

LETHAL LEGACIES

\$17.99

Traps of the World Before

In the elder times, before the dawn of man or even the first birth of elves, an ancient civilization was widely distributed across the world. Now they are long gone, but they left behind a lethal legacy. Their tombs and ruins are filled with the deadliest of traps, many using techno-magical powers not understood by modern scholars. This handbook examines 60 of the devious, deadly traps left behind by this mysterious civilization, with complete d20 stats for each.



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Traps of the World Before

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INTRODUCTION

FROM THE DIARIES OF SAGE SERGI DEG AH

My headstrong grandson, Sergi DeGah III, shares my thirst for knowledge but in a different way. A born inventor, little Sergi spends more time securing the baron's endless treasure rooms with a variety of deadly traps than he does studying!

"Grandfather," he says, "In all your studies, why have you not written a book on the origin of traps? Wouldn't my traps be left as a testament to the baron's castle and the community around it? Wouldn't traps left behind from the world before also tell us of the civilizations and the people that built them?"

My grandson is, of course, correct. Arrogant, for sure, but correct! Understanding a civilization means analyzing that which was left for us to study. But we can also study that which is NOT left behind! For are not the traps of a past culture a protection against something that also existed in the past? And it is these traps and what they were built to keep away that gives us insight into the lethal legacies of the past.

The People of the World Before: There has been a great debate amongst sages about the peoples of the past. Some contend that ages ago we were but one race, one culture and one world. It was this race that spawned the humans, elves, dwarves and even goblins. As the great sage Nobu Aperion once said, "We are all descendants of history." Perhaps then too we are all descendants of the great race that once ruled the world.

But as a man of science and magic, I cannot merely speculate. To truly know, one must uncover evidence, cast divining spells and call forth the wisdom of one's gods. It was over my travels of the last seven or so decades that I did just that and came to the conclusions you now hold in your hands, dear reader.

From the traps left behind from the people of the world before (or as I call them, "the Beforers") two things become obvious:

1) The Beforers were a technologically advanced race capable of sophisticated woodcarving, metal forging, glass blowing, ceramic crafting, stone sculpting and shaping of materials that still confound us to this day.

2) The Beforers were adept wizards in their own right, employing powerful, permanent magic that has lasted centuries without fading.

These are two facts that are indisputable. Where the Beforers truly shine, however, is not in the individual achievements of the artisans that built the traps or the mages that wove their enchantments (although each contribution is not to be lightly dismissed). Instead, it is the combination of these two amazing powers that sets the Beforers head and shoulders above many of today's most lauded and sophisticated trap builders. (Even you little Sergi! Ha-ha!)

Here, then, are some of the lethal legacies of the world before.

TRAPS OF THE WORLD BEFORE

TRAP #1: THE GRAPE VINE

Appearance: Decorative.

Type: Magical, Plant.

Targets: Any.

Duration: This trap continues to function as long as the plants are in place.

Typical Placement: This trap is used as a portal between two far locations.

Description: Shofogo Island and the Beforer stronghold in the Northwoods are connected by magic portals that appears to be elven in nature. These two portals are related, but it took me many years to figure out how.

The Shofogo Island portal did not look like a doorway to me. When I first saw it, I concluded it was merely an interesting wall decoration. But when I saw the same decoration in the Northwoods, I became curious.

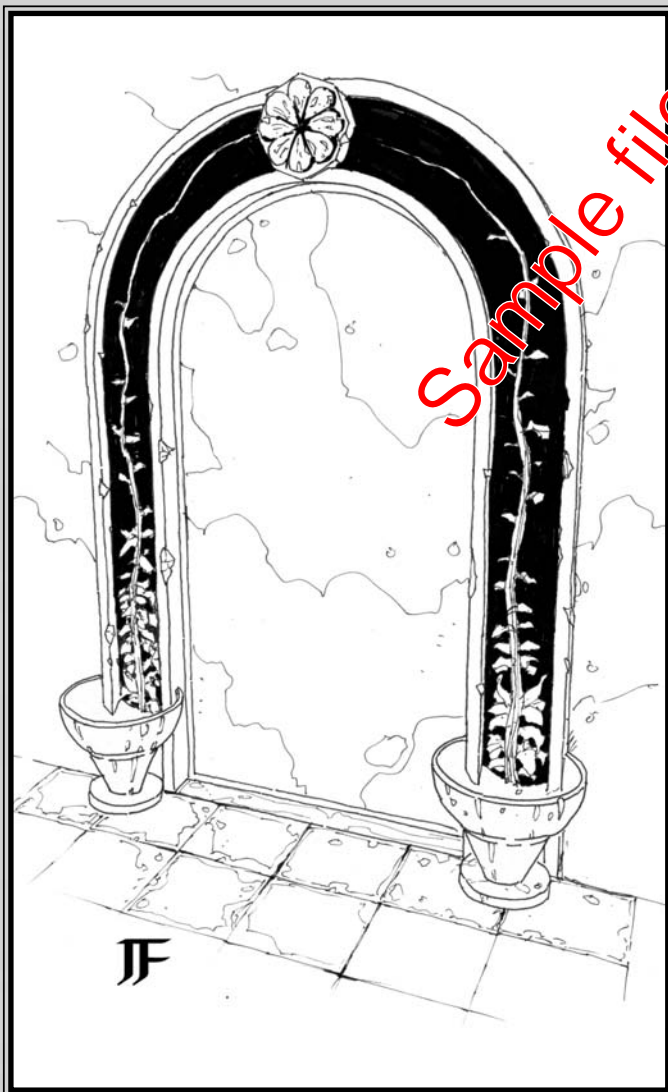
The portal is shaped like a black archway that's 10' wide and 15' high, but there is no visible door. Against the black of the archway is a delicate sculpture of a plant that begins at the base of the archway and rises to nearly meet at the top. From the bottom to the top of the sculpture, the plant gets increasingly barren and thin. The base of the sculpture begins in what resembles a pot. There is a flower at the apex of the archway.

If the pot is filled with water, the plant begins to grow and the flower begins to bloom. The vines grow



and fill up the archway. Flowers blossom and eventually berries begin to grow. If a target eats one of the berries, the inside of the archway appears to the eater to glow green. The eater then can pass through the archway and will instantly arrive on the other side of the other portal. There is no way to pass through the portal without eating the berry first.

Disarming the Trap: This is technically not a "trap" per se. It does no harm, it simply keeps you guessing until you figure out how to open it. Recently, a second grape vine portal has been uncovered in the Beforer stronghold beneath Lichtor's Glen. A group of adventurers walked through seven months ago against my advice. (My wife, Tatanya, forbade me to even accompany them, lest I decide at the last minute to go, not that I would.) I wonder where they are now.



Trap #1 - The Grape Vine

The Grape Vine: CR 1; magical; no trigger; continuous reset; no bypass; place water in the pots and eat the grapes to use the portal; no damage, but the portal cannot be used unless the user pours the water and eats the grapes.



TRAP #2: The Cleaving Steamer

Appearance: Hidden.

Type: Mechanical, Magical.

Targets: Any.

Duration: This steam trap functions continually, but the axe trap is a manual reset.

Typical Placement: This trap is placed ahead of important rooms. It is usually found in Beforer strongholds in temperate regions.

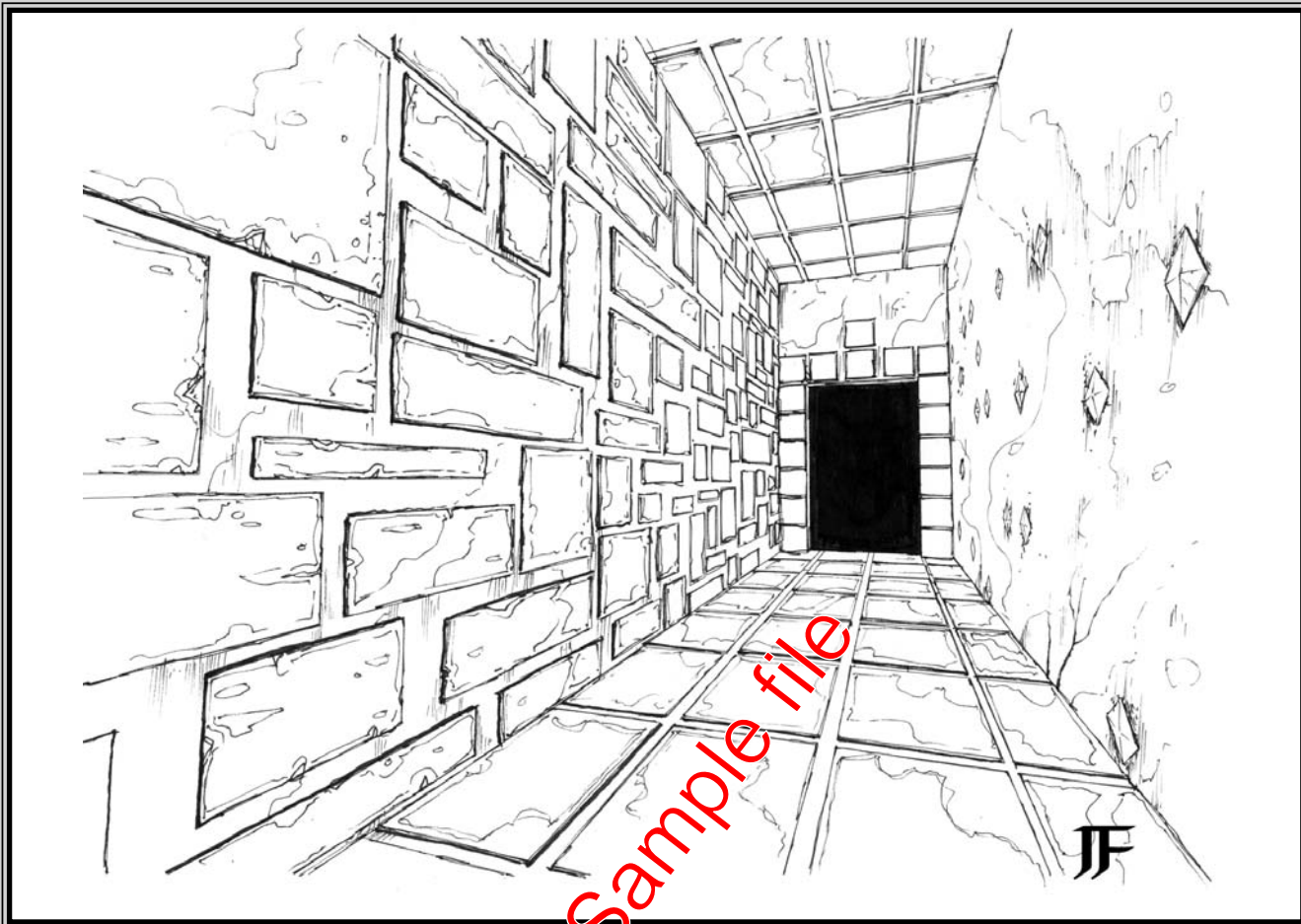
Description: Brugar's Death Spiral held many deadly traps. This one was discovered after the fire giant had been slain. It was positioned ahead of a previously undiscovered Beforer treasury.

The corridor was 80' long and 10' wide. The left side of the corridor was made up of large slabs. The floor was made up of similar slabs, but the mortar between them was approximately 1" lower than the surface of the slab. In between these slabs are tell-tale signs of mosses and lichens. The right side of the corridor is flat, but dotted with strange glass protrusions. Each protrusion has a tiny hole and this hole is also surrounded by mosses and lichens.

If anyone advances more than 15' into the corridor, steam begins shooting out of the tiny glass protrusion. (The steam damage is 1d6 per round.) Visibility is severely reduced. Unfortunately, that's not the deadliest part of the trap. When the targets walk another 30', battleaxes are launched from the darkened doorway ahead. Since visibility is reduced, the targets won't see them until they hit. (Make an attack roll against the targets in the front of the marching order at +9. Three battleaxes are launched. The damage for each axe is 2d8. If it misses the first victim, the battleaxe continues in a straight line for another 30' before falling to the ground. The battleaxes must be reset manually.) The steam is kept hot and under pressure inside the glass protrusion by powerful Beforer magics.

Disarming the Trap: The pressure plates on the floor can be disarmed if they can be pried up. (DC 25 Strength check and DC 30 Disable Device check to disarm the traps.) Holding up a shield to the glass protrusions can keep the steam from burning as long

Trap #2 - The Cleaving Steamer



as anyone in metal armor gets out of there quickly. (After four rounds, armor begins to heat up to 1d4 points of damage.) Unfortunately, the axes are another story. The pressure plate can be pried up the same way, but avoiding them is nearly impossible unless one is crawling across the floor. There is a secret bypass at the beginning of the corridor, but it is extremely difficult to find. (DC 28 Search check to find switch.)

The Cleaving Steamer: CR 4; mechanical, magical; location trigger; continuous reset and manual reset; hidden bypass; 1d6 steam damage plus 3 battleaxes (+9 attack, 2d8 damage); Search DC 28; Disable Device DC 30 (preceded by DC 25 Strength check).



TRAP #3: HELL'S LADDER

Appearance: Ominous.

Type: Mechanical, Magical.

Targets: Any.

Duration: This trap functions as long as the pillar is standing.

Typical Placement: This trap is used as a ladder between levels of a multi-level complex.

Description: I consider this "trap" more of an obstacle than a trap. It is, in fact, a ladder between two levels in a Beforer stronghold. Of course, this stronghold is more popularly known as "Brugar's Death Spiral," the bizarrely built fire giant lair. Brugar the fire giant chieftain only built half of the lair. Before his brain was ravaged by disease and he started constructing the unending spiral fortress walls, he took control of a Beforer stronghold.

Brugar's Death Spiral is still inhabited by the remains of the fire giant's legions and assorted monsters, but during the two weeks the Delsimore Elite