

## A MASTER OF MISCHIEF

*By Fred Hobbs*

His name is Harry. He was one of my roommates my freshman year at the University of Colorado in Boulder. We served together on our high school's newspaper and as college time approached decided to team up with Joe and room together in the dorm. Joe had been a friend since fourth grade, but I didn't know that much about Harry, especially his most outstanding trait: to commit acts of mischief.

Herewith is a true litany of the mostly sophomoric stunts of Harry, a master of mischief.

Harry's first senseless act was to unscrew the light bulbs in the first floor shower room and flush them down the toilet. What effect this had on the sewer system of the University of Colorado was and still is unclear to me.

Harry gave no rationale for that decidedly irrational act, but soon followed it up with one that from his twisted viewpoint made some sense. He decided to make a nighttime tour of the underground walkways on the campus in hopes of being able to enter the office of a professor of whom he was not overly fond. Maybe change a mark in the professor's grade book or sneak a peak at the content of an upcoming exam? Harry somehow was able to open a manhole and navigate the twisting tunnels, but, in a rare moment of normal behavior, admitted later that he failed in his attempt to enter the prof's office and almost got caught by a night watchman.

Harry's diabolical nature produced another relatively harmless stunt that Joe and I agreed was very humorous except to our hapless resident assistants (RAs), a nice young couple who didn't really deserve such harassment. This bit of mischief involved an accomplice in the room at the other end of the hall. Harry had a bowling ball, which he would send rolling down the hall. The reverberation on the concrete floor would provide a remarkably loud rumbling sound. The accomplice would quickly scoop up the ball and bring it into his room. When the RA looked for the source of the "rumble" nothing could be found, but as soon he or she closed the door, the ball would be sent rolling back to Harry with a repeat of the rumbling sound. The RAs never did figure it out.

The most outrageous act of mischief perpetrated by Harry actually could be considered petty larceny. And, I have to admit that Joe and I were accessories to this crime. Let's call it "The Great Cookie Caper." Harry (who else?) discovered that the vending machine in the dorm lounge somehow could be triggered to release small wrapped packages of cookies without the benefit of the insertion of the obligatory coin. This feat was accomplished easily by merely sticking one's hand in the retrieval slot of the machine and giving it a slight jiggle.

As is the case with all criminals, we weren't content with pilfering just one cookie package, but repeated the process frequently when we thought the coast was clear. Also, as with most criminal activity, someone saw Harry "at work" and snitched on us. Somehow, Harry found out not only who "ratted us out", but that the executive director of CU dorms, one Elmer Grosshauser, was personally going to search our room for evidence of our involvement.

As it happened, Harry was in the room when he overheard Mr. Grosshauser in the hall ask a maid to see if anyone was present therein. At that point, Harry quickly ducked into the closet and closed the door. As the CU official cased the room, finding no cookie wrappers (which we had religiously dropped in trash cans elsewhere), he made one last stop. Opening the closet door, he was startled to see Harry there, naked all the way from his big toe to the top of his head.

Said Harry, quite calmly, "Can I help you, Mr. Grosshauser?"

