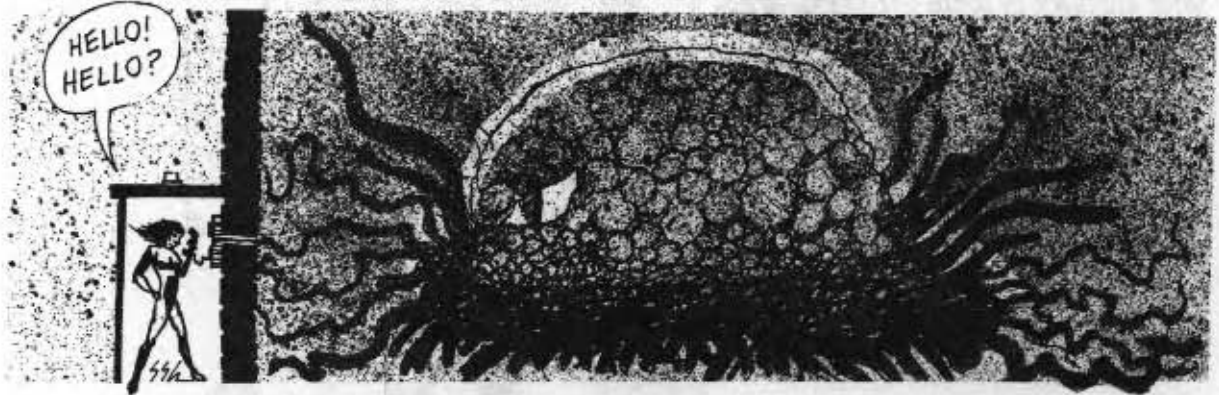
Locate a telephone booth up against any vast wall in your dungeon. The phone will ring as the delvers approach, encouraging them to enter the booth. Within





they will find an old fashioned telephone equipped with a crank, external bells, a mouth horn, and a separate ear piece connected to the phone box by an odd wire. Anyone bothering to look will see the phone cord is in fact warm and soft to the touch, and a little bit slimy.

Anyone stupid enough to answer the phone truly deserves what happens next. Crouching on the far side of the wall is Cthulhu, H.P. Lovecraft's infamous arch deity. The phone cord is in fact the trailing end of one of Cthulhu's many tentacles. Answering the phone and holding the ear piece to one's head will alert Cthulhu of



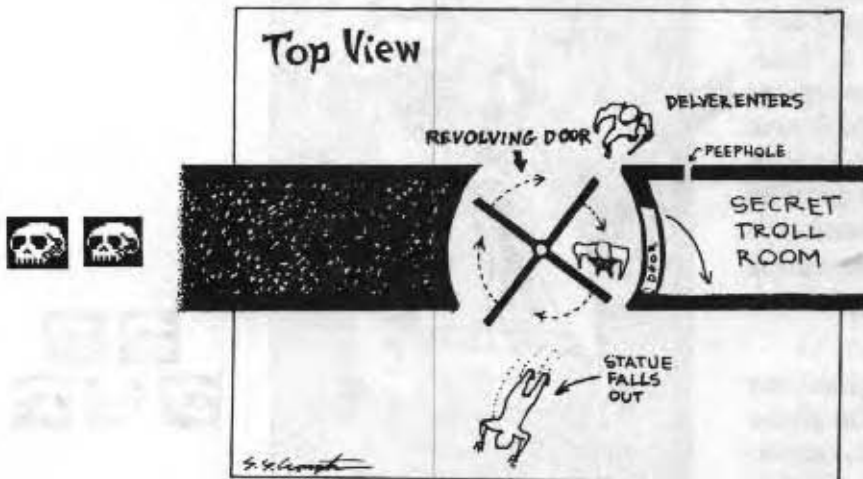
his prey...and with a tentacle already wrapped half way around his victim's head, it will be child's play for the great Old One to pull the delver through the wall and to unmentionable doom.

If you don't want to use Cthulhu, you can substitute any other tentacled horror. I suggest either an insurance agent or a Mets fan.



Norm Strange offers the **Molecular Screen Door** as an accessory for any dungeon door, trapped or not. Your dungeon's monsters will appreciate these in the summer, when they'll be able to leave their doors open at night without having to worry about delvers getting in.

The screen door has a light metal frame, just like any normal screen door. The screen, however, is made of incredibly fine material. In fact, the material making up the screen is just one molecule thick, meaning it is entirely too small to be spotted by the naked eye, but it exists all the same. Considering that the screen material is as tough as regular steel, anything blundering into the screen will be cut to ribbons. Woe to the character that takes a look at the screen door frame, decides there is nothing there, and then walks boldly through the doorway. Spaghetti.



Ugly John Carver took time out from designing the fabled second level of Uncle Ugly's Underground to provide our next trap. **The Golem Doorway** is a prime example of the twisted genius that has made Ugly John one of the most feared dungeon-masters in the land.

This trap takes the form of a simple revolving door. The

door revolves in a clockwise direction. The door is only so large enough to permit one character to fit in each section at a time. While a revolving door might excite a delver's suspicions, the door is in fact entirely safe.

It is the wall through which the door passes which the delvers must worry about. One section of the wall hides a secret room, in which resides a troll with a frying pan and several clay golems. The troll can view the party's approach through a hidden peep hole. Making careful note of the number of delvers in the party, the troll readies his frying pan and takes up a position behind a secret panel. After allowing a delver or two to pass safely through the revolving door, the troll makes his move, springing out from behind the panel when the door's revolution brings the intended victim into position.

I'm sure you're familiar with the distinctive sound of a frying pan striking someone in the skull. It's a common enough noise around my house. With one blow from the magic frying pan, the delver is knocked unconscious and dragged into the secret room by the troll. Simultaneously, one of the clay golems magically acquires the features of the smitten delver...and strides into the revolving door, to take the delver's place in the party.

A party passing through the door will know only that they heard an ominous noise, but they should have no idea of what happened. The golems are very good about deception, and only a very suspicious hero would notice one of his or her party has been replaced. Hopefully the party will elect to pass back through the revolving door. The rotation of the door will protect the party on their return trip, but should they decide to pass through the door yet again...BAM! Add another golem to the group! If the delvers are especially dim, you can replace the entire lot of them with imposters.

What to do with the golems, should you manage to replace one or more party members? Shame that you should even need to ask. The least subtle option is for one or more golems to turn on the party when they least expect it, but far better for them to stay with the group indefinitely, working against them in more devious ways. Perhaps the clones can lead the party deeper into your dungeon, where they can activate a more horrible trap the delvers would otherwise avoid.

Not nearly so stylish, but twice as childish, is Norm Strange's **Knock Knock Door**. This is an iron dungeon door possessing a living mouth and eyes, with a big brass knocker where a nose should be. Right about where a person would wear a flower in a lapel is the door handle...a handle that bears an incredible resemblance to a daisy.

The door is in fact an immensely powerful and indestructible magic demon. The only way to get past the thing is to endure a silly and tiresome ritual, which should really irk those boors who think there's no place for low comedy in high fantasy. The first step is to use the knocker--only two knocks, in



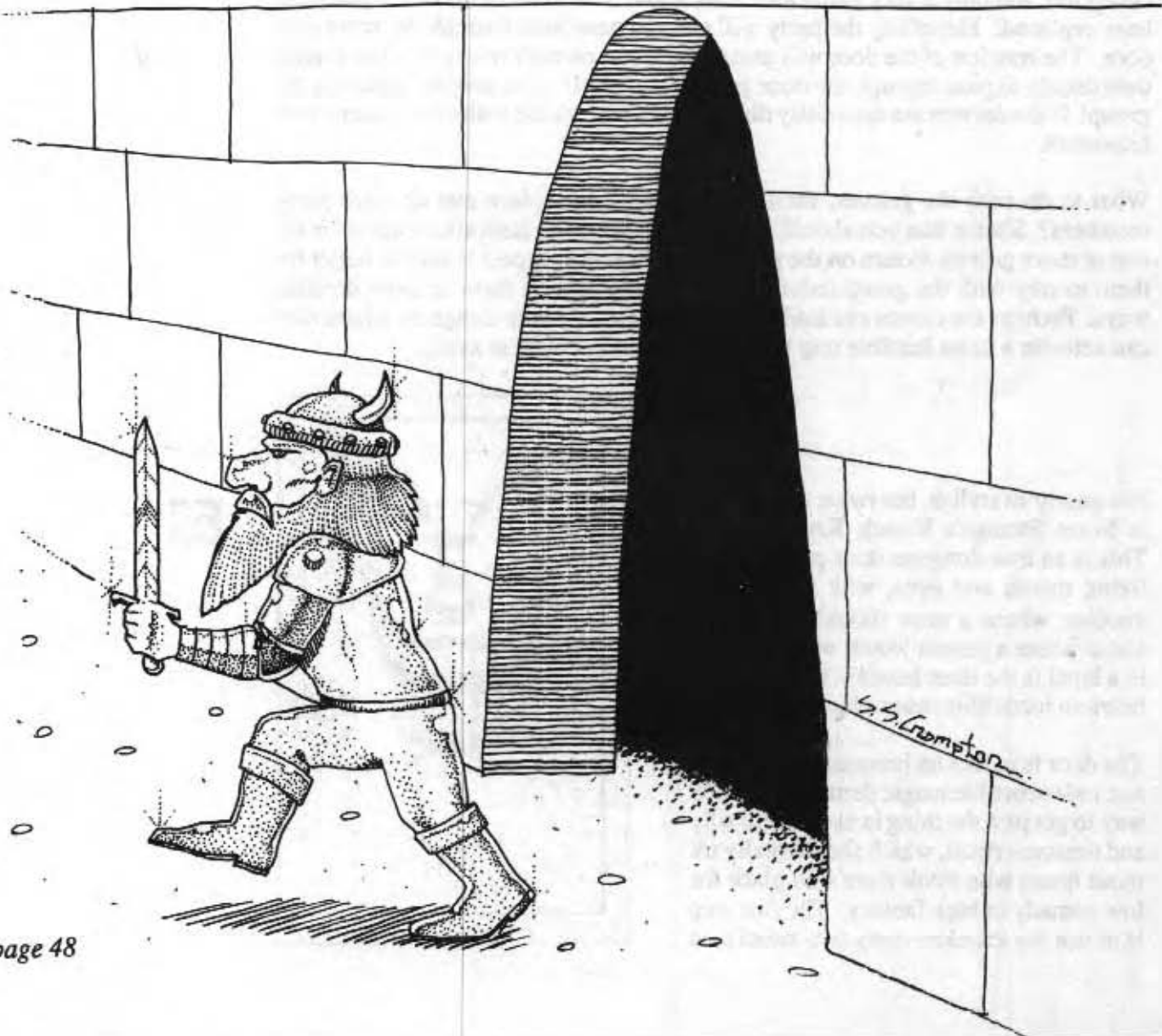


quick succession, with initiate the sequence. In effect, the delvers must say, "knock knock".

Need I say more? That's your cue. When the delvers say, "knock knock", the door mouths, "who's there?", and it's up to the delvers to come up with a suitably witty response. If the knock-knock joke thus offered is to your liking, the door opens and the delvers may pass. If you don't care for the joke, give the party a little squirt from the center of the daisy--skunk oil if you feel forgiving, acid or poison if you don't. And don't forget everything else you can do with that mouth...laugh, belch, spit, curse, even vomit! Wow! Fun for all ages!



Another of Rick Loomis' favorites is the **Golden Archway**. This is a quite ordinary-looking doorway that instantly turns anything passing through it into solid gold. A delver walking through becomes a golden statue. If the other party members try to drag the "treasure" back through the doorway, they will quickly find out that anything coming **BACK** through the doorway is turned back into whatever it was before. A pity. It's great that Pfred, the dwarf, is back with us again, but all that gold... If the party includes anyone terribly inventive, they may think of digging a hole in the wall near the doorway, so that something can be put **IN** through the doorway and taken out through the hole. (Make it properly difficult). This works. Unfortunately, the magic of the doorway only works until the item leaves the dungeon, at which time the item once again regains its previous form. What a waste of time!





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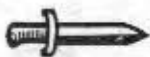


Item Traps

We're coming into the home stretch now, kids, but I don't want any of you to nod off. I kill more delvers that way. It seems that just because someone escapes a death trap or slays a dragon they automatically assume they are due a reward. Time and time again heroic chumps greedily accept whatever treasure they are offered, and time and time again they complain when one of my item traps goes off to devastating effect.

The message? Delvers are most vulnerable when they're holding out their hands. It's like dropping a grenade into the open sack of a angelic trick-or-treater on Halloween night...the expression on your victim's face is as much fun as the brilliant explosion that follows shortly thereafter. The next time some fool hollers for a reward, stick him with one of these beauties.



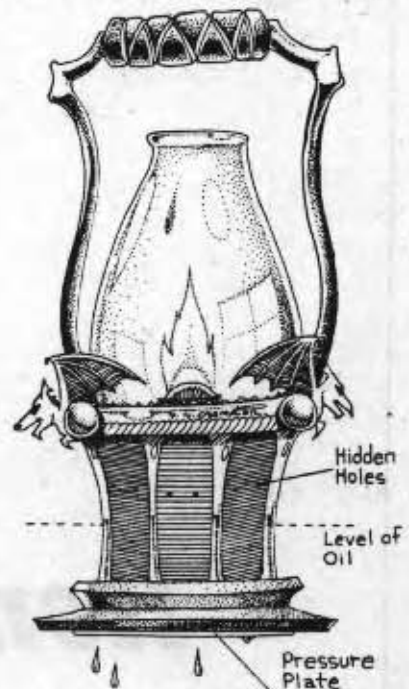


unless the character using the boots wears just one snappy glove, he or she is going goonwalking!! Results will range from ridiculous to deadly, depending on when the sweat kicks in.

We've all seen Michael Jackson impossibly slide backwards like Curly Howard on ball bearings, and with this trap delvers can try it too. Drew Deitz is responsible for these **Goonwalker Boots**. On first inspection, these boots seem blessed with some beneficial magic--maybe they'll make your run fast, or tap dance like a kobold on fire. In truth, the boots don't help much at all. Furthermore, they are made from the skin of a living creature, skin which will sweat profusely after someone has worn the boots for an hour or two. This sweat is very slippery, so



The **Dribble Lantern** is just one of the many reasons why Tom Keefer is such a gas at parties. Leave this item lying around where a dungeon party is likely to need some light and you'll keep your friends in stitches!



This looks just like an ordinary lantern. The flame burns a little low, but it should seem it might burn a little brighter if some oil were added to the lamp. The trap is sprung when someone picks up the lantern, releasing a pressure plate trigger in the base of the lamp. A timing mechanism is thus activated, ensuring the lantern will explode

in about fifteen minutes. This will be a minor explosion--hardly enough to damage a hardy adventurer--but if the victim behaves as Tom predicts, the explosion will prove very deadly indeed.

Seeing the lantern is burning a little low, a wise delver might decide to add some oil. This will seal the delver's fate. When the oil level inside the lamp rises just a little bit, oil will dribble out of the lamp through a series of holes too tiny to view with the naked eye. Hopefully the oil will drip onto a hand or arm or pant leg before the leak is noticed, and even then the delver is likely to think the oil leaked on him by mistake when he refilled the lantern. With the delver thus primed with flammable oil, an exploding lantern will cause considerable damage. Nothing like a human torch to brighten up a party!



Jon Hancock attached his John Hancock to **Dangerous Trevor**. This is a magical black sword Jon suggests you locate at the end of some dangerous trial to ensure the characters feel they've really earned something when they find it. In fact, they have. **Dangerous Trevor** should possess several significant abilities. Maybe it



WELL! ITS ABOUT
TIME. WHERE HAVE YOU
BEEN? NOW... I HAVE A..



provides it's wielder with steel-hard skin, or perhaps it destroys lawyers, or puts out fires. Make it something good.

Because, you see, Dangerous Trevor also talks. It talks a blue streak. When first claimed, the blade will moan and emit pulsing darkness, then speak with the voice of Una O'Connor, a distinguished character actress from the early days of Hollywood. For those of you who haven't seen "The Invisible Man" lately, its enough to note Ms. O'Connor has a very shrill voice. Anyway, Dangerous Trevor will instantly bond to whoever holds it, saying "About time! I've been here for years with no fun, no killing, and oh the dust! It's just murder, I tell you, and those orcs! The less said the better, and..." And on and on and on, ceaseless, until the end of the delver's days. The sword will continually nag and criticize the party, particularly its new owner. The sword so potent the party may wish to put up with this nonsense, but if Dangerous Trevor is insulted it will sulk, and refuse to fight until proper apologies are tendered. Have you ever tried to hide with a sword that continually chatters and insults anything that moves?

Andrew Bander has probably been watching too many David Lynch movies. Andrew's **Sponge Armbands** would compliment the Elephant Man's wardrobe, and would be right at home in one of Henry Spenser's twisted nightmares.

This trap appears to be a simple pair of magic wristbands. The wristbands are made of porous material, much like a sponge. Like so many magic item traps, once the wristbands are put on they will prove very difficult (if not impossible) to remove.



Donning the wristbands yields no immediate result. The sickening nature of this trap reveals itself over time. Wristbands are of course designed to absorb sweat. These wristbands do their job very well, but any sweat they absorb does not evaporate. After just a few minutes of exertion the wristbands will swell to twice their original size. At the end of an average dungeon delve a victim of this trap will find great pendulous sacks of sweat dangling from either wrist. Not only does this smell perfectly awful, but having all that weight hanging from each wrist makes swinging a weapon incredibly tiring, and precision work with one's hands is almost impossible. Anyone trying to cut away the swollen portion of a wristband will make a disgusting discovery. The sponge is not sponge at all, but has instead become flesh!



Fearing the imminent national savings and loan failure, Eric Taylor has converted all his gold into Acid Assets. These coins really aren't coins at all, but tiny acid-filled vials hidden inside lead coins plated with gold. An alert delver may notice these trapped coins are a little heavier than others, but who really spots small details when grabbing goodies with both hands?

With any luck, these coins will find themselves clinking along in a sack with lots of other treasure. A sudden jolt or continued pressure will break the glass vials and release the acid, with predictable results. Not only will any surrounding treasure be damaged, but the bearer will suffer from a fountain of acid springing up in his or her pack. I won't even mention the consequences if a character is in the habit of testing the authenticity of a coin by biting into it.

The last time I dropped around the pub I saw one of my favorite bar sports was making a comeback. The sport is called Halfling Hurling (that's Midget Chucking for you norms). Basically, a gang of the boys gets together and downs a pint or two, then they start looking for a halfling to hurl. Halflings, being drunken little sods, are never hard to find around a tavern. Scoop one up by the ear or the ankle and give him a fling--you might like it.

It's always just a matter of time before the rules lawyers get a hold of any activity and turn it into a strictly regulated sport. Alas, Halfling Hurling is no exception. Troll gangs from all over the land now meet for organized competitions, hurling the little monsters for distance and accuracy. They've even rounded up a pack of willing halflings to participate, if you can imagine such a thing!

Where's the trap in all of this? Consider Tyrone Shoes' **Halfling Handles**. These handy handles adhere to any surface, and imme-





diately render any object's mass null and void. Originally developed by a serious Halfling Hurler, this item has applications well beyond simple sport. Sticking a pair of these magic goodies onto a halfling makes him infinitely easier to hurl, and there's no reason your dungeon's monsters can't use them to equally good effect on all kindreds of delvers. These handles are also useful for carrying prisoners around, and thus are recommended for use with any of the traps in this manual that require a pack of subdued victims to operate.

The **Soprano Chair** is a fifty/fifty trap. It will prove painful to one gender and devastating to another. The delvers in Andrew Bander's dungeon may sit on strange chairs without provocation, but to make this thing work in your tunnel complex you may need to disguise it as a throne. Many societies punish anyone who dares to sit on the leader's throne--add a secret button or lever to this trap that disarms the mechanism described below, and you have a throne that will guard itself.



The operation of this device should be obvious. Sitting on the chair activates a trigger mechanism. This, in turn, releases a weight beneath the chair, causing a section of the floor to rapidly strike the victim where the sun doesn't shine.

Nothing good ever comes from hanging around in bars. Who wants to spend an evening with a bunch of maudlin drunks? As rumormills, bars are overrated--I get my best tips at health clubs, hangings, and celebrity golf tournaments. This is off the subject, but I bring it up because our trap uses a different sort of bar--the sort that guards cells and blocks doors. Brawny adventurers have no fear of bars, figuring they can easily bend them into pretzels or funny animal shapes. Markus Wande's **Brittle Bars** hope to put an end to this practice. After running across this item, maybe delvers will give iron bars as wide a berth as that they should afford to cocktail lounges.



This item works best when placed in the center of a row of normal bars. Someone wishing to clear a way through a barred window or door will usually try to bend those bars in the center, and flanking Markus' bars with the genuine article will improve the deception of the trap. The trapped bars are in fact hollow, and made of a soft metal such as lead. Thus they will easily bend and break, releasing whatever you care to hide inside. Markus suggests acid or poisonous gas, but his dungeon obviously requires frugal measures. In my personal pit, the hollow interior of the bars leads to a pocket dimension composed entirely of perfect vacuum. Thus, when a bar is broken, it sets up a powerful suction that few delvers can resist, and while the diameter of a bar is too small to permit a character to pass through, it is impossible for a delver to free himself after being sucked against the opening.

Ugly John Carver and Paul O'Connor have both experienced prolonged periods of unemployment, and during one such period those great friends decided to sponsor the world's first Pirate Olympics. The two devised a number of competitions, among them Parrot Chucking, Peg Leg Gymnastics, and Hooks Only Arm Wrestling. Alas, the 1980 United States boycott of the Moscow Olympic games undermined all attempts to sponsor this competition, and the event never got off the ground.

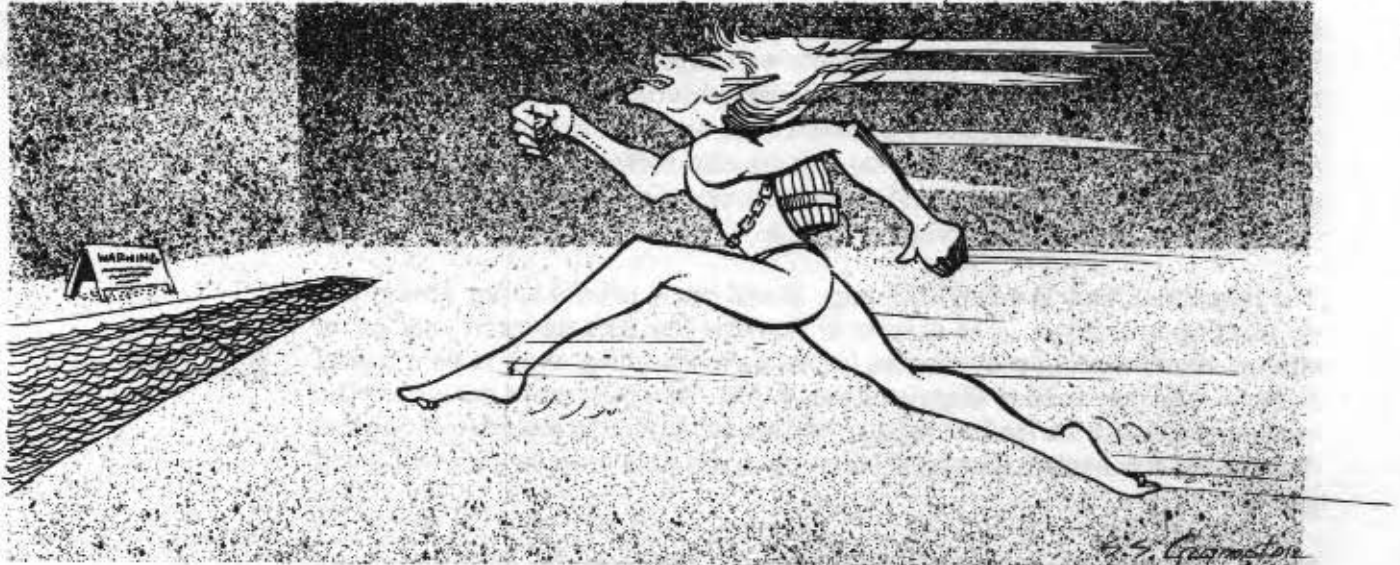


One idea from that twisted dream remains, however--a savage little competition called **Run, You Sucka!** Come to think of it, this deadly contest has almost nothing to do with pirates, although the boys may have intended it as a means of entertaining the many prisoners a competent buccaneer acquires in the course of



Item

- NOTES



his work. To inflict this trap on a group of delvers you will have to capture them first, but if you haven't learned how to do that by now, my life has been a waste. It's also best if you nail victims one at a time with this thing, as two or more characters can usually team up to solve their mutual troubles with little effort.

To begin the competition, strip a delver down to his jock strap and fit him with a wooden keg full of black gunpowder. Lock the keg across the delver's back with chains and a lock, and make sure the victim can't reach the keg no matter how hard he tries. Have a troll or some other beast light the uncomfortably short fuse trailing from the keg and point the victim toward a trench full of liquid one hundred yards away.

The fuse is short, and the delver doesn't have much time. There's no way the delver can reach around behind him and snuff out the fuse, nor can he expect to shuck out of the harness holding the keg before his time is up. The delver's only chance is to make a break for the trench in hopes the liquid found therein will extinguish the fuse. If the delver makes like Carl Lewis, he or she might just make it to the trench before the fuse burns all the way down and blows the victim to kingdom come.

If someone makes it to the trench, Paul and Ug suggest you show them what a generous person you are by allowing them to douse the fuse in the water found therein. I say to the devil with such nonsense, and insist you fill the trench with oil! One way or the other, it's big boom time!



Jim Palasty is a troll after my own heart. He, like me, agrees that matrimony is important to everyone but the happy couple. How else can you explain the next pair of item traps, each of which is ideally suited as wedding gifts for youngsters about to tie the knot? As jewelers are always reminding us, **A Diamond Is Forever**-most women are thrilled beyond words when given a diamond ring. Jim's ring, however, is of a very dark variety. It is not the diamond, but the ring itself, that is the trap. Once worn, the ring cannot be removed. Furthermore, the ring ex-





udes a horrible stench, powerful enough to return the breakfast of anyone standing near by. While this might improve the smell of your average goblin bride, most common folks will get a quick case of cold feet when this item kicks into action.

Providing a gift for the bride while leaving the groom empty-handed is of course an unforgivable breach of manners, so Jim devised the **Incredible Shrinking Armor**. This is a spectacular breast plate of superior workmanship--just the thing to complete the formal wear of a proud and heroic bridegroom. The breastplate fastens in front and back by snapping into place. No straps or buckles of any kind are visible, and with good reason. You see, once the breastplate is in place, it begins to shrink, and shrink, and shrink, and...I'm sure you see where this is going. It's one thing to get tight under the collar on your wedding day, but having your ribs crushed is worse than having to slow dance with your mother-in-law.



Even the most eager young couple might have a little case of nerves when their wedding night rolls around, but if awarded a supply of Rick Martin's **Love Potion Number Nine**, the honeymoon should be full of fireworks. Anyone sipping from a bottle of this stuff will fall madly in love with the next being they see...not a problem if enjoyed in private with that special someone, but a bit uncomfortable if used as Rick suggests. For whatever reason, Rick thinks it would be amusing to have a couple zombies hanging around when this potion is sampled, pointing out a variety of odd love triangles could result. I'll say...next thing you know, our happy young couple will find themselves appearing on the Newlydead Game!





I just can't let go of this marriage thing. You know what happens when you offer a slim and pretty gremlin girl a wedding ring, don't you? It's like pulling the ripcord on an life raft. No sooner are you hitched than your bride has ballooned up into a horrid obese beast. Inside of five years her transformation into a square bulldog woman is complete, and the only thing left to do is to escort her to Las Vegas, where she can exercise her grotesque puffy arms and elephantine elbows by pulling slot machines...while you slink off to watch vaguely attractive forms bounce across the stage in some sleazy cocktail show. Ah, marriage!



Tom Keefer wisely reminds us that **You Can Teach A Guy All You Want, But You Can't Make Him Any Smarter**, alternatively titled Brain Man. Anyone finding this magic book entitled "The Tome Of Knowledge" is bound to make this discovery for himself, although probably not before it is too late.

The first time someone reads from this book, you should provide them with a true and very tasty secret about your dungeon. I know this is like a magician revealing how he does a trick, but there is a method to Tom's madness. Give a character the first hit for free, and he'll be hooked for life.

In his quest for secret understanding, the owner of the book is bound to return to its pages sooner or later. This time, provide a slightly less useful but still interesting bit of knowledge to the character. At the same time, secretly reduce his intelligence by a point.

When the character returns to the book yet again, provide him with a significantly less interesting fact, and reduce his intelligence yet again. Although the player won't be excited about the information you provided, explain to him that his character actually finds this new bit of knowledge as interesting as the last.

I'm sure you can see the pattern that's developing. Each time the character checks the book you provide him with a fact duller than the last, but each time the character is equally interested, because his intelligence is decreasing at a constant rate. There's only so much you can learn from books, and eventually they get in the way of experiencing life first hand. If you take this trap to its logical limit, you will reduce a character to idiocy, but he'll be delighted to experience such startling revelations as learning the sky is blue and that the sun rises and sets each day. Scratch one big brain!



Speaking of expanding gas bags, consider Stephen Fitzgerald's **Spike Bag**. This item should take center place in a room specially devoted to its operation. Initially this looks like a deflated football covered with metal spikes. It is in fact a leather balloon...a balloon that starts to inflate even as the air begins to be pumped out of the room. In fact, the two phenomena are unrelated, but dim delvers may decide the inflating leather balloon is to blame for the sudden lack of oxygen. If things go your way, someone might decide to rupture the bag in a futile attempt to replace



the air in the room... which triggers a savage explosion. You see, it was not air, but hydrogen that was being pumped into the bag...hydrogen that is bound to explode when a weapon strikes a spark against one of the many spikes dotting the surface of the bag. Of course, the delvers could avoid striking the bag altogether...but they'll either fall prey to suffocation or perforation as the balloon eventually swells to fill the entire room.

The next time a delver needs to undertake a sensitive mission, convince him to try a belt of Osborne Lone's **I'm Invisible, Nyah Nyah** potion. You can either slip this potion to your victim through an unscrupulous alchemist, or leave it lying around in a dungeon where a sucker is likely to find it.



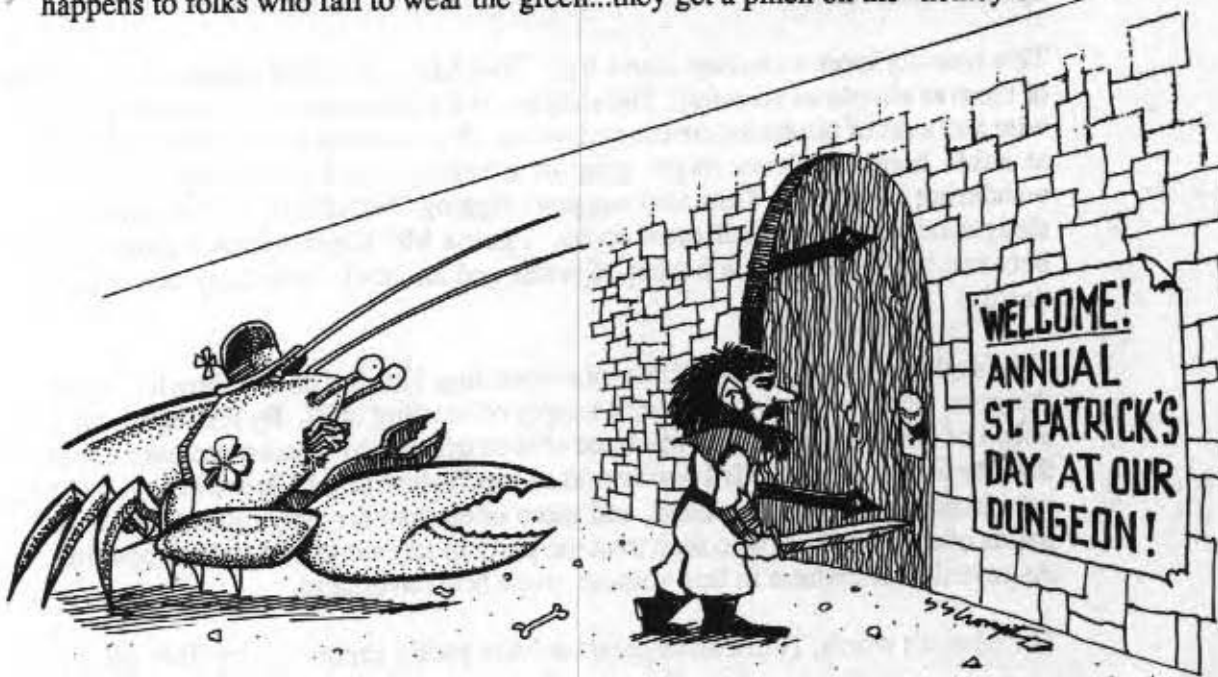
The first time the potion is used, it works as advertised. The imbiber is indeed turned invisible, although he must remove all his clothes and drop his items to be completely unseen. While the character can see himself, no one can see him. The potion lasts for about an hour, during which the character can copy all the great Claude Raines schtick he can remember. After again becoming visible, much to his glee, the character will see there is enough potion in the bottle for one more dose.

Anyone drinking this potion develops an immediate immunity to further dosages. Thus, the next time the character takes a swig of the potion, he will not turn invisible...although he will think he has. Unless the victim has some friends around to straighten him out, someone is about to run around naked in public, convinced he is invisible, while everyone else is certain they're seeing a naked loon. Try this routine at a court ball or in a dragon's lair and see how far you get!



Chips White is a festive fellow. All the holidays are important to Chips, but St. Patrick's Day is the most important of all. How else can you describe his trap--actually more of a curse--called **Feel The Pinch?**

For this trap to work, party members must specify exactly what type and color clothing they are wearing before they enter your dungeon. After the adventure begins, explain to the characters that it is St. Patrick's day. We all know what happens to folks who fail to wear the green...they get a pinch on the "heiney".





Hold on a minute. I can't believe I said that. Did I, mighty Grimtooth, the world's most bloodthirsty troll, make reference to someone's "heiney"? Of all the things I could call a rump, a sitter, a backside, a better half, a moon, a ham, a bun--I chose "heiney"! Never in a million years would I turn such a phrase, unless I was magically influenced by the powers of good. Beware, Mr. Chips White, lest you feel the wrath of the Troll!

As long as I'm on the subject, what's green, four blocks long, and has a collective IQ of three? Oh. You've heard that one already. No matter. On to the next trap.



If you want to give an archer fits, stick him with a quiver full of Tyrone Shoes' **Boomerang Arrows**. These appear to be high quality magic arrows complete with silver tips and fletching drawn from some exotic bird. The arrows radiate magic. A master archer might notice the shaft of each arrow has a gentle but definite curve.

This trap won't work unless used outside, and even then you've best make sure your intended victim is using a longbow. When shot from a bow, these arrows take off like quicksilver. The archer will be unable to determine where his shaft has gone, and will likely shield his eyes and search the horizon in vain for a sign of his shot.

The arrows are enchanted to fly true at incredible velocity until they strike something, at which point that thing is destroyed. If used outdoors and in suitably open terrain, the curve of the arrow shaft will cause one of these arrows to fly in a great flat circle when launched from a bow. If nothing gets in the way, the arrow will take about a minute to complete its flight...by striking the archer who shot the arrow in the back of the neck.



Tom Keefer is a dangerous heretic long since marked for termination by the Dungeonmaster's Guild. Chief among his many offenses is Tom's concept of **Anti-Trap Traps**. With this sickening innovation, Tom hopes to turn the tables on your hard working monsters and trap engineers...by using your own tricks against them. Gasp!

This is really more a concept than a trap. Tom has a variety of suggestions, most of them as simple as his mind. The simplest is for delvers to carry a spool of fine wire and a set of pitons for creating tripwires. By stringing wire across a corridor at ankle height, delvers might gain an advantage over otherwise invincible wandering monsters. Tom also suggests rigging "buckets of water, anvils, or sledgehammers" over half-open doors. I guess Mr. Keefer doesn't distinguish between the lethality of a bucket of water and an anvil. And they say I'm too deadly!

Tom's other suggestions are a little more sporting. Himself an avid bowler, Tom's dungeon parties are never without a supply of bowling balls. By rolling the balls ahead of themselves, a party might be able to trigger any unseen pressure plates that lay before them. This I don't mind so much--bowling balls are heavy, and a pain in the neck to carry around, and more often than not they roll right into the hands of a troll or two, who then treat the party to an example of trollish bowling. As revealed elsewhere in this volume, trolls bowl overhand.

For what it's worth, Tom also suggests delvers pack a supply a furry little animals

along on their expeditions. What you do with them, I'll leave to your own devilish imaginations.

Scot Sanner offers **Shades of Death**, a pair of sunglasses that definitely aren't cheap, no matter what Z.Z. Top may say. This vicious little item can be introduced anywhere, although if a monster is to wear them, it must either be blind or resistant to magic. If you want to be kind (gad!--the idea!), you could even place them on a bust or statue, to provide some warning of what is to come. Your dungeon must also support an unusually high technology level to permit this trap to exist.

This item for all intents and purposes appears to be a normal set of very dark sunglasses. They will radiate strong magic, and a cursory inspection might reveal a tiny design inscribed on the lenses. Actually wearing the glasses, or giving them a close visual inspection, will turn the delver to stone, however...

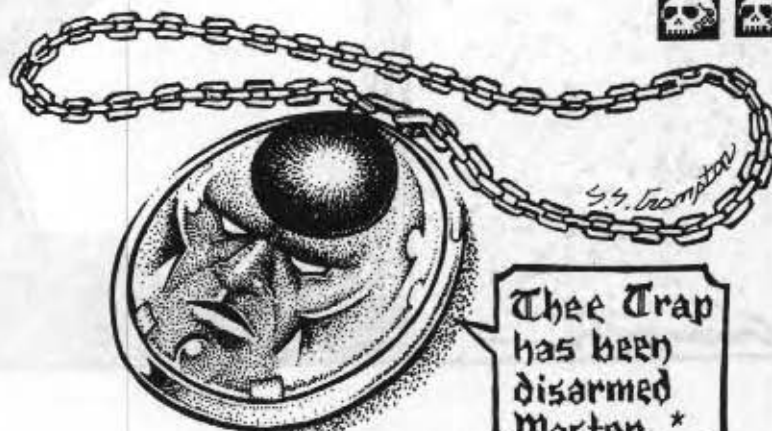
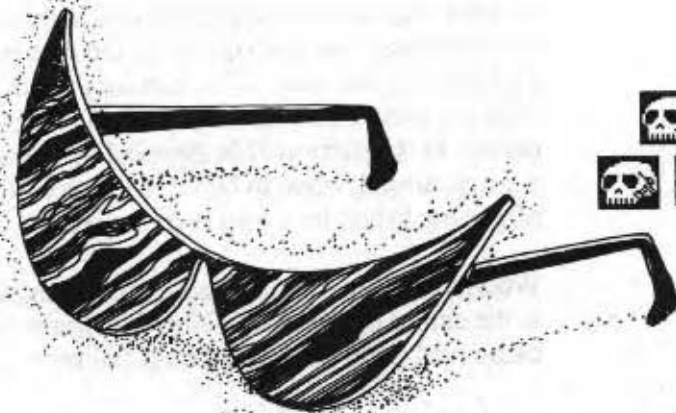
...for the inscribed design is an astonishingly life like three dimensional holographic rendering of a gorgon.

What would a TRAPS book be without at least one mummy trap? Mummies, like spiders in a forest of webs, have nearly become an endangered species since characters learned how easy it is to dispose of them by fire.

The Shrapnel Mummy is Michael Gittings' attempt to offset the unfair advantage delvers have built up over the years. I'm in favor of anything that gives mummies a fighting chance...they're about as sturdy as moths, and they move slower than the U.S. legal system. Anyone wasted by a mummy is a dork.

Maybe this mummy will help turn things around. We've seen exploding mummies before, but Micheal wraps the volatile core of his mummy with steel shards and buckshot, ensuring that when this puppy explodes, its going to take someone with it. For best effect, hide this dummy mummy after a series of conventional mummies and daddies...you might have to lose a tomb or two of King Tut types to a pack of firebug delvers, but the explosive climax will be worth it!

Dan Logans' **Trap Detection Amulet** does indeed perform as advertised, but perhaps not exactly in the fashion a delver would like. Dan suggests you place this amulet at the center of a maze guarded by a number of painfully obvious traps. Several of the traps should be sprung, and the remains of dead delvers should be at every hand.



*Wanna Bet? - Grimtooth



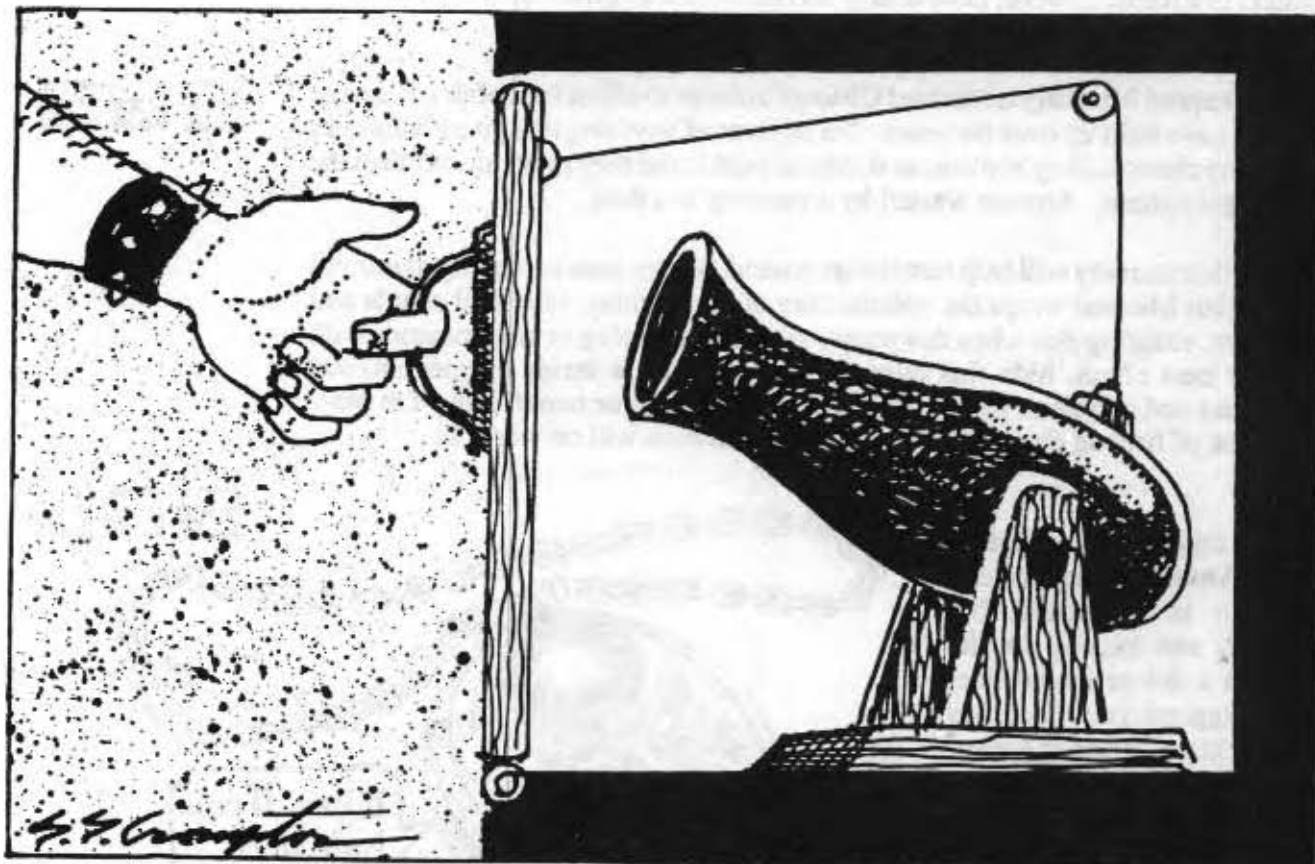
At the center of the trapped labyrinth, the characters will find the amulet resting on a pedestal. An inscription on the amulet indicates it will detect traps, and aid in disarming the same. The amulet does in fact detect traps, but it also interferes with the party's senses. The result is that even simple traps will prove difficult to defeat, as the party will be deluded by the amulet's magic into thinking a trap has been disarmed, when in fact it is still poised to kill. In effect, a character's chance of getting killed by a trap is increased ten-fold when this amulet is on hand.

When the last of the party is killed, the amulet teleports itself back to the pedestal at the center of the maze. Now you know where the remains of all those delvers came from, and how they could fall prey to such a variety of simple traps.



I make Andrew Bander's **Suggestion Box** the last item trap in this chapter because I want it to make an impression. Considering the incredible number of lousy trap submissions this volume received, I think I'll use this trap to collect suggestions for my next book. Like the "All You Can Eat" trap from the FOOD chapter, Andrew's trap is violently understated.

This is a clearly marked suggestion box. The box is accessed through a door similar to that on U.S. Mail boxes. When the door to this box is opened, however, a cannon waiting on the other side blows the head off anyone standing in front of the box. Now that's my idea of proper editorial form.





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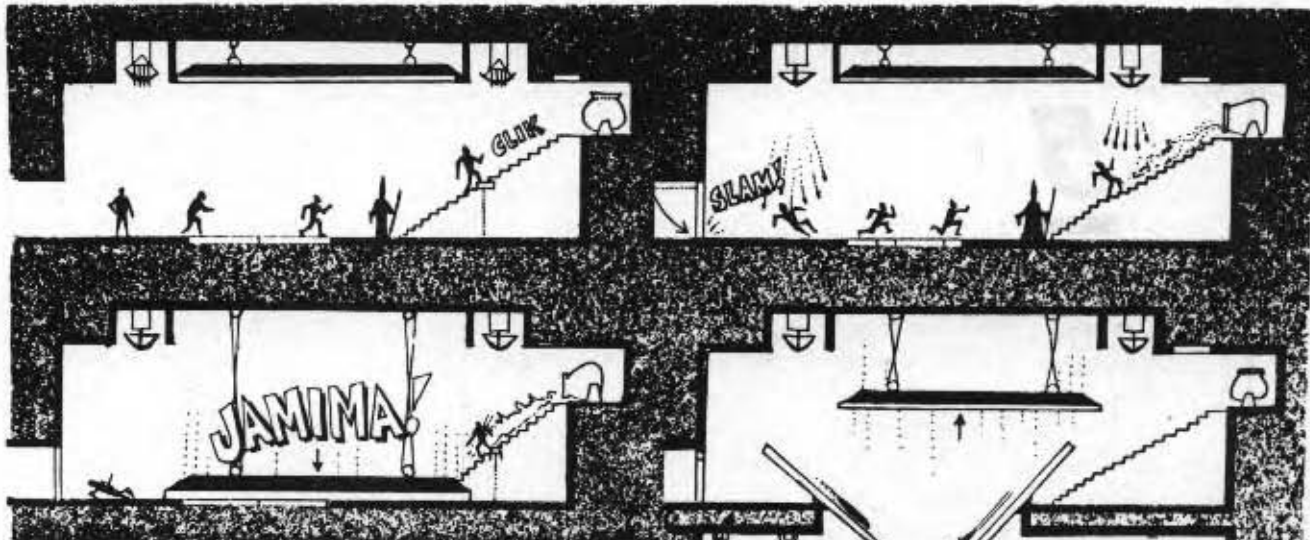
FOOD Traps

Often neglected by you Dungeon Masters is the possibility of an entire theme by which your hell-hole can revolve around. An overlying purpose to which all the creepie-crawlies slither about. Why are all these monsters hanging around? How about for a quick bite to eat?

I never thought it would come to this, but here I am introducing a whole chapter full of food traps. I mean, do I look like Betty Crocker to you? If I do, you need help.

Ah well. Might as well give in. This is what you've all been waiting for. Take all you want; eat all you take.





While I'd never write a cook-book, this manual is called TRAPS ATE, so I suppose a few recipes are in order. As a breakfast treat, Ian Milham offers a room trap that makes Delver Pancakes.

This is a vast dungeon room largely filled by a staircase. A pressure plate is concealed in the stairs. When the plate is triggered, an audible click is heard. Has there ever been so simple a sound that has caused as much trepidation as the ever-popular "audible click"?



The trap begins with a volley of crossbow bolts from the ceiling designed to nail characters near the front and rear of the party. Anyone else on the stairs will shortly have to contend with a spilling caldron full of boiling oil that is revealed beyond the top step. As if that weren't enough, the entire ceiling of the room slams down to the floor, crushing anyone standing in the room. Bammo! Delver pancakes!



It's unlikely anyone will survive this rude treatment. If they do, they will very likely pack it in when the trap tidies up and resets itself. After the ceiling snaps back into place, the floor drops away, depositing the fresh delver pancakes onto the hot griddle below, where they can be browned to your taste. The floor then snaps back into place, leaving anyone who survived the trap by fleeing out the exit to wonder what's become of the rest of the party. Perhaps the cheerful odor of hotcakes on the griddle will offer a clue.

That makes me hungry, and reminds me of the last time I dropped by Mom's Diner for the All You Can Eat elf special. I cleared a space at the counter and dug into my first helping of elf. I've had better elf, but at a place like Mom's you go for quantity over quality. I polished off my first platter in record time, but imagine my chagrin when Mom refused to serve me a second helping. "You've had your elf-



-that's all you can eat!" she laughed, at least until I persuaded her to see the error of her ways. Maybe a cheap play on words is enough to shake down the average dwarf, but with the King of the Trolls it just won't cut the mustard!

All of which reminds me of the next trap, submitted in somewhat cryptic form by Winslow Condon. In Mr. Condon's semi-hallucinatory writing style I sense a budding D.H. Lawrence, so rather than try to improve on his submission, I will quote, "I made up a new trap called **All You Can Eat!** First the character walks into a room and there are a thousand ice cream cones...they are magical, and if you eat one you have to eat more! So the character kills himself eating ice cream cones!" Bravo. Short, sweet, and savage. Maybe the next time Mom tries to cheat me out of an honest meal, I'll treat her to desert at Winslow's ice cream parlor.



The great W.C. Fields advised us all that we should **Never Give A Sucker An Even Break**, advice which Tyrone Shoes has taken to heart with his trap of the same name. This trap must be located in a narrow corridor where delvers can pass only one at a time, and ideally should be somewhere in your dungeon where delvers have found themselves separated from the group. Locating this design right after the Ice Cube Lube Tube trap from the "Rooms" chapter will do the trick.



The trap is triggered by a pressure plate. The narrow dungeon corridor suddenly becomes a death trap as metal clamps spring from the walls to hold the delver in place. Thus bound, the delver is powerless to resist as an evil little gremlin crawls from a hidden cubby hole. He is armed with a ball peen hammer and an all day sucker.

Fright may momentarily turn to delight when the gremlin shoves the sucker into the sucker's mouth. After all, it is quite yummy. But remember, you never give a sucker an even break. No sooner is the sucker driven home than the gremlin goes to work on the delver's shins, taking care to break each an odd number of times with his hammer. When the gremlin's work is done, the manacles are released, and the delver is free to writhe about the floor in agony. If the victim proves exceptionally brave, you might wish to let him keep his sucker for a reward, but you should otherwise take it away--how are these brats ever going to learn anything, if you spoil them all the time?

We've seen whirling fans blocking doorways as long ago as my first volume in this series, but the subtle application of Dan Logans' **Devil's Food Processor** makes it worthy of inclusion in this manual. Locate this door in a section of the dungeon where no artificial light is possible--either damp gusts extinguish torches, or some minor magic makes light impossible.



You will, of course, provide light of your own, in the form of a carefully synchronized strobe light. If you've ever viewed a fan under a strobe light you know it appears motionless, even through the fan may be spinning. Thus, under the effects of the strobe, this doorway looks as if it is guarded with motionless fan blades...an illusion that will be painfully dispelled should someone actually try to pass through the door. Thousands of delver fries, ready for preparation, courtesy of the Devil's Food Processor.

Dan has an odd food fixation with doors. Anyone trying to open a door in Dan's dungeon without mouthing the proper password will find a pit opens beneath their feet. No spikes or acid or bubbling oil awaits in pit...that would be easy. Instead, this is the **Jello Pit!**



Think of it! Imagine being smothered to death in a twenty foot deep pit filled with tepid gelatin. Imagine if it were lime jello...anyone watching this comedy might

mistake the jello for some common dungeon slime, and waste his or her time trying to kill a monster instead of rescuing the victim. And even if the delver does escape from this grotesque trap, imagine trying to live down the reputation of having almost drowned in a pit full of jello! Might as well just suck in a lungful of wild cherry, Jackson.



Tyrone Shoes has got to be hanging around on the tracks with the orc frat boys, or he would never have learned to play **Beerhunter**. Dwarves have lately begun distributing their beer in aluminum cans contained by an ingenious pull tab mechanism. Beer will keep a long time in such a container, but it is packaged under pressure, and if you vigorously shake a full can before you open it, beer will shoot out all over the place.



The idea with Beerhunter is to pick one beer at random from a six pack and shake it for a minute or two. Then replace the beer with the rest of the cans and scramble them around. Everyone playing the game selects one beer at random. Simultaneously, everyone has to open their can under their nose --someone is going to get a beer blast they'll never forget, while everyone else gets to laugh.

This contest will test the nerves of any hearty adventurer, especially if he or she is captured by a gang of rowdy orcs and made to play the game. The game goes on until everyone is unconscious or comes to their senses...although if the game drags on long enough, a delver and his orc captors may find they've forgotten what they were fighting about in the first place!



Oatmeal... Because its the right thing to do.

Trust Chris Seibert to come up with a meal that will **Stick To Your Ribs!** You can use this trap just about anywhere, but it will function best in a swampy environment, so maybe this is just the thing to locate in the howling wilderness surrounding your favorite dungeon.

Imagine a bubbling bog complete with dense foliage and a compliment of prehistoric beasts. Any armored dungeon party would be hard pressed to pass through such a region while at full strength, let alone complete a return

journey burdened with treasure and wounded companions. While you can easily populate a bog with savage goblins who pick off a party with blowguns, why not have a little fun and create a few bogs full of hot oatmeal?

From a distance, it's tough to tell the difference between quicksand and oatmeal. If you've taken care to "reward" the party with some item that permits them to thwart quicksand--maybe a pair of boots that allow someone to walk across a quicksand bog--you can really throw the characters a curve by dropping an oatmeal pit in their path. This is especially true if you allow a party to outrun a dinosaur or other nasty by skipping across a quicksand bog early in the journey. The next time danger appears, the characters will try to escape the same way, and they'll blunder right into your hands.

While sinking hip deep into hot oatmeal won't kill anyone, it will scald exposed skin, and it will slow someone who figured he was going to rush past the obstacle. Dinosaurs also appreciate an occasional variation in their diet now and then, and coating a delver in oatmeal is just the ticket. If you want to give the characters a break, sprinkle some sugar and a pat of butter on top of your oatmeal bog--but I say let the delvers blunder right into the pit, then chastise them for playing with their food!

Back in elementary school, I was quite a prankster, so I can imagine what kind of fellow Norm Strange must have been. I enjoyed fooling my chums with joke gum, but Norm gives his old standby a deadly twist with his fiendish **Choke Gum**.



This appears to be ordinary chewing gum, and comes in both regular and spearmint flavors. After chewing this gum for a few moments, the victim's friends should be amused to see black spittle running down the chewer's chin. Surmising this is ordinary joke gum, a good-natured victim might even have a good laugh at himself.

Cheers turn to jeers when the disgusting truth of this trap comes out. The gum, in fact, rots teeth in the twinkling of an eye--so fast that a victim's teeth will be gone before he or she feels more than a little numb. Rotting teeth eventually liquify, and the black spittle is the result of just the first few teeth coming apart. When the rest of the unhappy chump's teeth fade away, the resulting sludge is as like as not to congeal in the throat...hence the name of this trap.

Shish-Ka-Delver has long been one of my favorite delicacies, and Eric Taylor offers this inviting recipe for its preparation. The only warning characters have of their impending doom is a rapid rise in temperature in whatever corridor they occupy. An ever-popular pressure

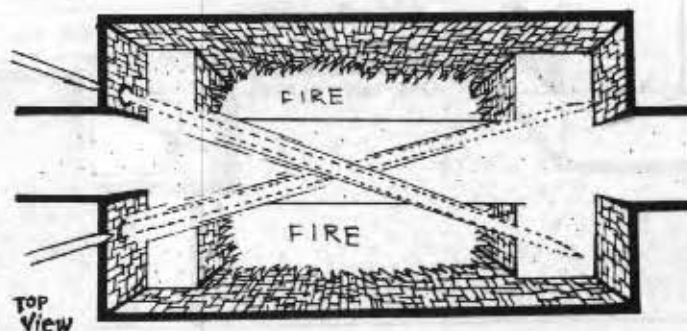


plate gets things rolling...literally, in this case, as the floor rapidly rolls away into the wall, revealing a fiery pit beneath. A stone wall drops down behind the party, so escape is impossible, but no one need fear for falling into the fire, as a huge barbecue spit simultaneously springs from the opposite end of the corridor, neatly impaling the party along its length. Thus speared and held above the fire, I suppose you could leave the party to their doom, but Eric suggests hiring an ogre or two to turn the delvers over the fire. After all, how many times has your Shish-Ka-Delver been ruined by being burned on one side?



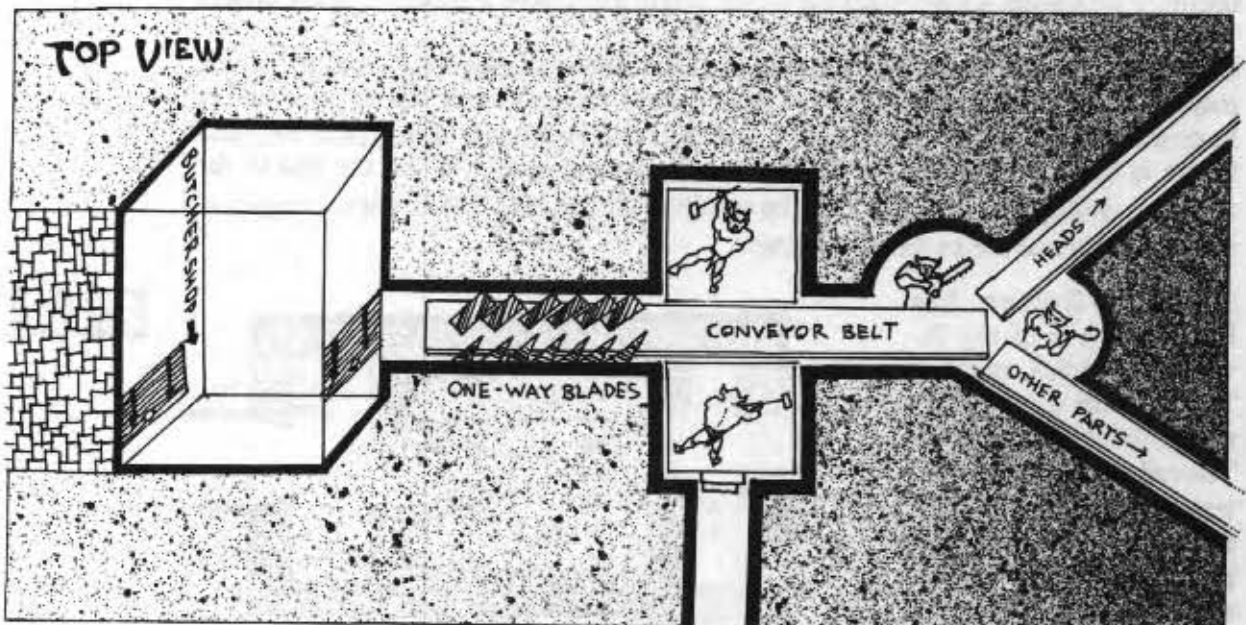
Rowdy Rhodes works in the kill pit at a major slaughterhouse, so I guess we should believe him when he says **If You Knew How They Made It, You Wouldn't Want To Eat It.** Rowdy says with pride that he's a mean cuss with a stun hammer, and that he expects to move up to chainsaw in a year or so. It's so good to see young people doing something productive with their lives.

You should front this trap in your dungeon with a fully stocked butcher shop. Meat is meat when its all cut up, and if no one asks too many questions, the source of this shop's fine wares won't become evident until it is too late. Allow the party to shop for tongue and headcheese a bargain prices, and invite them to enjoy a delicious coldcut sandwich if they have time for lunch. The viands are wonderful--they have a mysterious and forbidden flavor that sets the senses racing.

Unless the party exits the way they came in, they are doomed...because the only other door exiting from this room lets into a dark corridor, after which the door seals and locks behind the party. After the characters advance a step or two, a conveyor belt activates beneath their feet, and bears them off down the corridor.

The corridor is lined with blades sharpened only on one side...characters can pass through the blades like swinging doors so long as they go with the conveyor belt, but should they try to turn around they will face a forest of steel. The blades are the least of the party's problems.

Still in the dark, the party passes beneath a pair of elevated platforms on either side of the conveyor belt. Atop the platforms are two trolls accustomed to working in



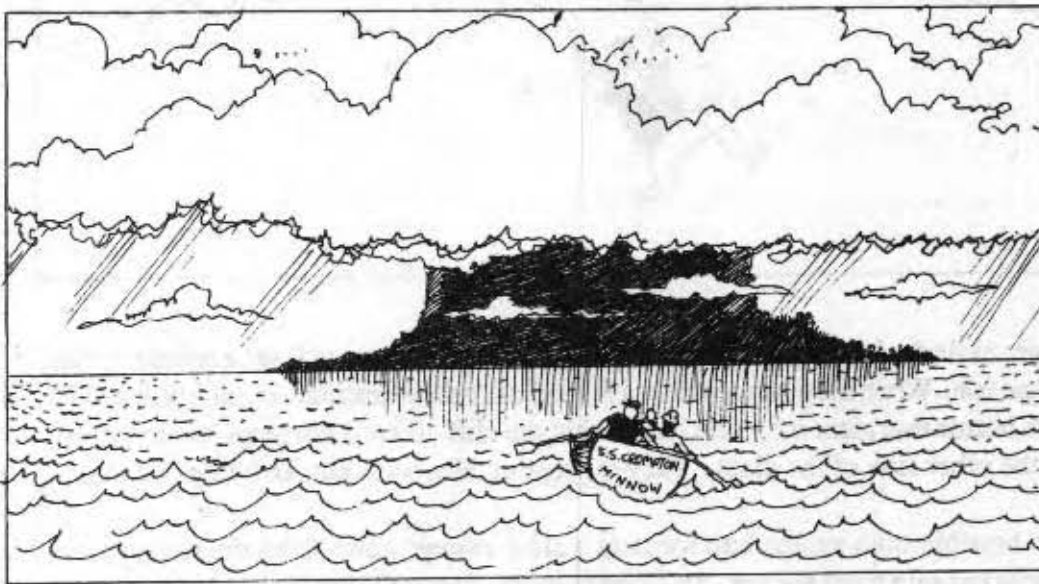
the dark, and very adept with their weapons of choice--the stun hammer. Delvers blundering past along the belt take a hammer in the head, which will stun but not kill the character.

After passing the stun hammers, the victims travel beneath yet another platform, upon which stands a troll with a saw. It is the saw troll's task to separate the victim's stunned head from the numb body in a flash. The troll is very good with the saw, and this is a humane way to go. Alas, the victim won't feel any pain.

Shortly after the saw troll, the conveyor belt branches in two. Above the split in the belt stands a troll with a long pole, at the end of which is a hook. This troll's job is to make sure delver heads travel down one branch of the belt, while everything else goes the other way. Sometimes the hook troll messes up, but that's what gives delver sausage its special spice. You see, the heads and the bodies continue down the conveyor belt until...oh...if you knew how they made it, you wouldn't want to eat it. Pass the bacon.

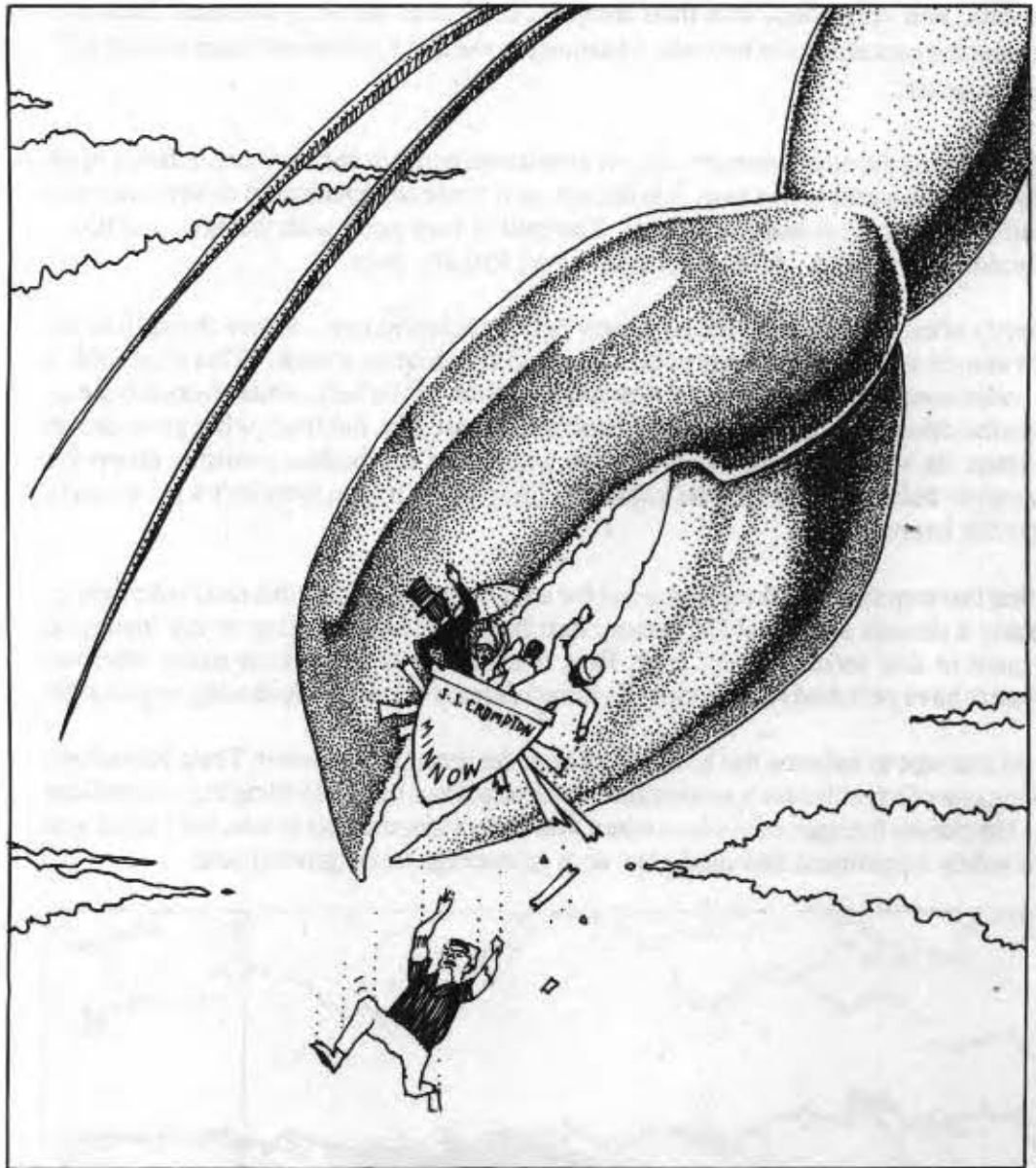
If that last trap didn't make you run out for a sandwich, consider this next submission. Nearly a decade ago, Paul O'Connor contributed the **Lobster Trap** to my inaugural volume in this series. Years later, Paul is ashamed to admit how many innocent lobsters have perished at the hands of vicious delvers thanks to his shoddy trap design.

In an attempt to balance the books, Paul has designed the **Lobster Trap Revisited**. Using one of my rules for a memorable room trap, Paul built this thing big--incredibly so. He claims the trap works best when you have a spare ocean to use, but I think you can safely implement this mad plan with an average underground lake.



Victims are lured into the trap when they find a boat moored on a desolate shore. Aboard the boat they find several dozen lobster bibs, a case of lemons, and a dozen or so nutcrackers. Looks like someone was planning a party. Most delvers will dump the junk overboard and get to where they are going.

After several day's journey at sea, the characters will have to admit they are lost. The sky is full of strange stars, the sun does not appear, and weather patterns are very odd. Right about when the characters lose hope, they spot a brilliant magic isle on the horizon. The isle is massive, and great cliffs of enchanted glass rise up from the waterline and march toward the clouds.



Eager to find a friendly port on this strange sea, the delvers will set a course for the magic isle. When they come within a few miles of their destination, they will realize with horror that giant monsters lurk within the cliff. Incredibly large lobsters await on the other side of the glass. They're wearing bibs with human beings on them!

The horrible truth swims into focus as a claw sweeps down from the heavens and plucks the ship from the sea. Ship and delvers alike are hurled into a boiling pot of water the size of a city, where they horribly scald to death. Turnabout is fair play! The lobsters will have their revenge! And lobsters consider humans a delicacy, and it is so luxurious to pick your meal from a fish tank while it is still alive, then consign it to the cook's pot. Only the freshest delver is served to the giant lobsters at Paul's.





THE 101ST TRAP.

Unfortunately I have run out of ideas for the 101st trap, so there is none in this book.

No, really, there isn't one.

I'm serious. Honest. **TRUST ME!** There is no 101st trap in this book. No secret codes, no clever poison, no tricky paradoxes. Zip. Zilch. The big zero. Nada. Nyet. Nicht. Nein. Nope. Nuh-uh.

Hey, you got 100 traps. What more do you want from me?

No, it's not a trick. There is **NO** 101st trap! Have I ever lied to you?

What do I have to say to convince you? Cross my heart and hope to have to eat Delver Crunchies without any milk? This book does **NOT** have a 101st trap.

I **REALLY** mean it. No deception, deceit, delusion, illusion, fraud, gullery, trickery, treachery, swindle, dodge, diddle, or surreptitious bogus chicanery.

What, are you still here? Can't you understand what I'm saying? You are **NOT** going to find a trap hidden on this page. There just isn't one. I haven't had time, and besides, it isn't necessary. It's not in my contract. It's not my responsibility.

For the last time, **FORGET IT.** There **IS NO 101ST TRAP!**

Ok, ok. Look, if you don't believe me, you really think there is a 101st trap, and I cannot convince you otherwise, send a **STAMPED, SELF-ADDRESSED*** envelope to:

Grimtooth's 101st Trap, Book Ate
c/o Flying Buffalo Inc
PO Box 1467
Scottsdale, AZ 85252

*For those ignorant mortals who don't pay close attention: A "stamped, self-addressed envelope" is one that has a **POSTAGE STAMP** on it, and is already **ADDRESSED** to **YOU**. If you do not follow these two simple instructions, your request will be posted on my cave wall for a few days to be pointed at and laughed at, and then burned in the fireplace unanswered. If you are from some foreign country where you cannot get a U.S. postage stamp, enclose an international reply coupon. This will be your **ONLY** warning!





A NOTE FROM GRIMTOOTH

It has been drawn to my attention by those of you who have purchased my second tome of traps that the encoded message might be too difficult to decipher. Leave it to mere mortal minds to stumble over the most simple of problems, and complain when things fail to come easily to hand. I steadfastly refuse to publish a *solution* to the code, but the incessant mewings of befuddled mortals has driven me to reveal some *clues* to my code. The price for this solution, as you will all soon come to regret, will be a third collection of my top-notch torturous traps!

The code is a simple substitution cipher, where a symbol takes the place of a letter in your clumsy common tongue. Those of you intelligent enough to have gotten that far will nevertheless have detected over *thirty* different symbols in the code — more than the twenty-six letters you commonly use. This is because there are two punctuation marks in the message, and separate symbols for common two-letter combinations like “th”, “ng”, and “oo.”

Perhaps obvious only to one who is unaccustomed to viewing your scrawlings, the very code symbols are drawn from the *shapes* of the letters used in your written language. An “A” has a tent-shape, and so do “K”, “M”, “N” and “X.” The other letters were similarly grouped, even as birds of a feather (or humans of a clan, so to speak).

Perhaps most odd is that no one has complained about the 102nd trap cipher used. It is based upon a common human cipher that is almost impossible to break without the key. The numbers refer to page, paragraph, and a word in that paragraph. The book used for the code must be one owned by both the sender and the receiver of the message. *Imagine what book that might be. . .*

I trust these clues will not overburden your minds with their complexity. Fear not, in my next tome of traps (for which I am deigning to entertain submissions, for all you trolls in human clothing) there will be no codes. Instead, I’ll have something to keep your little idle hands busy, busy, busy. . . .

—Grimtooth



GRIMTOOTH'S SCRAPBOOK

Since I have a few pages left, and we have a little time, I thought I'd show you some of the pictures in my scrapbook. [Where are you going? You aren't LEAVING are you? I thought not. I'm so glad you want to see my pictures. Don't worry, that arm will be as good as new in a few weeks.]



*What's Wrong With this
Picture?*





illustration by Liz Dantforth

This is my father, holding me and
 my evil twin brother "Skippy".
 We don't talk about "Skippy".
 Don't ask. Dad sure is a
 handsome devil, isn't he?

I was a playful lad.
 This is me, playing
 with my dart set...



illustration by Liz Dantforth





....my yo-yo....

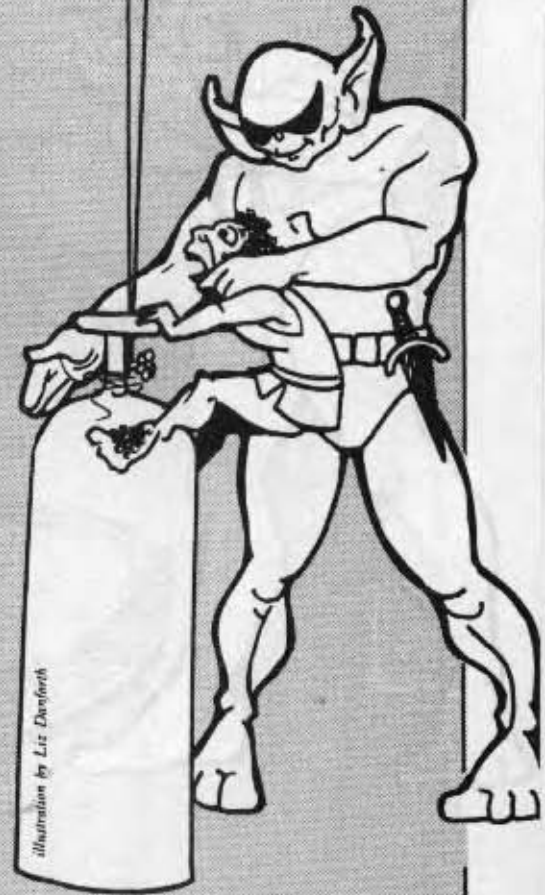
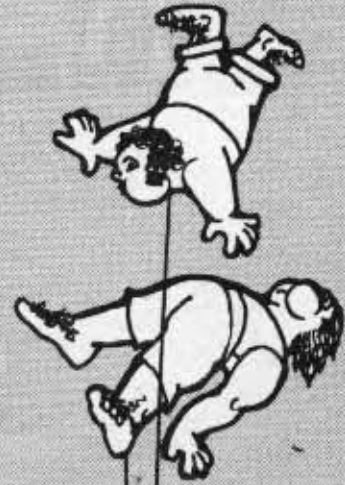


Illustration by Liz Danforth

... and my balloons....



.... reading my favorite book....



happy **h**olidays



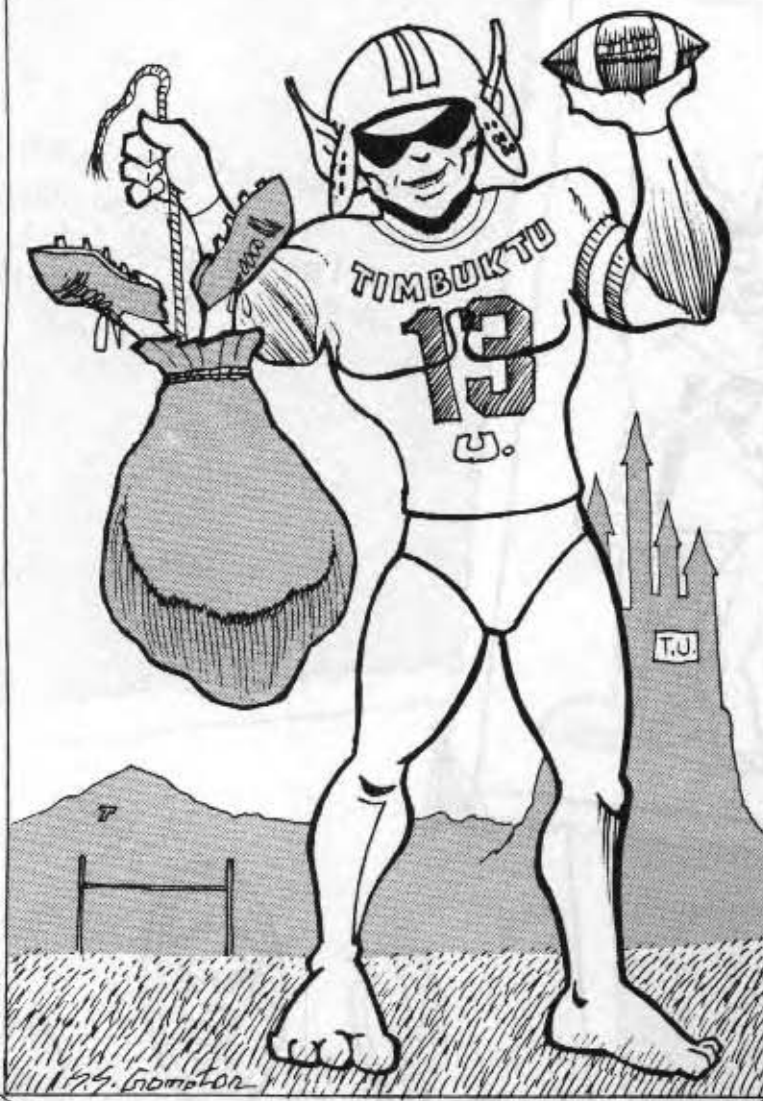
....and playing with my train set one Christmas Eve.



Here I am at my first job. My "lemonade stand" was a little more advanced than most. I passed up a chance to buy a "Rat On A Stick" franchise, though.

This is a more recent picture of me, enjoying my fan mail. Note my favorite artist, over the hearth.



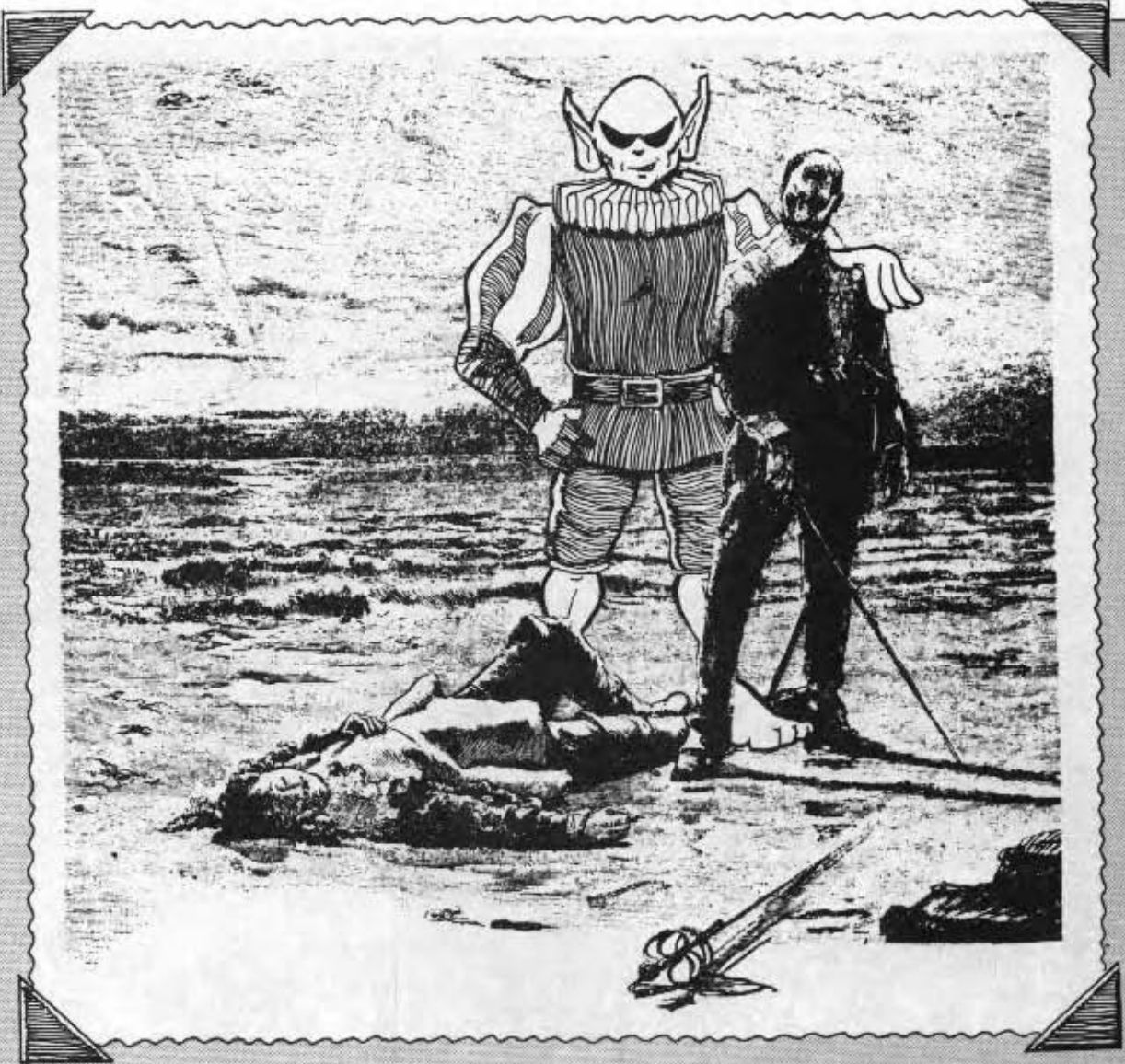


Here I am sacking the Quarterback in football...



Ah, good old school days at the University of Timbuktu. I was really involved in sports at Timbuktu U.

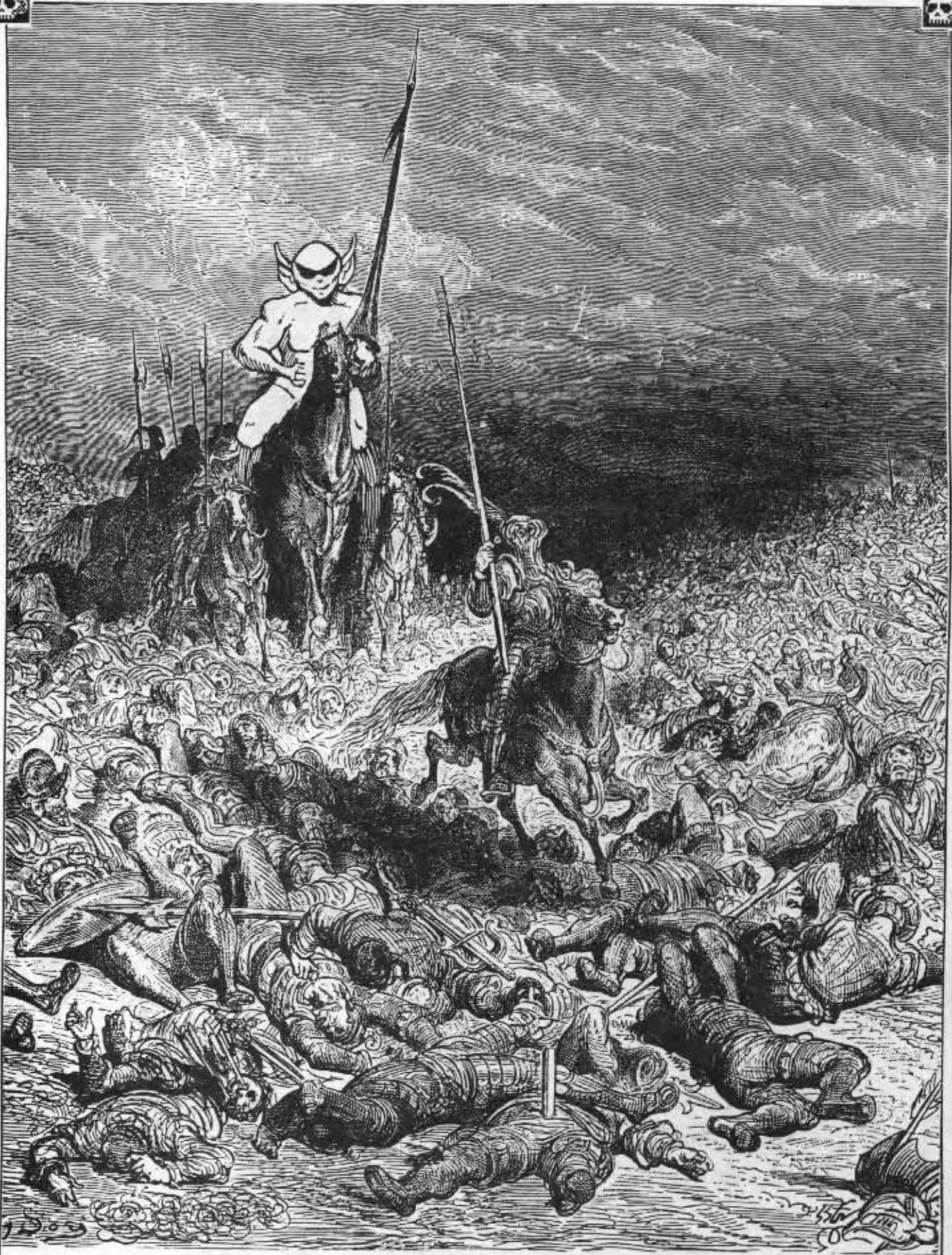
boxing with my famous left hook.



playing on the beach during Spring Break. . .

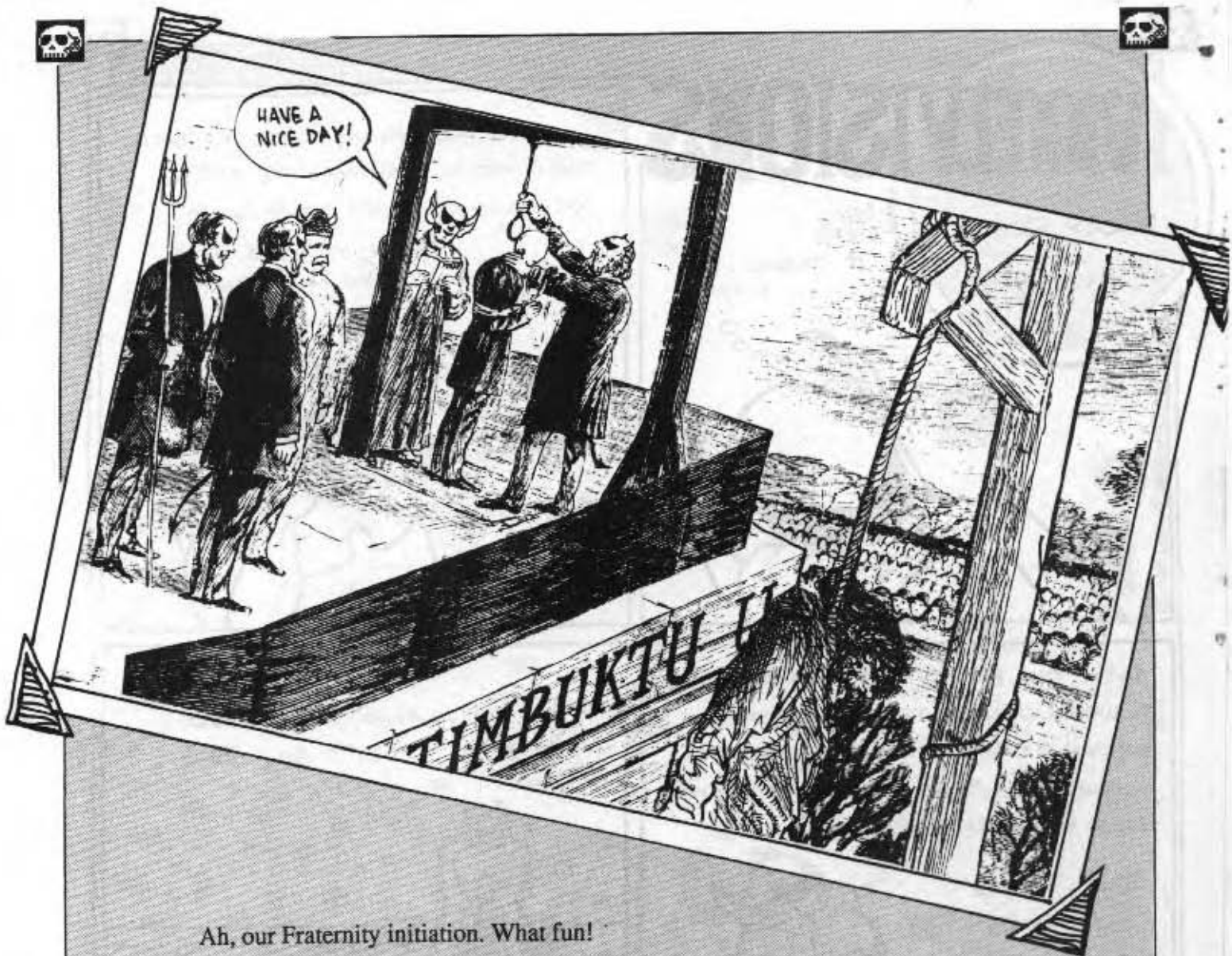
and spiking the
second baseman in baseball...



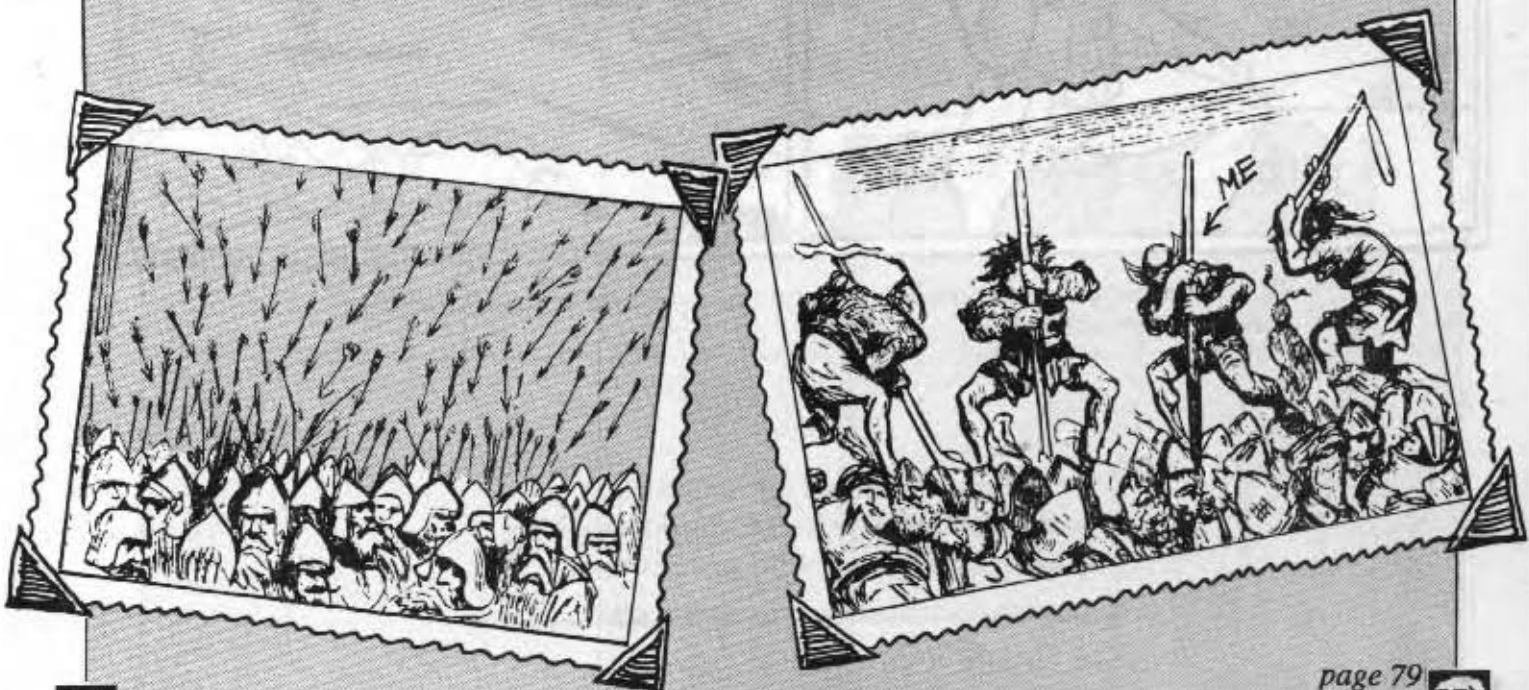


I am particularly proud of our championship polo team.





Ah, our Fraternity initiation. What fun!



FUNNELVISIONS

FOOD FOR
THOUGHT

IT BEGINS
ANEW...



...THIS MADDENING CYCLE OF DARK,
SILENT WATCH, FOLLOWED BY THE
KALEIDOSCPIC FURY OF AMBUSH.

THEN, MOBIUS-LIKE,
THE WAITING STARTS AGAIN.

SIGH

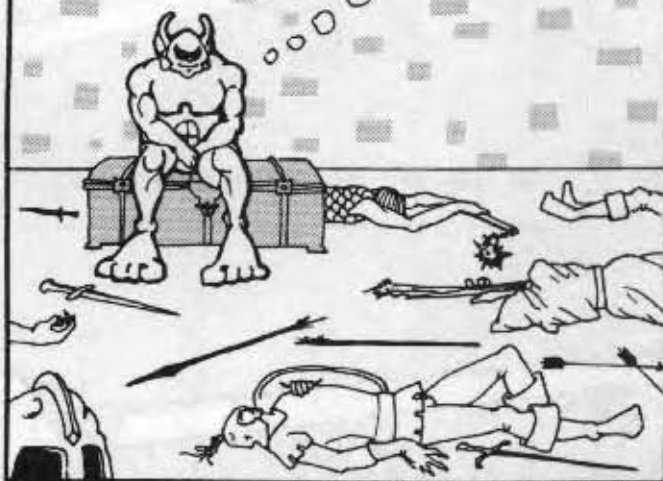


EVEN THE BRIEF SPARK OF HORROR
WHICH OPENS WIDE THEIR EYES,
BEFORE I CLOSE THEM TO ETERNAL
DARKNESS, HAS CEASED TO AMUSE
...OR EVEN SATISFY.

BUT IT IS
A JOB,
AFTER ALL...



... AND THE FOOD
AIN'T HALF BAD.

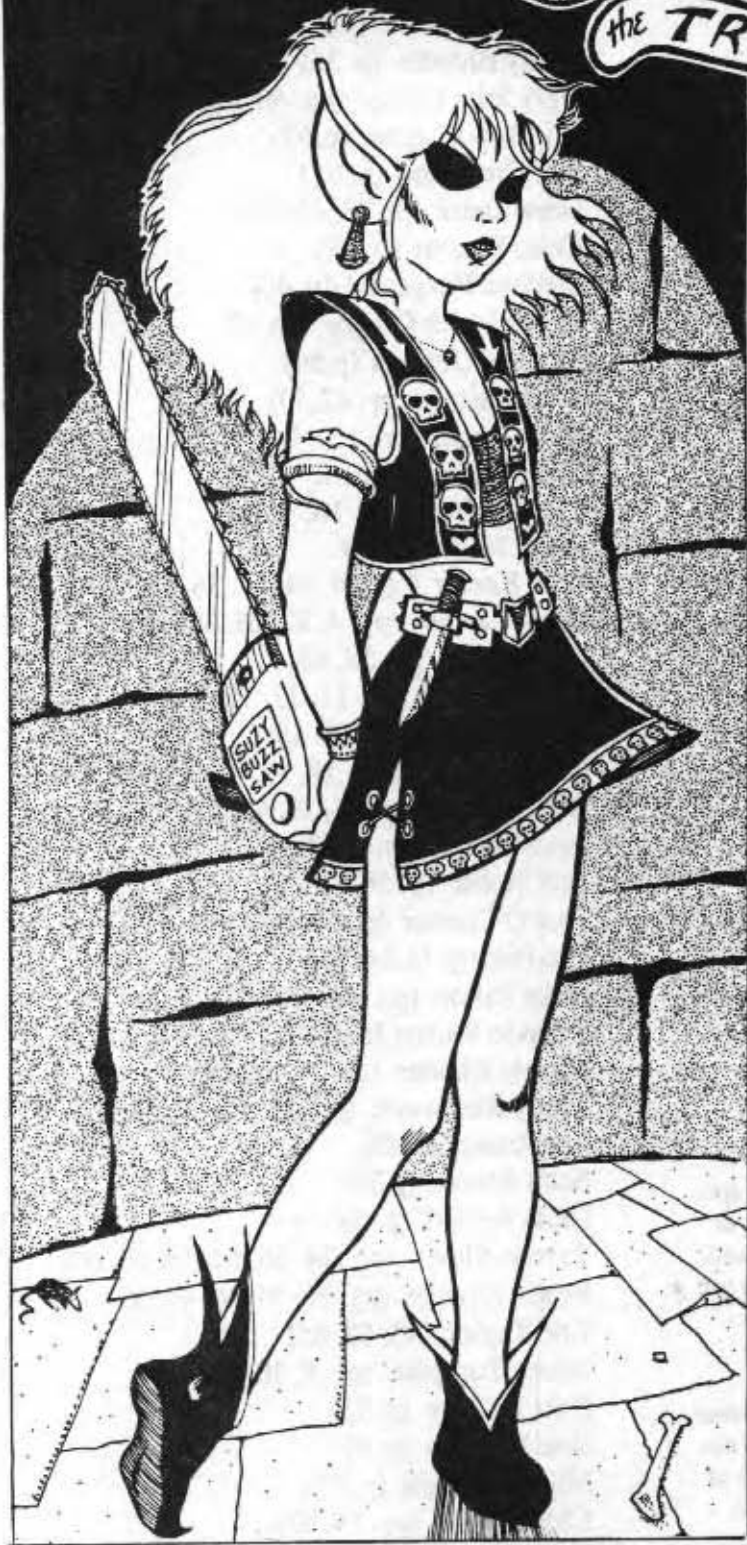


This is the very first Grimtooth cartoon that was ever published, in Issue #1 of Sorcerers Apprentice back in 1978.

I hope you all enjoyed my scrapbook. If you ask VERY politely, I might consider showing you some of the rest of my pictures someday!

Grimtina™

the TROLLETTE



For all these years my big brother (Grimtooth) has gotten all the credit for his Traps books and NOT ONCE has he mentioned me, his kid sister Grimtina! He hasn't even used any of my neat traps! Well I don't need any big giant fancy machines or lobsters the size of Vermont! I'm my very own trap.

I put on some beat up old clothes and wander around the dungeon waiting for you adventuring types to show up. Then I cry & act like I'm lost or something.

If the adventurers are really nice to me, I might just lead them to some treasure. But, like, if they are mean to me or ignore me, I pull out my invisible chainsaw and let 'er rip! Serves them right! Those greedy trespassers!

Anyway, now you know who I am so you had better watch out in case I saw you first!

♡♡♡
~Grimtina
~

Grimtina loves to wander the realms of any underground domain and is always looking for new ideas for the family cave. "I like to think I'm on the 'cutting edge' of interior cave decoration" says the fashionably dressed Trollette.

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Chuck Gaydos

Technical Advisor
Wally Blunder

Available in stereo in selected areas.

Ælves supplied by the World of Lejentia.

The producers of this book would like to thank the people of Phoenix, AZ for their co-operation in the making of this book and owe them a debt of gratitude for withstanding the 124 degree temperatures they had to endure to test many of Grimtooth's theories concerning human endurance.

Any resemblance between persons living or dead for other than satirical purposes is strictly coincidental and was not intentional on the part of the producers or distributors of this book. . . Of course, what Grimtooth intended is completely beyond the control of mortal man or corporate entity and we can not be responsible for the acts of a Troll!

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FOR ALL ROLE-PLAYING SYSTEMS!

Grimtooth's

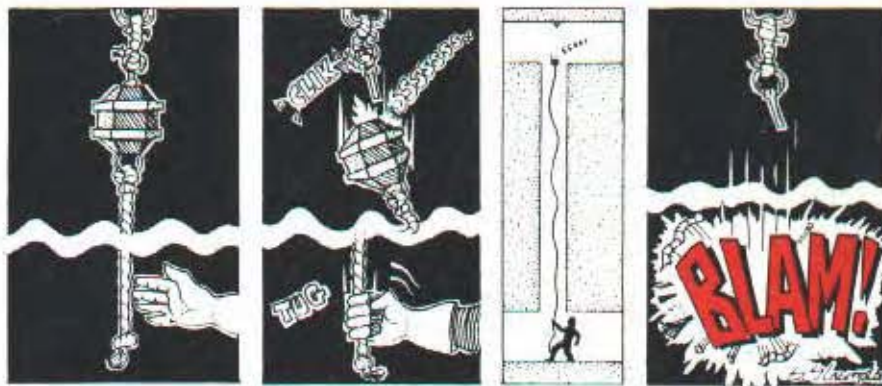
TRAPS ATE

a game-master's aid for
all role-playing systems

*A complete compendium of
better mouse-traps, delver mishaps,
adventurer mish-mash and a sarcastic
smorgasbord of stealthy strikers,
cryptic confusers and character crushers.
Over 101 different delver dicers!*

The traps in this latest tome are shown without specific game mechanics of any kind; the nature, cause, and effect of each trap has been described so that any game master can use the various traps in his favorite role-playing system with ease.

For example, *Going Up?* This trap appears to be a rope leading from one level of a dungeon to another. The rope seems completely harmless and appears to have been left behind by some other adventurers during their explorations. Unknown to the delver, a canister of explosive chemicals is attached to the top of the rope. As soon as the rope is pulled upon, the canister detaches from the ceiling & both it and the rope fall down the tunnel, ending with a deadly explosion.



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