



But don't throw nothing at all walls you meet. You'll let all the air out (and then you've got another mouth problem).

Even outside, in the wild light spaces, when you hit a wall, throw nothing at it. See if it sticks.

The wall's not nothing.
(Maybe it's not a wall.)



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And after that? Cases, walls, and caves will vary. It's starting with nothing that matters.

Stand still at the wall of the cave as it breathes you in. Sucking air out. Sucking air in.

When you hit this wall, first, do nothing.

This is a real wall of a wall.

You can lose yourself in a cave's breathing too. Hitting a cave wall is nothing like a thirst wall, there's no bouncing back.

Find a cave by feeling for its breath. It could be rock-uttered whistling and moaning. It could feel like cool, dislocated exhalations.

As any spelunking meteorologist can tell you, caves are both many-walled and breathing things.



Hitting the walls
Blair Johnson

Notes:
Images taken from *Winning Racquetball* by Arthur Shay and *Gregg Shorthand* by John Robert Gregg.
Cave facts adapted from *Exploring American Caves* by Franklin Folsom.

First of all, we're not talking about *bouncing off the walls*. Nowadays, only miracles can produce the required velocity for bouncing.

Hitting a wall, on the other hand, resembles bouncing only in the sense that walls make all the decisions.

But as walls go, they are peculiar ones. Utterly impassable, but temporary. Unintentionally constructed, but effectively vertical.

Can you hit a wall both there and not there? Isn't it more of a full-body smush? Your will against the wall's?

Then again, hitting a wall can often be traced to mere thirst. A full-faced parch, perhaps. (Many walls spring up from a problem of the mouth.)

