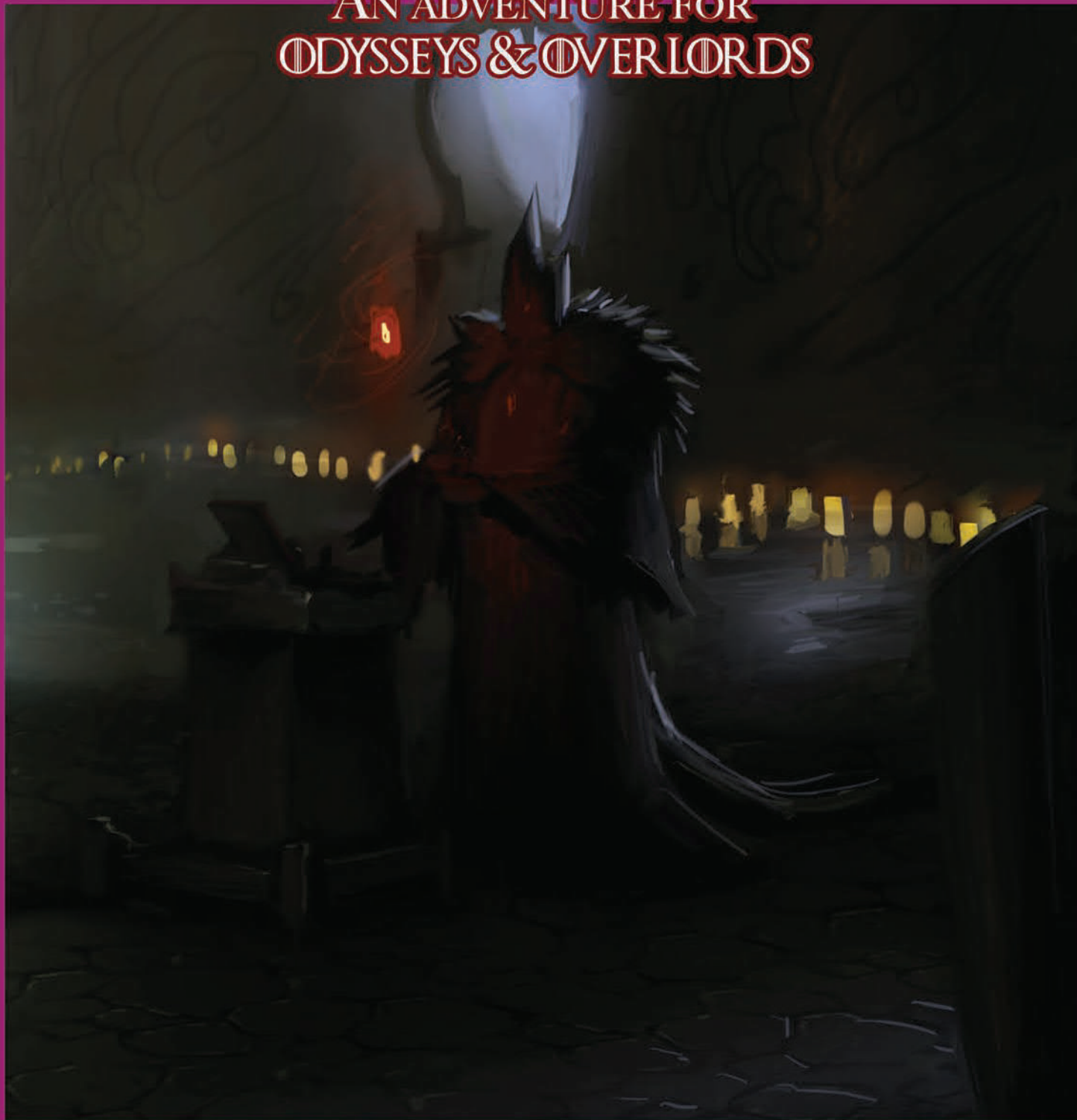


Designed for use  
with the **Basic Fantasy**  
Role-Playing Game

# THE IDOL OF BALA



## AN ADVENTURE FOR ODYSSEYS & OVERLORDS



SUITABLE FOR 4-6 CHARACTERS OF 2ND - 3RD LEVEL

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AN ADVENTURE  
FOR ODYSSEYS & OVERLORDS

**SUITABLE FOR 4-6 CHARACTERS OF 2ND – 3RD LEVEL**

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# ODYSSEYS & OVERLORDS

In the ancient times, the Gods watched over humankind. This was a golden age of learning and peace. Humans revered the Gods, living in harmony with the divine and the companion beasts. Magic flowed freely allowing the learned and the faithful to alter their forms, prevent aging, and preserve health. The wild folk were born of this time as humans and companion beasts united in love. While most of the Gods rejoiced at this development, Ragnar, the God of Conquest was jealous and appalled by the humans choosing the animal companions as mates instead of the Gods. This caused a divine war during which the Gods who agreed with Ragnar tried to kill the other Gods. The first casualty of this war was Ember, the Goddess of knowledge. When Ember died, her scholar-priests, the Keepers of the Arcane were caught in a magical backlash creating the spellscorched. This war of Gods, called the Schism, raged for 1000 years, during which time the followers of Ragnar courted the worship and love of as many humans as they could. From these unions, the Abyss-kissed were born. After a long and bloody conflict, Ragnar and his followers were defeated. The Gods who fought them dragged Ragnar's followers into the Abyss where they are believed to still be fighting to this day. Only Ragnar and Chandra, the Goddess of the moon and nature remained among mortals. Declaring a cease fire, Ragnar retreated with a small retinue of cultists to the Tower of Wretched Wroth. Chandra and her highest clerics went to the Crystal Library on the surface of the northern Moon. Mortals were left to determine their own fates. The magic that had bound the souls of humans and the companion beasts shattered, though wild folk were already numerous enough to persevere. The spellscorched taught the ways of arcane magic sparingly, protecting the art nearly to extinction. Clerics of Chandra and Ragnar spoke of worship, but most mortal kingdoms rejected all gods and magic, relying on steel and blood to determine righteousness and rulership.

Now, the mortal lands are divided. A dozen kingdoms lie scattered across the world, separated by dangerous wilds filled with bandits and monsters. The bravest mortals act as adventurers, guiding travelers between the kingdoms, killing monsters to thin their numbers, and plundering ruins in search of the lost treasures of the golden age. This is the world of **Odysseys & Overlords**!



## INTRODUCTION

The **Idol of Bala** is a dungeon crawl intended for a party of 4 - 6 characters of 2nd - 3rd level. It is written assuming the use of the Basic Fantasy Roleplay system and/or the *Odysseys & Overlords* setting. The Basic Fantasy Role-Playing Game is available FREE at <https://www.basicfantasy.org/> and <https://www.drivethrurpg.com/product/140455/Basic-Fantasy-RPG-3rd-Editon>. A copy of The Basic Fantasy Role-Playing Game 3rd Edition is highly recommended for use with this product, but any OSR basic ruleset should get you by in a pinch.

## OVERVIEW

In the wake of the Schism (See **Odysseys & Overlords Game Master's Guide**), some turned to the worship of new gods – cold gods who did not always answer prayers but served as a focus for mortals to find common ground amongst themselves. One such god was known most commonly as Bala, represented as a stocky elephant-headed woman capable of making great and bewitching music said to reveal the secrets of the very cosmos. The cult of Bala flourished for a brief time amongst poets, singers, and artists before being largely forgotten. Bala's temples crumbled and her priesthood dwindled until they were little more than a footnote only the most dedicated sages would bother to read.

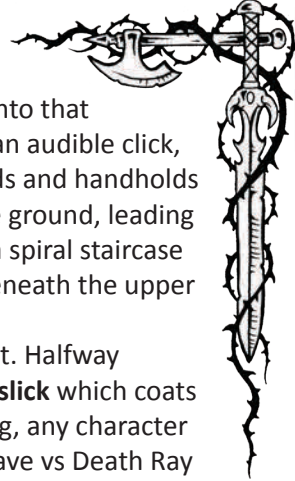
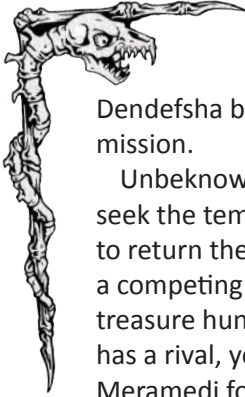
Centuries later, a rumor spread that Bala's followers had actually discovered the secret to eternal life and encoded this secret into the sacred statues they carved from white opal. With no record of Bala's temples, locating one of these statues is as much a matter of luck as anything else, and even the hint of one's discovery prompts milters, magicians, madmen, and magistrates alike to seek it out.

A group recently returned from an expedition into the Untamed Gauntlet bearing a stone tablet covered in strange and indecipherable runes. The Council of Laypersons expressed no interest in the tablet, but an elderly priest named Dendefsha was concerned that the markings could be heretical. Over long hours of study, Dendefsha concluded that the tablet detailed the way to a long-lost temple to Bala hidden deep in the Untamed Gauntlet – a temple likely to contain one of the rare white-opal idols. Dendefsha has taken it as a personal duty to issue a Writ of Salvage to an adventuring party in secret, in hopes that the party will recover and return the long-lost idol.

Dendefsha is prepared to offer each party member 100 gp x the character's level (200 gp for a 2nd level character, 300 gp for a 3rd level character, and so on) as a reward for retrieving the idol. Dendefsha also broadly hints that additional, similar work will be forthcoming if the PCs succeed in this quest and keep the operation secret.

In addition to the Writ of Salvage, Dendefsha allows the party to take the carved tablet with them – it has no apparent value except in the search for the temple, and





Dendefsha believes it might have some direct use in the mission.

Unbeknownst to Dendefsha, two other parties already seek the temple: one is a worshipper of Bala who intends to return the goddess to her former glory and the other is a competing treasure hunter named Meramedi, a prolific treasure hunter and a rival of the PCs. If the party already has a rival, you can use that individual, but we provide Meramedi for use if no such NPC exists in your campaign.

Meramedi already obtained their own Writ of Salvage and retained the Bala worshipper named Heshoth, posing as a guide, to bring them to the site. As written Meramedi and Heshoth arrive about two to three hours before the PCs do, though you can adjust this time frame if you desire in order to maximize any existing tensions.

## THE LOST TEMPLE

### GENERAL DUNGEON NOTES

The underground temple has been abandoned for centuries. Its interior is dry and dusty but the earthen walls muffle sound, deadening echoes and creating an eerie silence. Unless specified otherwise, all passageways in the temple are 10' wide and 10' high, carved from solid, packed earth. There are no light sources in the complex, though metal sconces set into the walls every 20' could hold torches if someone provided them.

Doors are heavy stone but pivot on load-bearing brass hinges; any character with a Strength score of 8 or higher can open them with ease.

The rats in area 3 have worn a tiny tunnel (less than 1' in diameter) out of one alcove in area 3, through which they escape the temple and scrounge for food. The rats are territorial and sneaky and have thus far fended off any other creatures seeking to enter through this route.

Heshoth knew of the temple but had no idea where it was located. As soon as they gained access to the site, Heshoth poisoned Meramedi but arranged the death to look like an accident. The Bala worshipper now lurks in the temple, trying to determine the idol's location.

### 1. THE GATE

The temple's name has long been lost to history, but the circle of eight obelisks has been the subject of rampant speculation for centuries. Known colloquially as the Octolith, the 12-foot black stones are carved with strange runes badly weathered by time and negligence.

The Octolith surrounds an ancient tomb, long since looted and forgotten, but whatever ancient graverobbers desecrated the vault never discovered the key to opening its deeper secrets. A character who succeeds on an **Intelligence Ability Score Check with a Target of 16** or spends at least three hours studying the obelisks realizes that the markings on one end of the stone tablet match those along a groove-like etching on the southern obelisk.

When a character places the tablet's end into that groove, the obelisk's side pops open with an audible click, revealing its hollow insides. Stone footholds and handholds form a ladder that drops 10 feet below the ground, leading to a narrow sloping passage that leads to a spiral staircase underneath the center of the Octolith – beneath the upper crypt.

The stairway winds downward for 50 feet. Halfway down, a weighted stair trap triggers an **oil slick** which coats the remaining steps. Once the trap is sprung, any character attempting to walk down the stairs must save vs Death Ray (with Dexterity bonus added) at a -2 penalty or fall the rest of the way down the stairs, taking 3d6 damage and landing prone at the bottom.

When the PCs reach this point, the trap has already been sprung and the steps are coated with slippery oil. Each character must make the saving throw as described above or fall. A character walking in front of another character who fails the saving throw must make an additional save, this time at a -4 penalty, or fall as well.

### 2. MERAMEDI'S CORPSE

At the bottom of the stairs is the body of Meramedi. The treasure hunter's face is frozen with a look of shock and horror; broken bones, bruised flesh, and a thin coating of grease bear grim and obvious witness to the cause of death. Meramedi has a stone tablet similar to the one carried by the PCs, as well as common travel gear and weapons. The body does not appear to have been disturbed since its fall.

A character who succeeds on an **Intelligence Ability Score Check with a Target of 15** or a **Wisdom Ability Score Check with a Target of 16** notices Meramedi's true cause of death: poison. The fall, while damaging, was not bad enough to be fatal.

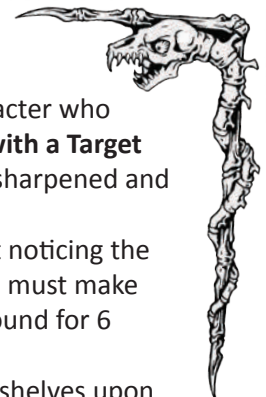
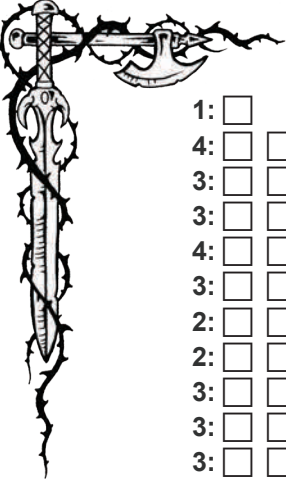
### 3. FALSE IDOLS

This 10-foot wide hallway is pocked with 10-foot-deep alcoves – three on each side. The alcoves are full of ragged fabrics, torn parchment, strips of rotted wood, and other debris. A small, dirty carving of an elephant sits in the back of each alcove. Each idol is about 6" tall, crudely formed, and might be worth one gold scepter (gold piece) to the right buyer. These idols can also be used as holy symbol of Bala.

More dangerously, these alcoves are home to a mischief of **giant rats**. At any given time, there are 3d10 giant rats present in the hallway and alcoves.

**3-30 giant rats AC 13, hp 1d4 hit points, # At 1, Dam 1d4 + disease, Mv 40' (20' swim), Sv. F1, MI 8, XP 10 ea**

**HP** 4: ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐  
2: ☐ ☐  
1: ☐  
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## 4. MESMERIZING CHAMBER

This room is punctured by two 10' wide pillars in its center, making it feel more like interconnecting hallways than a single space. The walls are covered in bas-reliefs that depict the triumphs and travails of Bala and her worshippers through the ages.

The reliefs are both a history lesson – of definite interest to anyone studying the Schism and its effects – and a trap. A character who studies the reliefs for more than one minute must make a save vs. Spells or become transfixed with wonder, staring at the wall. Those under this effect are aware, and breathe normally, but cannot take any actions, including speech. Pulling a transfixed character from the wall, or dealing a point of damage to them ends this trance.

A character who succeeds on the saving throw and proceeds to study the reliefs for an additional hour gains a +2 bonus on Intelligence checks regarding the Schism and Ragnar's divine war.

**Heshoth** is hiding in this room when the party arrives. The Bala worshipper is eager to find the idol and may choose to follow the party instead of ambushing them at this time, or may simply wait until the PCs have retrieved the idol and attack on their way out.

**Heshoth** AC 13, hp 16, # At 1 spear or 1 blowgun, **Dam** 1d6 or 1 + poison, **Mv** 30', **Sv** F3, **MI** 9, **XP** 145

Heshoth is able to move in nearly complete silence, surprising opponents on 1-3 on 1d6.

Heshoth also carries two additional applications of poison; each is good for coating a weapon and lasts exactly one attack. A character wishing to apply the poison must make a successful **Dexterity Ability Score Check with a Target of 13** – on a failure, the character poisons themselves instead of the weapon.

### 4A. STORAGE

Recessed into the chamber's end is a door carved as exquisitely as the walls (though lacking the mesmerizing quality of the main area). The door has a clearly defined

handle with which to pull it open, but a character who succeeds on a **Wisdom Ability Score Check with a Target of 15** notices that the handle's inner edge is sharpened and poisoned.

A character who grasps the handle without noticing the sharpened edge takes 1 point of damage and must make a save vs. Poison or suffer 1d8 damage per round for 6 rounds, starting the following round.

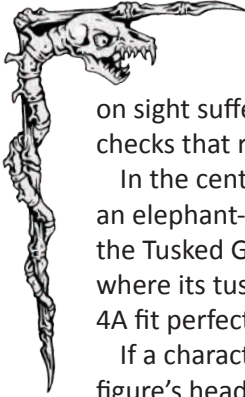
The interior of the storage area consists of shelves upon which sit rows of ceramic and earthenware jugs. Most (1-80 on D%) of the jugs are empty, but some (81-90 on D%) contain spoiled or indeterminate substances which will poison anyone who touches or consumes them. A few (91-97 on D%) of the jugs contain a healing salve that takes one full round to apply and restores 2d4 hit points. The remaining (98-100 on D%) jugs contain a random spell scroll or another item of the GM's choosing.

Aside from the jugs, the shelves contain a combined 4d10 gold coins and 2d8 x 10 platinum coins, all cast in an ancient and unfamiliar mint. In addition, the shelves hold two 3' long elephant tusks carved of white opal.

## 5. WORSHIP HALL OF THE TUSKED GOD

This lowest level differs from the others in that its walls and floor are of polished black stone rather than packed earth, and the ceiling is 15' high. The sheen from the stone reflects light in dizzying patterns, and if a light source is created or brought into this chamber all creatures who rely





on sight suffer a -2 penalty to attack rolls and ability score checks that require vision.

In the center of the hall stands a 6-foot-tall carving of an elephant-headed humanoid holding a spear, known as the Tusked God. The figure's head has two round openings where its tusks should be; the two tusks from Storage area 4A fit perfectly into these slots.

If a character places the tusks into the space on the figure's head, the statue begins to transform. Over the course of one round, the statue grows until it stands a full 9' in height. During the transformation the Tusked God's body is still made of stone, but once it completes the change it can be harmed by normal weapons (see the **Tusked God** monster entry below). The Tusked God attacks anything within the chamber except characters who brandish a holy symbol or carving of Bala (the small idols from area 3 will suffice for this purpose). Once a creature attacks the Tusked God, the Tusked God will seek to destroy that creature even if that creature later holds up a symbol of Bala.

If reduced to 0 hit points, the Tusked God's body reverts to black stone rubble.

**Tusked God AC 16, hp 26, # At 2 weapon, Dam 2d6+ 3, Mv 40', Sv. F6, MI 12, XP 500**

26: ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

## 5A. THE IDOL OF BALA

The door leading to area 5A is constructed the same as the one leading to Storage 4A.

In the center of this chamber stands the 2' tall Idol of Bala, seemingly unguarded. However, the entire interior of the room is filled by a **gelatinous cube**, which automatically engulfs any character who walks into it.

The Idol of Bala is nonmagical in all respects except that it cannot be damaged or destroyed by any means shy of divine intervention. Those who sleep within 20' of the Idol also report having consistently pleasant dreams filled with alluring music and awaking full of inspiration.

**Gelatinous Cube AC 12, hp 17\*, # At 1, Dam 2d4 + paralysis, Mv 20', Sv. F2, MI 12, XP 280**

17: ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

## CONCLUSION

Dendefsha pays the characters as promised if they return with the idol. The cleric also gives the party a bonus of 1 platinum crowns if they return the carved tablet and triples this reward if the party also returns the tablet Meramedi carried.

At this point the party has made a contact and possible ally within the priesthood of Chandra but have also likely earned the enmity of Bala's cult. How useful or dangerous these affiliations may be is left for the Game Master to develop.

# MONSTERS

## GELATINOUS CUBE

<b>Armor Class:</b>	12
<b>Hit Dice:</b>	4*
<b>No. of Attacks:</b>	1
<b>Damage:</b>	2d4 + paralysis
<b>Movement:</b>	20'
<b>No. Appearing:</b>	1
<b>Save As:</b>	Fighter: 2
<b>Morale:</b>	12
<b>Treasure Type:</b>	V
<b>XP:</b>	280

The nearly transparent gelatinous cube travels slowly along dungeon corridors and cave floors, absorbing carrion, creatures, and trash. Inorganic material remains trapped and visible inside the cube's body. A typical gelatinous cube is ten feet on a side and weighs about 15,000 pounds; however, smaller specimens have been reported.

A gelatinous cube attacks by slamming its body into its prey. It is capable of lashing out with a pseudopod, but usually engulfs foes. Any character hit by a gelatinous cube must save vs. Paralysis or be paralyzed for 2d4 turns.

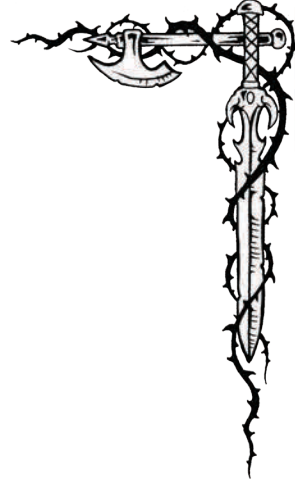
Any treasure indicated will be visible inside the creature, which must be slain if the treasure is to be recovered.

While Gelatinous Cubes can be found in any ruins or caves, they are most common in the subterranean ruins of the Untamed Gauntlet. While scribes have a number of theories regarding this phenomenon, the prevailing wisdom teaches that these creatures, like many oozes and slimes, are byproducts of magical effects used in the final battle between Chandra and Ragnar.

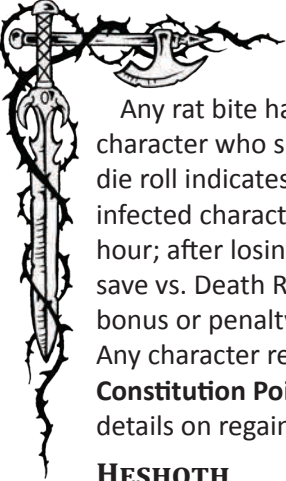
## GIANT RAT

<b>Armor Class:</b>	13
<b>Hit Dice:</b>	1d4 hit points
<b>No. of Attacks:</b>	1 bite
<b>Damage:</b>	1d4 + disease
<b>Movement:</b>	40' Swim 20'
<b>No. Appearing:</b>	3d10
<b>Save As:</b>	Fighter 1
<b>Morale:</b>	8
<b>Treasure Type:</b>	C
<b>XP:</b>	10

Giant rats are scavengers, but will attack to defend their nests and territories. A giant rat can grow to be up to 4 feet long and weigh over 50 pounds. A single giant rat, or a small group of up to four, will generally be shy, but larger packs attack fearlessly, biting and chewing with their sharp incisors.







Any rat bite has a 5% chance of causing a disease. A character who suffers one or more rat bites where the die roll indicates disease will sicken in 3d6 hours. The infected character will lose one point of Constitution per hour; after losing each point, the character is allowed a save vs. Death Ray (adjusted by the current Constitution bonus or penalty) to break the fever and end the disease. Any character reduced to zero Constitution is dead. See **Constitution Point Losses** in the **Encounter** section for details on regaining lost Constitution.

### HESHOTH

<b>Armor Class:</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Hit Dice:</b>	3+1
<b>No. of Attacks:</b>	1 spear or 1 blowgun
<b>Damage:</b>	1d6 or 1 + poison
<b>Movement:</b>	30"
<b>No. Appearing:</b>	1
<b>Save As:</b>	Fighter: 3
<b>Morale:</b>	9
<b>Treasure Type:</b>	Q, R
<b>XP:</b>	145

Heshoth is able to move in nearly complete silence, surprising opponents on 1-3 on 1d6.

Heshoth also carries two additional applications of poison; each is good for coating a weapon and lasts exactly one attack. A character wishing to apply the poison must make a successful **Dexterity Ability Score Check with a Target of 13** – on a failure, the character poisons themselves instead of the weapon.

### THE TUSKED GOD

<b>Armor Class:</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Hit Dice:</b>	6+1
<b>No. of Attacks:</b>	2 weapon
<b>Damage:</b>	2d6 + 3
<b>Movement:</b>	40'
<b>No. Appearing:</b>	1
<b>Save As:</b>	Fighter: 6
<b>Morale:</b>	12
<b>Treasure Type:</b>	Nil
<b>XP:</b>	500

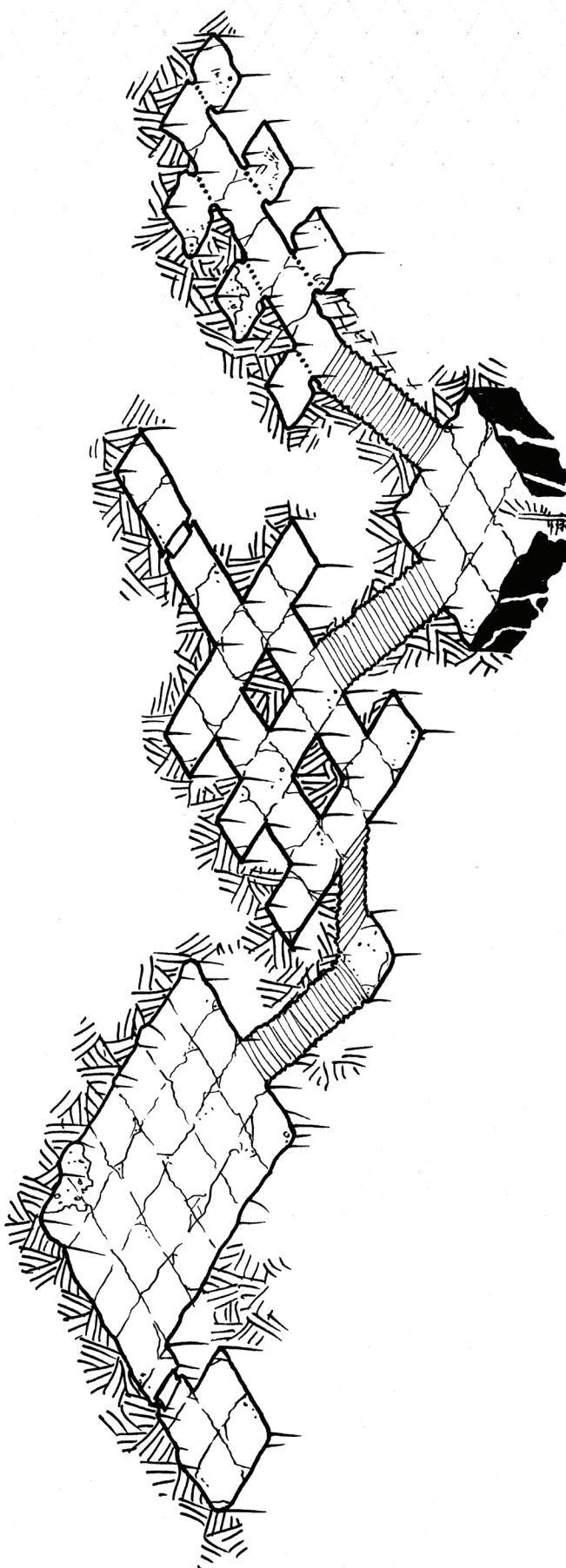
The Tusked God does not rely on vision to make attacks and does not suffer the attack penalty from reflected light, if applicable.

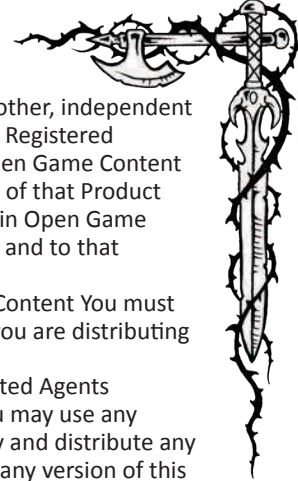
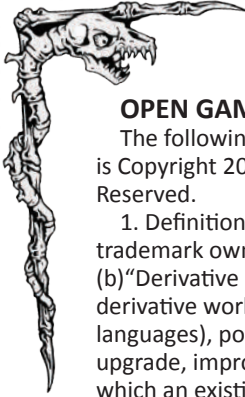






# MAP - PLAYER VERSION





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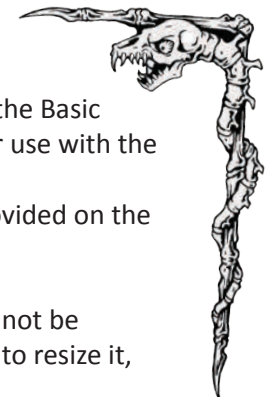
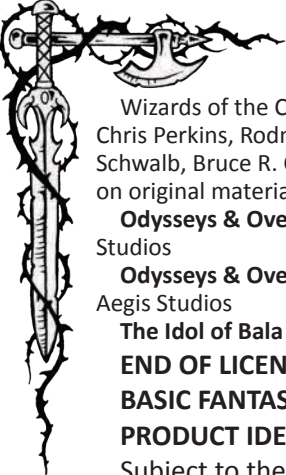
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