

DUNGEON CRAWLER CARL BOOK VIII

A PARADE OF HORRIBLES



MATT DINNIMAN

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DUNGEON CRAWLER CARL BOOK 8

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Thank you to all the crawlers who have helped turn this silly book about a guy and his talking cat into what it is today. Also, I want to extend a special shout-out to the mods on my Discord who have been there since the very beginning. No words can convey how grateful I am that you carry the torch for me.

And, Dwight . . . you only have yourself to blame for what happens in this book.

When I was a boy and I would see scary things in the news, my mother would say to me, “Look for the helpers. You will always find people who are helping.”

—Fred Rogers

PARADE OF HORRIBLES

(plural parades of horrors)

Noun

1. A parade featuring a progression of people wearing comic and grotesque costumes, commonly accompanied by floats and models representing monsters.

2. (*law, informal*) Any rhetorical device presenting a series of terrible results that notionally might follow from an act, instead of confining the argument to the explicit terms of any applicable law.

See also

fearmongering

catastrophism

**(Definition from Wiktionary, “Parade of horrors,”
https://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/parade_of_horrors)**

SAMANTHA'S BOOK 7 RECAP

"BUCKET BOY, COME HERE," SAMANTHA CALLED.

The young Crocodilian was sitting on the couch in the personal space, talking to that weird bald guy with the gross scar on his head. Samantha didn't like him much. Or maybe she did? Maybe she was in love with him?

No, no. That wasn't right. Who was his mother?

Something, something, garbage truck. No, no, no. Not him. That scar was gross, though.

"What is it?" Bucket Boy shouted back. "I'm a little busy . . . Wait. Why are you in Carl's room?"

Why was she in Carl's room? Oh, yes, yes. She remembered now.

"I'm redecorating, and if you know what's good for you, you'll come here this instant."

The Crocodilian and the bald guy with no eyebrows—ew—approached. They stepped in, eyes wide.

"Yah, do you like it? It's not done yet," Samantha said, feeling proud. A dozen sluggalos were in the far corner, struggling with the new wallpaper. To Bucket Boy, she said, "Come here. I need help installing the chandelier. The sluggies are too small. Come along. Hurry up."

"Carl is going to kill you. This is his room. He says nobody is allowed in."

"He never comes in here, so I have claimed it for my own. Honestly, I feel as if it's my right. I won it in the breakup." She rolled over to the chandelier

she had borrowed from the room next to Tish's room when she had done that thing she wasn't going to talk about because everyone would get mad. "This goes to the ceiling. Hurry up, now."

"Wait," Bucket Boy said. "This is not a chandelier. This is a swing."

"Anything can be a chandelier if it lights up and you attach it to the ceiling."

"I can't do it," Bucket Boy said. "I promised Rosetta I would catch Tipid up on what happened during Faction Wars before he lost his memory."

Samantha neck-cootered the goblin drill onto the floor in front of the kid. "Oh, don't worry. I'll tell him what happened. You, get to work." She turned to . . . Tipid? Yes, that was his name. He was from outside the dungeon. He was a former crawler. His mother was probably long dead. She would never have had the chance to trick Samantha into . . . "You, don't worry, okay? I will explain it all."

Tipid, VERY SERIOUS, sat. Samantha was suspicious of people who were VERY SERIOUS.

"Yo, I want to hear this, too," Bigs the slugalette said, sliming up.

Samantha liked Bigs even if she got orange goo all over her new carpet. Samantha had borrowed the carpet from the Larracos College of Magic. Sometimes Sam and Bigs had girl talk. Bigs was now invited to her bachelorette party.

Psamathe's baby was dead. She was there, and now she was gone. An overwhelming wave of . . . relief . . . washed . . .

Why was it her thoughts always got fuzzy when she remembered her child? Why did she always lose track of . . .

"Okay," Samantha said to Bigs and head-scar guy. "So the ninth floor of the dungeon was Faction Wars. Normally, it's this boring level with all these ugly, old rich people pretending to be warriors, and they fight and one of them takes a castle and wins and honestly it's really stupid and not important. But this year Carl and Donut had their own army, and the NPCs had their own army and they all started fighting over the castle, blah, blah, blah. A bunch of old crawlers from outside the dungeon came back to fight,

which if you ask me was kind of stupid. I mean, what kind of suicidal morons were these idiots?”

“Uh,” Tipid said.

“Exactly. And in the end, the NPC team and the whole city of Larracos got transferred to the cotton fields because one of those nerd-rock guys cast a spell. That sent all the NPCs to the Ascendency floor, and we probably won’t see any of those guys until the twelfth floor. So not this tenth floor. I’m sure this will be a boring, filler floor where nothing important happens at all.

“Anyway, the whole thing ended with Carl and Donut winning Faction Wars, but that was only because the NPCs went away. Oh, and there was this other team that showed up at the last minute. They were called the War Mage Rebellion. They killed that orc boss guy. Not the one Rosetta beheaded but the younger one. Stalwart. They beat up Elle and stole the Gate of the Feral Gods from her. Their leader is a guy named Akuma, and Elle says if she ever sees that guy again, he’ll be peeing ice cubes for the rest of his short life. But they stole . . . They took . . .

“Have you seen how pretty my room is? I’m trying to come up with a good name for it. The war mages were working with Agatha, the shopping cart lady, but they didn’t like each other. She left when they did and nobody knows where she is, but Carl says the war mages want him to kill Agatha for some reason. Oh, and then Meatus came. He was a giant penis. A gross, stinky one like from one of those guys who gels his hair back and the only aspect of his personality that he works on is his duck facing. You know what I’m saying?”

“Totally,” Bigs said.

Samantha sniffed at the guy. “Show me your penis.”

“No,” Tipid said.

Samantha growled. “Anyway, there was this goddess named Eris that came when Meatus the penis was fighting this other, boring god guy. Donut cast a spell and they all turned into a giant ball. Oh, oh, and then Yarilo showed up from the Nothing, and he was chasing me, trying to talk to me, but I didn’t want anything to do with that weirdo after that last party before

he got banished. Anyway, Donut took all the bad guys out of the ball and smooshed them through a Li Na chain, including Meatus, and it got in Rosetta's teeth. After that, Li Na couldn't heal and is all weird now. And her brother, Li Jun, died, which was really sad because I liked that guy. Oh, and Yarilo died too, but he was killed by the boring god guy.

"That's a lot," Tipid said. "Maybe we can start over and—"

"The scary Lucia lady only had one doggy left, and he almost ate Mongo, but little Rend saved him and the doggy died! It turns out, she has like a ton of children trapped inside her head, and if she dies, they die, but I say kill her anyway because children are so much trouble. Also, the floor was really tense because Katia and Donut both put the same hat on, and it made it so they both had to kill a snake lady. So Katia and Carl and me went to kill the snake lady, but when I got there, my plan was to go say hi to and possibly kill my own mother—her name is Theia—but when I went to her place, it really wasn't her but some skyfowl dude, which really has a way of messing with a girl's head. And he was all 'Look, I'm not really your mother,' and I was like 'No shit, bucko. You're a creepy bird dude,' and he was all 'No, I mean, Theia isn't,' and I was like, 'Yeah, okay, weirdo.' But then the whole club went nuts and got pulled into some really creepy demon shit because Li Na has totally gone cuckoo.

"Oh, and before that, Louis was in trouble, but I saved his life and selflessly gave my very body to keep him alive. Now he has gills and is my cousin."

"I remember that part," Tipid said. "I remember everything that happened after my memory was wiped. The Dream warlord inhabited Louis's lungs. We used the body of the flesh golem to replace it."

"Kiwi and Mongo's babies!" Samantha gasped. "They're so adorable. We won't see them again until we get to the twelfth floor. Or all the other NPCs, like Holger and Edgar the turtle and Big Tina the dinosaur. But after that part, the most important thing that happened is that Louis broke up with Juice Box so we can have our torrid affair."

"And Katia left," Tipid said.

“Oh yes. Louis, being so virile, made Katia pregnant just by standing near her, and she got shuffled off to a nunnery or something. I wasn’t paying attention. Someplace outside the dungeon. And then me and Emberus had a little talk, and then Justice Light the skyfowl dude broke the Nothing so all the demon ladies who hate me are now loose and it’s probably going to cause a problem. Oh, and Scolopendra, the big bad centipede thing at the bottom of the dungeon, woke up.”

Tipid sighed. “Yeah. I think I’m good.”

“I thought you explained it perfect,” said Bigs.