

DUNGEON FANTASY™

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TRAPS



Written by JASON “PK” LEVINE and CHRISTOPHER R. RICE

Illustrated by BRANDON MOORE

Additional Material by SEAN PUNCH

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GURPS Line Editor ■ SEAN PUNCH
Assistant **GURPS** Line Editor ■
JASON “PK” LEVINE
GURPS Project Manager ■ STEVEN MARSH
Production Administrator ■ DARRYLL SILVA

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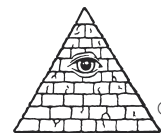
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ABOUT THE *DUNGEON FANTASY ROLEPLAYING GAME*

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INTRODUCTION

Brave heroes have no shortage of things trying to kill them, from wicked sorcerers to slaving monsters. But *traps* hold a special place in this genre. There's no emotional impetus behind a trap, and the enemy who set it may even be long gone – which is why traps drive home the point that *even the dungeon itself is trying to kill you!*

Traps and tricks allow the GM a chance to be truly creative and diabolical, seeking new ways to surprise and shock the adventurers (and their players). But sometimes the process of creation can use a little bit of inspiration . . . or the delvers have wandered off into uncharted territory, and the GM needs a trap *now*. No matter the reason, the 60+ ready-to-use examples in *Traps* will keep the entire party on their toes. Those who survive, at least.

RECOMMENDED BOOKS

Traps uses the statistics explained on pp. 70-71 of *Exploits*. As such, that book is required to properly use this one. A few traps, mainly those involving summoned and hidden creatures, require *Monsters* as well.

PUBLICATION HISTORY

Some of these traps first appeared in *GURPS Dungeon Fantasy 16: Wilderness Adventures* and “It’s a Trap!” from *Pyramid* #3/60: *Dungeon Fantasy III*.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

As the Assistant *GURPS* Line Editor for Steve Jackson Games, Reverend Jason “PK” Levine has been fortunate enough to contribute to the original rules from which the *Dungeon Fantasy Roleplaying Game* was derived. (Does that make him this game’s godfather?) He’s been taking players on

Delicate Work

All *DX*-based rolls to disarm, rearm, or steal a trap (or trick) – not just those involving the **Traps** skill – benefit from **High Manual Dexterity** and suffer from **Ham-Fisted**. This includes *DX*-based **Alchemy**, **Hazardous Materials**, and **Thaumatology** rolls, though never *IQ*- or *Per*-based rolls.

The Off Switch

In any *inhabited* dungeon, there’s likely to be a simple way to disable any trap or trick, at least temporarily – otherwise it would be nearly impossible to live there! The GM should decide where to hide these. Of course, such a switch should be very hard for interlopers to spot, usually requiring a *Per*-based **Traps** roll at -8 or worse.

dungeon crawls since he was 12, and enjoys a good trap almost as much as he enjoys a terribly evil one. He keeps a repository of RPG randomness at www.mygurps.com, and lives just outside of Chattanooga with his amazing wife and family.

A frequent contributor to *Dungeon Fantasy* and *Pyramid*, Christopher R. Rice is constantly writing, tinkering with, and running *GURPS*. Of course, if he’s not writing about *GURPS*, he’s blogging about it. Visit his site “Ravens N’ Pennies” (www.ravensnpennies.com) for more *GURPS* goodies. From Portsmouth, Virginia, he wishes to thank L.A., his own personal muse, as well as the rest of his gaming group (The Headhunters) and his family (especially his mother). Special thanks to Elizabeth “Archangel Beth” McCoy for all that she’s done and taught him.

Grükuk grunted impatiently. “Do you know what the symbols mean or not, monk? Remember, we have to reach the lich before her midnight ritual starts.”



“Yes, which means reaching her in one piece,” Francesco countered. “This is the old tongue for ‘plague’ . . . and pestilence is not something I’m equipped to –”

“Is that all?” Grükuk grinned and bounded down the hall, past the stunned cleric.

CHAPTER ONE

TRAPS

These traps range from annoyances to potential party-killers, which is why it's important for the GM to tailor challenges to fit the skills and power level of the PCs. As a rule, if the GM can't think of any way for the party to escape or avoid the trap, *and* its effects are lethal enough to incapacitate them, considering using a different one!

Alternatively, the GM can adjust an existing trap to make it fit the party better, or even invent brand new ones. Here are some guidelines:

Detect and Disarm: This is usually **Traps**, or **Thaumatology** for magic. The GM should strongly encourage the group to give *some* of their PCs those skills at character creation, if for no other reason than to avoid stumbling into every trap in

Keep an Eye Out

Many traps and tricks give a **Perception** or *Per*-based skill roll to detect, avoid, or save. Such a roll always takes the modifiers for *Sense Rolls* (**Exploits**, p. 9) based on the most applicable sense (usually vision). This applies even in the rare cases where a delver must *fail* such a roll; advantages like **Acute Senses** make it harder to do so, while disadvantages like **Hard of Hearing** make it easier.

this supplement! If the party is deficient here, a kind GM may allow them to use a loosely related skill, like Observation or Scrounging (or Occultism for magic). The skill penalties here are only *suggestions*, and can be varied freely based on how obvious the GM wants the trigger and trap mechanisms to be.

Avoid: Remember that this is only for getting around *detected* traps. As such, there should usually be a way to do so, and it may even be automatic. For avoiding pits, see p. 12.

Save: As the last-ditch roll for those caught in a trap, this is important. Physical attacks and sudden falls usually allow an active defense, while magical and noxious effects give a **HT** or **Will** roll to resist. Don't hesitate to change the modifier; a bonus makes a trap *far* more survivable, while a penalty can ensure doom.

Effects: Tailor this to the group, particularly damage. Assume the trap will inflict (4 × dice) points of damage, see what that does to each adventurer, and then adjust to keep it dangerous yet survivable (unless it's meant to be truly lethal). When changing the damage on falls, be sure to adjust the distance to match the chart on p. 67 of **Exploits**.

Shots, Rearm, Steal: These just need to make sense for the trap, regardless of party composition. However, consider tailoring the "Steal" value to fit the group's usual loot haul. If the trap rearms *itself* after triggering, note this as "*Rearm: Automatic*"; this takes place 1d×10 seconds after activation unless otherwise specified.

ALCHEMY AND GUNK

Concoctions and hazardous potions are common threats, as they're easy ways for non-spellcasting bad guys to include magical effects in a dungeon without having to rely on *Foul Magic* (pp. 7-8). See also *Alchemy Basin* (p. 19).

ALKAHEST SIPHON

A siphon attached to a tripwire squirts alkahest (*Adventurers*, p. 116) at unsuspecting adventurers. (The GM can fill this with other concoctions to vary the trap's effects.)

Detect: *Per*-based **Traps** at -9.

Disarm: *DX*-based **Traps** or **Hazardous Materials**. Failure triggers!

Avoid: Automatic (step over the tripwire).

Save: Detection, or **Hearing** at +1, allows a **Dodge** roll.

Effects: 1d corrosion, bypassing DR.

Shots: 1d.

Rearm: Yes, requires *DX*-based **Traps** roll.

Steal: Yes, with a *DX*-based **Alchemy** or *DX*-based **Hazardous Materials** roll to steal alkahest grenades equal to remaining shots, and a *DX*-based **Traps** roll to steal the siphon (\$1,000, 10 lbs.).

BLACK WIND

This small room or hallway is lined with pressure plates. Touching one results in the area being pumped full of demon's brew (*Adventurers*, p. 116), dispersed through sprayers to cover a four-yard-radius area and linger. This trap is often found areas with low or no mana and sanctity, to prevent **Purify Air** from easily countering it.

Roll	ST	Thrust	Swing
1	10	1d-2	1d
2-3	14	1d	2d
4	18	1d+2	3d
5	22	2d	4d
6	26	2d+2	5d

ANKLE-BREAKING SPEARS

A tripwire sends two spears into the victim's feet! This can potentially cripple the delver if enough damage is delivered; see *Exploits*, p. 61.

Detect: Per-based **Traps** at -2.

Disarm: DX-based **Traps** at -2. Failure triggers!

Avoid: Automatic (step over the tripwire).

Save: Detection, or **Hearing** at -4, allows a **Dodge** roll at -3. If Dodge succeeds by 0, one spear still hits; if it succeeds by 1+, both miss.

Effects: 1d+3* impaling to each foot.

Shots: 1.

Rearm: Yes.

Steal: Yes; yields two normal spears.

* At ST 14. May instead be ST 10 (1d+1), ST 18 (1d+5), ST 22 (2d+3), or ST 26 (2d+5).

CHAINSHOT

When one of the many pressure plates in the floor are triggered, this trap launches two bolas at the subject, each comprising two heavy balls connected by razor-sharp wire. The first bolas is aimed at the neck (to decapitate or suffocate) and the second at the legs (to maim and trip).

Detect: Per-based **Traps** at -6.

Disarm: DX-based **Traps** at -6.

Avoid: **DX** at -5 or **Light Walk**.

Save: Detection, or **Hearing** at -2, allows an active defense at -3. Success by 0 means one bolas still hits the legs; success by 1+ avoids both.

Effects: 1d-1* cutting to the neck and legs, plus effects as per *Bolas* (*Exploits*, p. 44).

Shots: 1d

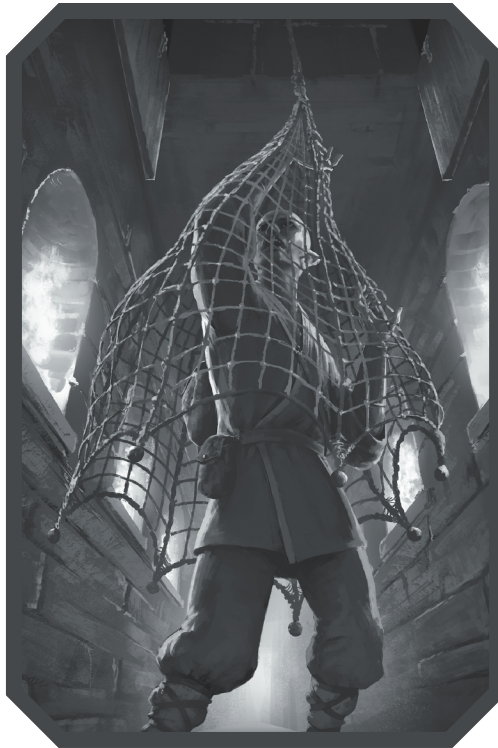
Rearm: Yes.

Steal: Yes. Two cutting bolas per remaining shot (\$100, 2 lbs., failure by 5+ or critical failure when using it does cutting damage to the wielder's arm).

* At ST 14. May instead be ST 10 (1d-3) or ST 18 (1d+1).

DROP NET

A hex of floor acts as a pressure plate; anyone stepping on it triggers a weighted melee net that drops from the ceiling and entangles him. See *Nets* (*Exploits*, p. 45). This is not a



dangerous trap on its own, but intelligent foes will prepare a room with a few such traps, know exactly which hexes to avoid, and act quickly to take advantage of any bound foes!

Detect: Per-based **Traps**.

Disarm: DX-based **Traps**. Failure triggers!

Avoid: Automatic (avoid that hex).

Save: **Hearing** allows a **Dodge** roll at -2.

Effects: Entangled (cannot move or attack until free). See *Nets* (*Exploits*, p. 45).

Shots: 1.

Rearm: Yes.

Steal: Yes. No roll; the melee net can be picked up if undamaged.

FIENDISH FLUNG AXE

A tripwire sets off a mechanism that throws an axe at the subject. This flies from an unexpected angle (e.g., corner of the ceiling) or long distance, and is hard to see coming!

Detect: Per-based **Traps** at -8.

Disarm: Per-based **Traps** at -8.

Avoid: Automatic (step over the tripwire).

Save: Detection, or **Hearing** at -8, allows any valid active defense at -3.

Effects: 2d+2 cutting* to a random hit location.

Shots: 1.

Rearm: Yes, if you can reach the mechanism.

Steal: Yes. No roll; just pick up the throwing axe.

* At ST 14. May instead be ST 10 (1d+2), ST 18 (3d+2), ST 22 (4d+2), or ST 26 (5d+2).

PROJECTILE CAPTURING FIELD

This trap always accompanies some other hazard, usually monsters (who may or may not be intelligent enough to know what it does). Any projectiles fired across its threshold (a line across the area) disappear, only to be fired at the original shooter (from behind) after a short delay! The focal point of the trap is a faintly glowing stone eye about 8" in diameter (SM -4, DR 6, HP 40, no darkness penalty to attack) mounted high on the wall behind the party. On its turn (treat it as Basic Speed 1.00), it fires all captured projectiles back at each original shooter with effective skill 15 (ignore range penalties); damage is based on the *shooter's* ST and other traits.

CHAPTER TWO

TRICKS

Not every trap is about dodging arrows and leaping pits. Some require a bit more thought, seek to disrupt the party more than to kill it, or act as a double-edged sword. For simplicity, we call these *tricks*. Most are unique challenges, which work best one to a dungeon and should not be repeated.

The advice at the beginning of Chapter 1 (p. 4) also applies to customizing and inventing tricks.

Obstacles

Most of these tricks are intended as *obstacles*, which block the way to an important part of the dungeon; e.g., the actual goal or a “bonus area” with great loot. Hence, these are all labeled “*Avoid*: No.” Successfully dealing with the trick allows safe passage forward – a door unlocks, a bridge materializes

over a chasm, a platform or air spirit raises the party up to a new area, a force field drops, etc. – or grants some sort of reward, perhaps by unlocking a treasure chest or bestowing a magical boon like *Bless* (*Spells*, pp. 50-51).

If the main impediment is a locked door, it’s up to the GM whether the delvers can pick the lock or beat down the door if they fail to work through the trick; see *You Shall Not Pass* (p. 10). For other obstacles, the GM should put in alternative passages – usually more difficult and less lucrative ones. Failing to overcome a trick shouldn’t make a dungeon “unwinnable.”

Obstacles work especially well in situations where the delvers are being attacked or under similar pressure. It’s evil and fun to make the party decide who should focus on the trick instead of helping keep the enemy at bay!

INSANE ARCHITECTURE

Sometimes it’s not that the dungeon wants to kill you, it’s just that it makes *no sense*.

A CROOKED MILE

This bizarre room is a fiendish wonder of Hell Gnome architecture, with twisted staircases and impossible-seeming passageways through disguised tunnels. Everyone within must save every 1d yards or suffer daze (*Exploits*, p. 66) for (margin of failure) seconds, disoriented by the architecture. This is problematic if monsters or other hazards are present! There is nothing magical about this room; it’s all mundane architecture, just twisted in bewildering and befuddling ways.

Detect: Automatic.

Disarm: No.

Avoid: No; even flight is confusing.

Save: **IQ**, **IQ**-based **Acrobatics**, or **IQ**-based **Body Sense** – all at -3 without **Absolute Direction**. Gnomes add **Widget-Worker**.

Effects: See above.

Shots: Constant.

Rearm, *Steal*: No.

DELVERS UNDER GLASS

This room has exits on opposite walls. Across the middle of the room, completely separating the exits, are four floor-to-ceiling panes of glass about a foot apart. The nature of the

glass walls is not apparent until the entrance door is shut, at which point the pressure plates within the floor gauge the party’s total weight. For every 10% by which this weight is reduced, the panes of glass drop 1’ away from the ceiling; this will become immediately evident if anyone jumps or otherwise leaves the ground. There are many ways to achieve this: martial artists can use **Light Walk** or **Spider Climb**, wizards can cast **Walk on Air**, and so on. Anyone may try clinging to the outside wall, roll **Climbing** at no penalty to halve weight, or at -3 to eliminate weight completely.

The top edge of the glass is *sharp*, requiring those climbing over it to save or take damage. If the glass dropped 2-3’, delvers must clamber over them all, requiring four such saves. If it dropped 4-7’, they may step carefully, making two saves. If it dropped 8’ or more, no save roll is required.

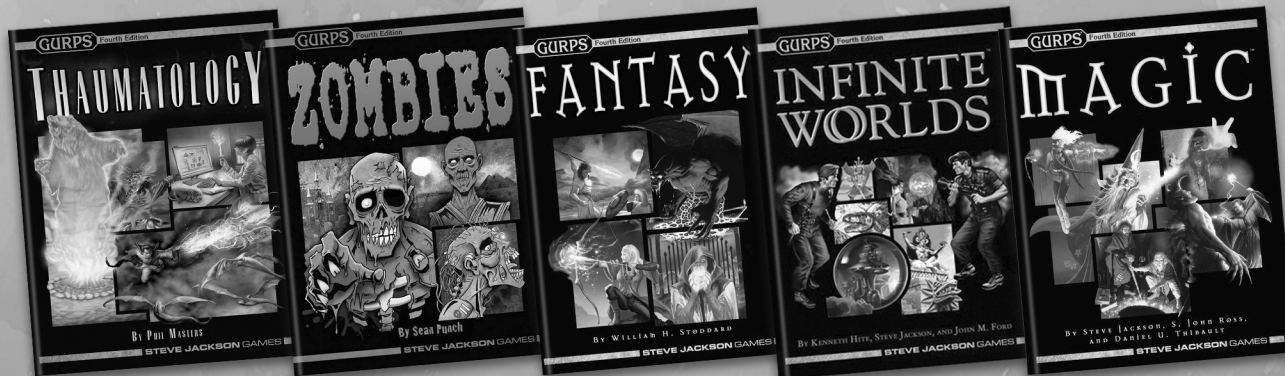
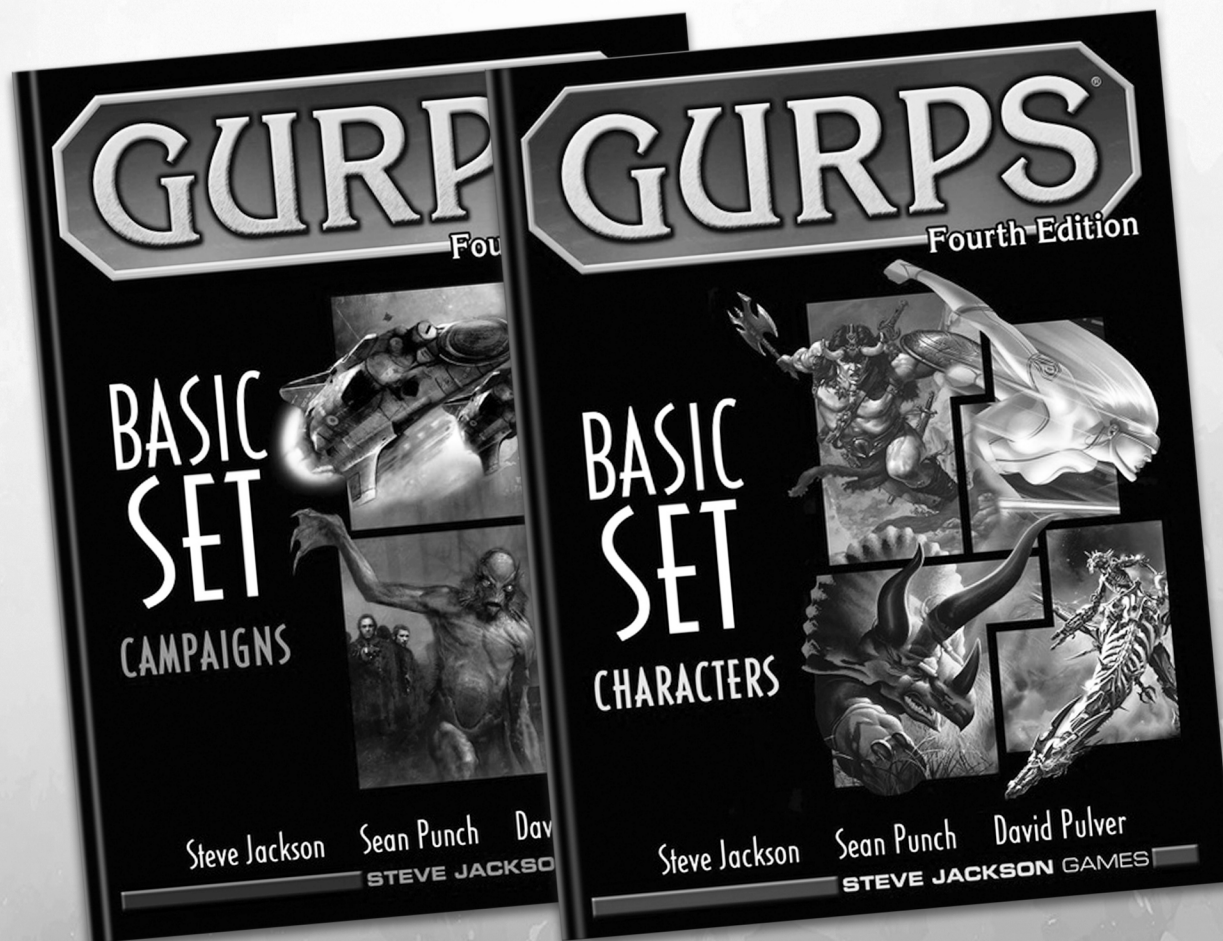
If the entrance is reopened, the panes *immediately* rise back into place. If anyone is currently crawling on them, each pane inflicts 1d-1(2) cutting and then *shatters* (below).

Alternatively, the party can simply break the glass. Each pane has DR 24 and HP 180. But they’re forged to shatter *explosively* when damaged, inflicting 4d+6(2) cutting (per pane) to everyone in the area! Any remaining glass shards are nonmagical and worthless except as scrap.

Detect: *Per*-based **Traps** at -2 to work out how weight affects the panes, which changes to +2 once someone has jumped, etc. Success by 4+ warns about the glass shattering outward if broken.

Disarm, *Avoid*: No.

Any adventure you can imagine . . .



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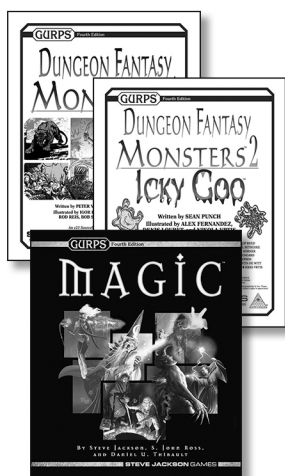
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