

The Belly of the Beast

by Mike Monaco

"Well, Peggy, this is a hellmouth. You don't want to leave this open, not with a baby in the house."

Describing the dungeon: The players should be made to figure out that the cave is, itself, a monster. Lull them into thinking it is just a "theme" of the dungeon: "Tooth-like stalactites," not teeth. "A slimy lump of fungus like a tongue," not a tongue. The wind pipe is a damp cave passage. The walls of the stomach and intestines are covered with a thick red lichen or slime mold. The transition from rock to flesh is gradual and only noticeable after some examination.

Doors: All doors marked on the map are large "valves" or flaps of flesh that can be opened by pushing against them. There is a 2 in 6 chance that any given door is "stuck" and will need to be forced open, either with an open doors roll or by causing sufficient damage to the door. Irritating doors with feathers, tickling, etc. will also cause them to open.

Secret doors: All marked secret doors are "sphincters" that are more difficult to notice than valves. However they can be opened in the same manner.

Gastric events: Roll once each turn and on any round that walls, floors, or doors are attacked.

D6/ D12	Gastric events (Roll d6 until a door, wall, etc. is damaged, then d12)
1-3	Peristalsis – all creatures in play moved 50' (5 squares) toward Cloaca .
4	Secretions – thick slime coats area's floor, walls, and ceiling, walk at -5' or risk falling.
5-6	Antibodies – Roll on Antibodies table
7	Movement – Rumbling! PCs in area risk falling, and roll again on this events table. If 4 is rolled again the movement just stops
8	Gas – 20' cube cloud of gas fills the area. Open flames ignite on a 1-5 in 6; closed flames (e.g. lanterns) ignite it on 1 in 6 (boom!).
9	Bleeding -- Chamber fills with d4 feet of blood (cumulative if bleeding occurs again while party in the same area.
10-11	Tumor erupts – Roll on Tumors table.
12	Nausea – Creatures in areas 14-17 moved toward Cloaca per Peristalsis above. Creatures in area 2 thrown into Teeth (area 1). Creatures in other areas moved toward area 2.

Antibodies: Some encounters can appear only a limited number of times, indicated by a number in curly brackets, e.g. {2} means only two such encounters can appear.

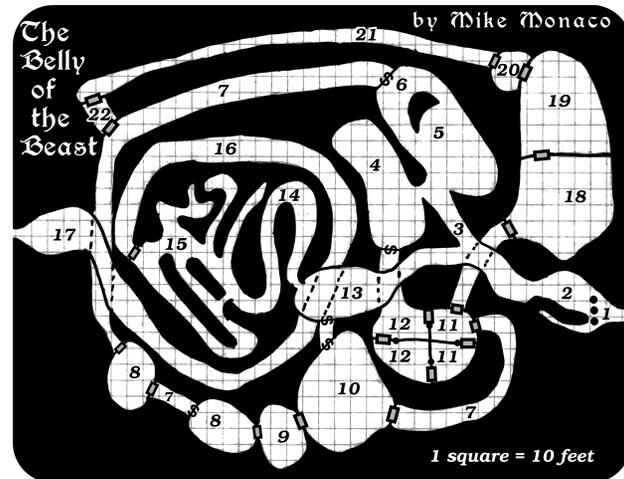
Environmental hazards: Several areas cause damage to any character in the area through acids, sparks, heat, cold, etc. The DM must keep an account of damage dealt by the environmental hazards of the Beast, as these are used to determine the Beast's hit points if the party attacks its heart or brain. Most hazardous effects can be avoided with "Saving throws" etc.

Killing the beast: One way would be to demolish the wall in "heart" areas or brain (This should take the damage equal to that which could be taken by the strongest PC present, plus the total damage dealt by environmental hazards of the beast). Or dousing the **Cartesian sparks**. Or maybe a toxic bonfire in the **lungs**. The players must come up with a solution without any hints apart from the realization that they are *inside the beast*.

Placement of "antibodies" and "tumors": These can usually erupt from anywhere. Randomly select a player character and deploy the monster or hazard d20' away from him/her. Then roll for surprise and initiative as usual.

D8	Antibodies (Wandering monsters)
1	White blood cell (Ochre jelly) {2}
2	Swarm of flying or crawling grubs
3	d6 Larvae
4	Violet Fungus grows out of floor {2}
5	Otyugh {1}
6	d6 Implings (= Homunculi, Quasits, Imps, etc.) drop from ceiling
7	D4 Lemures
8	Gray ooze {1}

D6	Tumors (Spontaneous hazards)
1	10'x10'x10' obstruction of amorphous flesh
2	5'x 10' pillar of fire
3	Jet of steam erupts from wall or floor
4	5' diameter pool of green slime forms adds 1' to diameter per round as it consumes area.
5	5'x5'x5' obstruction of rotting flesh. 2 in 6 chance of housing Rot grubs
6	Tentacles erupt from ceiling and try to grab any creature that comes within 10'.



Key

Areas marked * cause slight damage (equal to a dagger) every round to any who are crawling or prone. The beast will digest his own antibodies and tumors but the creatures keyed on the map are assumed to be immune to all the environmental hazards.

- Teeth.** Stalactites & stalagmites will snap shut 2d6 rounds after first adventurer passes them. Any within 5' when they close may be bitten (as Dragon). Re-open after 24 hours or if Beast is slain.
- Tongue.** Roll on **Gastric events** table if disturbed in any way. Will attack as an Ochre Jelly if attacked. If slain, regenerates in d6 hours.

3. Wind tunnel. Smooth, damp tunnel. Swift wind flows into and out of areas 4/5. Wind changes direction every 3 turns.

4. Lung: the roost. Porous black rock, dripping wet. 4 Robber Bats roost here. They will attempt to steal an object and fly to random area to drop it (roll d20). They will use secret doors to escape.

5. Lung: chilled. Porous black rock, coated with frost. It is very, very cold. Slight damage every round spent here after the 1st (winter clothes, etc. may delay this effect).

6. Tuberculosis. A small Lurker Above is in this area. Large treasure in a bag on the floor below it.

7. Artery. Ankle deep in blackish, foul-smelling blood. Each artery hosts d6 Larvae (or roll on **Antibodies** table)

8. Gland. Once this room has been entered, the seething mound of flesh on the floor will spawn one random monster (Level III) every 3rd round until it is destroyed.

9. Bile sack. Bilious ooze d3 feet deep. Sticky and nauseating. May sicken PCs when first encountering it. Moderate treasure concealed in bile.

10. Liver. Trapped. Large treasure.

11. Atria. Boiling hot blood, knee deep. Slight damage every round in it.

12. Ventricles. Boiling hot blood, 1' deep. Slight damage every round if prone, seated, or crawling in it.

13. Stomach*. Once any adventurers reach half-way point in, spray of acid shoots forth on all in room. Items may be dissolved and acid damage taken.

14. Intestines*. Dark tunnels reeking of sulfur. The floor is coated with acid.

15. Fistula*. Sulfurous and dark like the intestines. Roll on the **Gastric event** table when first character reaches here.

16. Bowel of reeking doom*. Save each round or be sickened. Searching carefully reveals several feces-caked skeletons with small treasure.

17. Cloaca (Ass of Hell). This is a portal to the Abyss.

18. Forebrain. A night hag is here, and does not attack initially, demanding the party give her five living larva from the rest of the dungeon. She will kill any evil characters she deems likely to produce a salable larva. Otherwise she sees no profit in fighting and will avoid the PCs. Her treasure is stashed under a pile of filthy papers and rags along a wall.

19. Subconscious. A dark room with clouds of fog shifting around, and echoes, unintelligible voices, and laughter from unseen sources. An Invisible Stalker is in here, ordered to let none leave the room.

20. Animal brain. A chamber bathed in eerie red light. Creatures in here may go berserk (as a Confusion spell, but replace babbling with angry ranting, drooling, and raging)

21. Spinal slide. A tunnel with a very smooth, slightly wet limestone floor sloping down toward 22. Anyone here must move at least 30'/round toward 22 due to the slope and slipperiness. Grappling hooks, spikes, or Climb rolls allow travel toward 20.

22. Sparks of Cartesian interaction. Electrical discharges may damage any in this room each round.

Read more about this dungeon at **Swords & Dorkery:**
<http://mikemonaco.wordpress.com/tag/belly-of-the-beast>



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