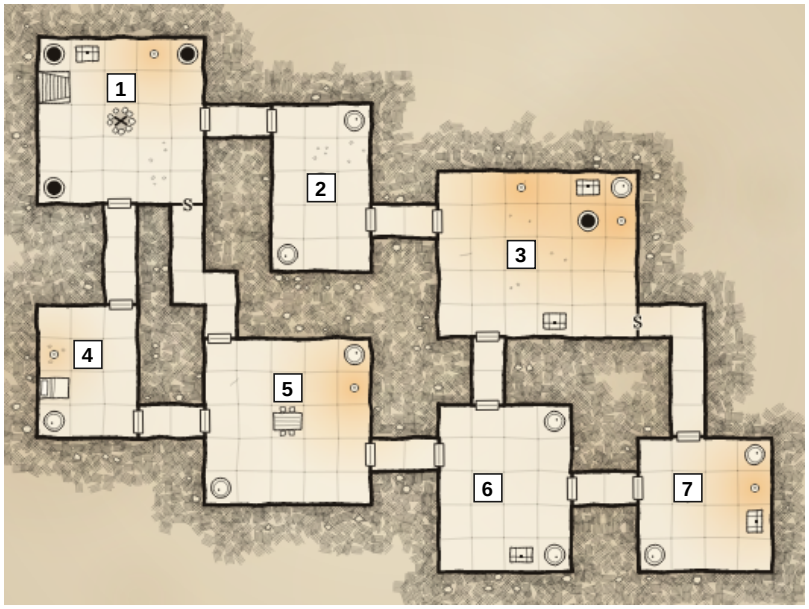
Big Rats of Gallows Keep

Cheat sheet

A goblin's growing tonic blew up under Gallows Keep. Now dog sized rats raid the town at night, and a bugbear wants the last vat.

PF2e / 4 characters, level 3 / 2 hours / Dungeon



Party enters at area 1. Climax in area 3.

PEOPLE

Fizzlegut goblin alchemist, locked up
Wants: Out of the cell and far from Skarn. Talks fast and counts on his fingers.
"Oh good. You're not a rat."

Nubb goblin boss of the guard post
Wants: To get paid and not get eaten. Sings his words when he's nervous.
"Oi! This is a private dice game."

Skarn bugbear who runs the town's dog fights
Wants: A cellar full of giant rats to sell. Speaks softly and very slowly. Never blinks.
"You're late. The rats are already fed."

SCENES AND FIGHTS

Area	What	Who	Challenge
2	**The rat nest** The swarm flows over whoever has a light. The big rats bite and pull back. Each rat...	4 Giant rat (creature -1), Rat swarm (creature 1)	Low, 60 XP
4	**Talking to Fizzlegut** He wants out first and talks second. A DC 15 Diplomacy or Intimidation check gets...	No fight	Social
5	**Dice and goblins** Nubb sings first. The warriors flip the table for cover. They run when Nubb falls.	3 Goblin warrior (creature -1), Goblin war chanter (creature 1)	Low, 50 XP
3	**Skarn and the last vat** The rats rush in first. Skarn hits whoever is off guard. At half HP he drinks a bottle,...	Bugbear thug (creature 2), 3 Giant rat (creature -1), Rat swarm (creature 1)	Moderate, 80 XP

CLUE CHAIN

Skarn is behind the giant rats, and he will bottle the last vat of tonic in the throne hall tonight. (for the ending)

area 1: GROW, batch 9. For S. Paid in full.
area 2: Property of Skarn. Do Not Open.
Fizzlegut: Skarn's bottling the last vat tonight. Then there'll be a rat in every cellar in town.
area 5: Tonight's buyers, each with a number of rats and a price. At the bottom: 'Vat ready by moonrise. S.'

The goblin lock on the throne hall doors opens to the words 'Big Cheese'. (opens area 3)

Fizzlegut: The lock word is 'Big Cheese.' I picked it. I'm not proud of it.
area 6: Lock word for the big room: BIG CHEESE. Don't tell Skarn I wrote it down.

PACING

0:00 Mayor Crane's offer, the walk to the keep, down the steps into area 1.
0:10 The rat nest in area 2. Glowing blue paw prints.
0:35 Fizzlegut in the locked cell, area 4. He trades the lock word for his freedom.
0:55 Skarn's goblins at the guard post, area 5, and the notes in area 6.
1:15 Skarn and the last vat in the throne hall, area 3.
1:50 Pour out or keep the tonic, and back to town with the news.

TREASURE

Area 5: The goblins' dice pot (8 gp in mixed coins)
Area 6: Two minor healing potions (4 gp each)
Area 3: Three bottles of growing tonic (20 gp each to the right buyer, or pour them out)
Area 7: Skarn's purse (45 gp from the buyers)

IF IT GOES SIDEWAYS

If they skip Fizzlegut, the notes in area 6 still give the lock word.
If they go in loud, Skarn hears them and waits in area 7 to come out behind them.