

Pit of the Red Wyrm (V1)

An adventure location for 4-6 characters averaging 5th level, for the Swords and Wizardry system, by Jakob McFarland.

Overview: The red dragon Nimgobar has stolen a banks strongbox and taken it to his lair, a deep hot spring in the rainforested mountains. In the ruined asylum above, insane dragon-worshipping berserkers grow the merciless insanity peppers of Quetzalemalan which begets them greater strength and insanity.

Usage in Campaign: Place in a forested mountain hex. Sometime when the players are travelling nearby, Nimgobar flies low overhead, clutching the huge gilt strongbox, and flies onward to this location.

Random Encounters (1d8):

1. Goblin Thieves (3d8) here to steal the strongbox.
2. Grimlocks (2d6) (see area 13)
3. Berserkers (2d6) (see area 13)
4. Chief Eshek with 2d6 Berserker guards (see area 13)
5. Giant Centipedes (2d6)
6. Vampire Bats (2d8) (see area 10)
7. A Rainbow Algae (see area 19)
8. Nimgobar (see area 23). Inside nearest large area.

1. The Firepit. A winding path leads up a steep valley; conifers, flowers, and ferns. Steam billows from a benighted chasm. Steps cut into the wall descend 100' to area 2. The walls are craggy, mossy, and strung with vines.

→ Every 1d6 turns, a geyser erupts, dealing 3d6 damage to anyone inside the chasm. Save or be knocked off the walls/stairs.

2. Descent and Gate. A small landing before heavy stone double doors, barred with a rotten beam. Open doors check to break through. The landing is watched by crossbowmen in area 7.

3. Entry Hall. Primitive murals of a deified red dragon. A ceremonial washing basin is filled with silty, tainted water.

→ If the **water** is touched, save or contract a disease (-4 to Strength score for 1d6 weeks or until cured). Five pearls (100 gp) can be found in the silt.

4. Atrium. Three-stories tall. Statue-columns of slaves uphold the balconies and domed ceiling. Warm cloying rainforest smell. Overgrown with pale moss. Magical **darkness** shrouds the bottom story.

→ The eastern doors are stuck and open onto an open shaft. If shouldered open, save at +2 or fall in.

→ A huge marble **statue** of a sejant winged lion (5,000gp, 5,000lbs) peaks above the darkness, perching on a **pedestal**.

→ A secret compartment in the **pedestal** contains a lit

candle of darkness (6 remaining charges) atop a gold-paged bible (777 gp).

→ The bottom floor is infested with vampire vines; entangling dessicated corpses, debris, rot and mold.

Vampire Vines (8): HD 7; AC 4 [15]; Atk 1 x thrash (1d8); Spec: entangled on hit, 1d6 dmg / round, Str check to escape; HP 34

Candle of Darkness. A shiny black candle. Consume a charge to ignite. When lit, emits a 50' diameter sphere of darkness. If moved, the candle is snuffed.

5. Patio. Bare stone couches and tables. Two marble statues of silken dancing women (500 gp, 1,000 lbs) face each other. Two thick black curtains trisect the room.

→ The southern statues base can be rotated to open the secret door. The grimlocks know of this door.

→ In the four corners, hidden by the curtains, are four ballista. Each is operated by two grimlocks, who use their echolocation to aim through the curtains. They alternative firing and loading, dealing two attacks per round in total.

Ballista (4): HD 4; AC 7 [12]; Atk 1 x bolt (2d6)

Grimlocks (8): HD 2+1; AC 5 [14]; Atk 1 x weapon (1d8); Mv 120'; Spec echolocation

6. Well of Secrets. Carved with bathing women whispering in one another's ear. After 50' it opens into area 13, 50' above the pit.

→ If a gold coin is tossed in, its clattering echo whispers a secret about this dungeon, with a cumulative 10 percent chance of a falsehood.

7. Overgrown Arcade. Moss and ferns cling to rain-scarred marble columns. The arcade passes through a cave shaggy with **lichen**. Two marble **statues** (600gp, 1,000 lbs) of adonis archers face each other.

→ Berserker crossbowmen patrol this hall, watching over area 2 and area 10. The columns grant +1 to surprise and +2 to AC.

→ A cave opening is concealed by hanging **lichen**.

→ Either **statues** base can be rotated to open to the nearby secret door.

Berserkers (8): HD 2+1; AC 7 [12], Atk weapon (1d8); Mv 120'; Spec +2 to hit and damage when berserk.

8. Bath. Large tiled **pool** of steaming spring water. Mosaics of men and woman bathing. In either corner is an enchanted stone brazier (300 lbs, two hands to carry) filling the room with a fragrant **cloud** of incense.

→ If entering the **cloud**, save or become extremely relaxed (-2 to hit and saves, for 2d6 turns).

→ A naiad named **Balnea** resides in the **pool**. She is bound to the lake in area 15, but has been forced out by Nimgobar. She will mention and exaggerate Nimgobars treasure hoard, to encourage the

characters to kill him.

Naiad: HD 1; AC 8 [11]; Atk none; spec: charm person (save at -2, at will); HP 8

9. Bridge. A bronze lattice bridge spans the pit, wet and slick from steam. If running or fighting, Dex check to avoid slipping and falling prone (or off).

- If the Geyser erupts, the water shoots straight through the perforations and throws creatures off the bridge (save at -4 to cling on).
- Any bright light here will enrage the vampire bats in area 10 to attack.

10. Bat Cave. A tall jagged cave choked with fang-like stalactites and damp **moss**. A desiccated corpse lies slumped against a central stalagmite, his skeletal hand grasps a bejeweled golden **chalice** brimming with dark liquid.

- Vampire bats hide in the craggy ceiling. Any bright light here will enrage them to attack.
- The **chalice** is worth 650 gp. The liquid within is harmless cave drippings.
- A narrow opening is concealed behind stalagmites and **moss**.

Vampire Bats (20): HD 1; AC 8 [11]; Mv 40'/180' flying; spec: suck blood (1d6 / round damage on bite)

11. Stairwell. Damp hanging chains (broken elevator). Central shaft drops 100' to area 21. Loud noises or light will attract attention from area 12.

12. Barracks. Matted sleeping mats; bubbling **cauldrons** over rude cooking fires. Insane berserks performs feats of strength, grimlocks sharpen their blades, and slave women practice their crafts.

- The **cauldrons** contain a spicy meat-stew, seasoned with **Insanity Peppers** (see area 17).

Berserkers (10): HD 2+1; AC 7 [12], Atk weapon (1d8); Mv 120'; Spec +2 to hit and damage when berserk

Grimlocks (8): HD 2+1; AC 5 [14]; Atk 1 x weapon (1d8); Mv 120'; Spec echolocation

13. Throne Hall. Ominous music (chimes and drums) fills a hall decorated with tribal fetishes and murals. Red-tinged steam billows from an open **pit**. A large golden **throne** sits on a 10' high dais. Jeering dragon cultists spectate **Chief Eshek** and a rebellious grimlock fight to the death, dancing around the edge of the pit.

- The **pit** drops 50' before opening into area 23, 50' above the lake.
- The **throne** senses of evil; anyone not of evil alignment who touches it is horribly burnt and loses 1d6 points of Constitution.
- The **secret door** can be opened by pressing a button set in the arm of the throne.

Berserkers (8): HD 2+1; AC 7 [12], Atk weapon (1d8);

Mv 120'; Spec +2 to hit and damage when berserk

Grimlocks (8): HD 2+1; AC 5 [14]; Atk 1 x weapon (1d8); Mv 120'; Spec echolocation

Chief Eshek: HD 6; AC 5 [14]; Atk 2 x greatsword (1d10); Items: emperors amulet, cloak of red dragon scales (+2 to AC, immunity to heat damage); HP 30

13B. An ornate gilt **strongbox** and a richly dressed woman (**Lucia**) sit within a **magic circle** of lead ruins in the floor. She is sweating and tinkering with the vaults ingenious locks.

- Anyone who enters (or is forced to enter) the **magic circle** is unable to leave. Dispelled as if cast by a 10 level magic-user. Destroying the lead runes destroys the circle. Anyone holding the **emperors amulet** may freely traverse, active, and deactivate the circle.
- The **strongbox** contains 5,000 gp, and 800 bank notes (100 gp each). It has three puzzle locks, each requiring a successful Open Locks check to open.
- **Chief Eshek** has captured and imprisoned **Lucia** in the **magic circle**. He is forcing her to open the **strongbox** under threat (e.g fed to Nimgobar).
- **Lucia** wants to steal the hoard for herself, so she is stalling for time to scheme and escape. If the party aids **Lucia**, she will ally with them, but rob them blind at the first good opportunity.

Lucia: Thief 4; AC 8 [11]; Atk 1 x hairpin (1d4, poisoned save vs death); items: thieves tools; HP 12

14. Subterranean River. This warm river flows for 600' through a cave before emerging and tumbling into a roadside pool surrounded by ferns and flowering **bushes**. The road continues up the valley to area 1.

- Searching the **bushes** uncovers a hidden boat and poles.
- The river leg at {14B} is watched over by the berserkers crossbowmen in area 18 through arrow loops, and will shoot at passing boats. The arrow loops grant +1 to surprise and +4 to AC.

15. Hot Spring Lake. 30' deep pool of boiling cerulean **water**; banks painted with prismatic mineral stains. A sloping ledge, carved into the craggy wall, circles down from dark caves mouths to area 16.

- Creatures touching the scalding **water** suffer 1d6 damage per round.
- A submerged passage runs 50' to area 23

16. Hot Pools. Simmering calcium pots, separated by craggy travertine terraces, like tidal **pools**. An empty **pedestal** overlooks the colorful shore.

- Counts as difficult terrain, requiring a dexterity check to traverse without slipping into a pool.
- Creatures touching the scalding **water** suffer 1d6 damage per round.
- Around the **pedestal**, four identical **statues** of a saintly maiden holding a lantern lie toppled in four

adjacent pools. Three are actually gargoyles!

- If the real **statue** is replaced to the **pedestal**, her marble lantern shines and illuminates the lake. If prayed to by a lawful character, they gain +2 to attacks and AC for 6 turns (1/day per character).

Gargoyles (3): HD 4; AC 5 [14], Atk 2 x claw, bite (1d6)

17. Hothouse. Steamy, wet-earth smell. Large frond plants obscure vision. Small red peppers glisten with sweat and an enticing aroma. **1:2** a pepper is an **insanity pepper**. **1:2** slaves are here harvesting peppers.

- The **alcove** contains a mosaic of a saintly maiden holding a shining lantern and watering can. The lantern is a button which opens the secret door.

Quetzalemalan Insanity Peppers. On consumption, hallucinate vividly, +2 to hit and damage, and -2 to AC, for 2d6 turns. Also suffer 2d6 damage if eaten raw.

18. Secret Barracks. Berserkers sit at a table playing insanity pepper roulette for a diamond (1000 gp).

- Bowls of six identical red peppers are set before each; five are mere bell peppers while the sixth is an **insanity pepper** (see area 17). PCs are welcome to join the game.

Berserkers (6): HD 2+1; AC 7 [12], Atk weapon (1d8); Mv 120'; Spec +2 to hit and damage when berserk.

19. Pump Room. Choked with thrumming old pipes. A large machine with a niche and four levers, which fill and stopped a bottle with a substance. If there is no bottle, the substance spills into the room.

- **Lever 1:** Insert empty bottle into the niche (10 left)
- **Lever 2:** Fills bottle with compressed air.
- **Lever 3:** Fills bottle with pyrophoric gas (3d6 damage fireball when broken/released)
- **Lever 4:** Fills bottle with a rainbow algae.
- The **alcove** contains a mosaic of a saintly maiden holding a shining lantern and wrench. The lantern is a button which opens the secret door.

Rainbow Algae: HD 6; AC 8 [11]; Atk acidic strike (3d4); Mv 30'; Spec lightning divides into two; HP 30

20. Algae Tanks. Damp seaweed smell. Watery-green light shines through the crystal doors of algae tanks.

- In the central tank, hazily can be seen a slimy skeleton grasping an untarnished glinting scimitar (a **Scimitar of Speed**). If opened, water floods the room to 2', counting as difficult terrain, and the algae congeals around the skeleton and animates as a **shambling mound**.
- A rusty metal drain drops 20' to area 22. It is conceal under a tank and is stuck (open doors check).

Shambling Mound: HD 6; AC 3 [16]; Atk 2 x tendrils 2d8; Spec: enfold and suffocate victim 2d4, immune to fire; HP 34

Scimitar of Speed: +2 longsword, +1 attacks per round.

21. Slimy Cave. Musty air, algae coated surfaces, dripping stalactites, around a brackish **pool**. Rotten debris of fallen elevator lie under the shaft to area 11.

- A lost adventurer (**Coral**) huddles at the bottom of the **pool**. She is trapped in the pool because she is wearing a cursed ring of air as water.
- Silt on the **pool** floor conceals a stone trapdoor which opens to the eastern passage in area 22.

Coral: Fighter 4; AC: 6 [13]; Atk 1 x sword 1d8; MV 90'; items: cursed ring of air as water; HP 23

(Cursed) Ring of Air as Water: A gold ring resembling a fish biting its tail. When worn, air becomes like water to the wearer and vice versa. They can swim through the air, but not water, and they can breath underwater, but not in air. While **cursed**, it can not be removed.

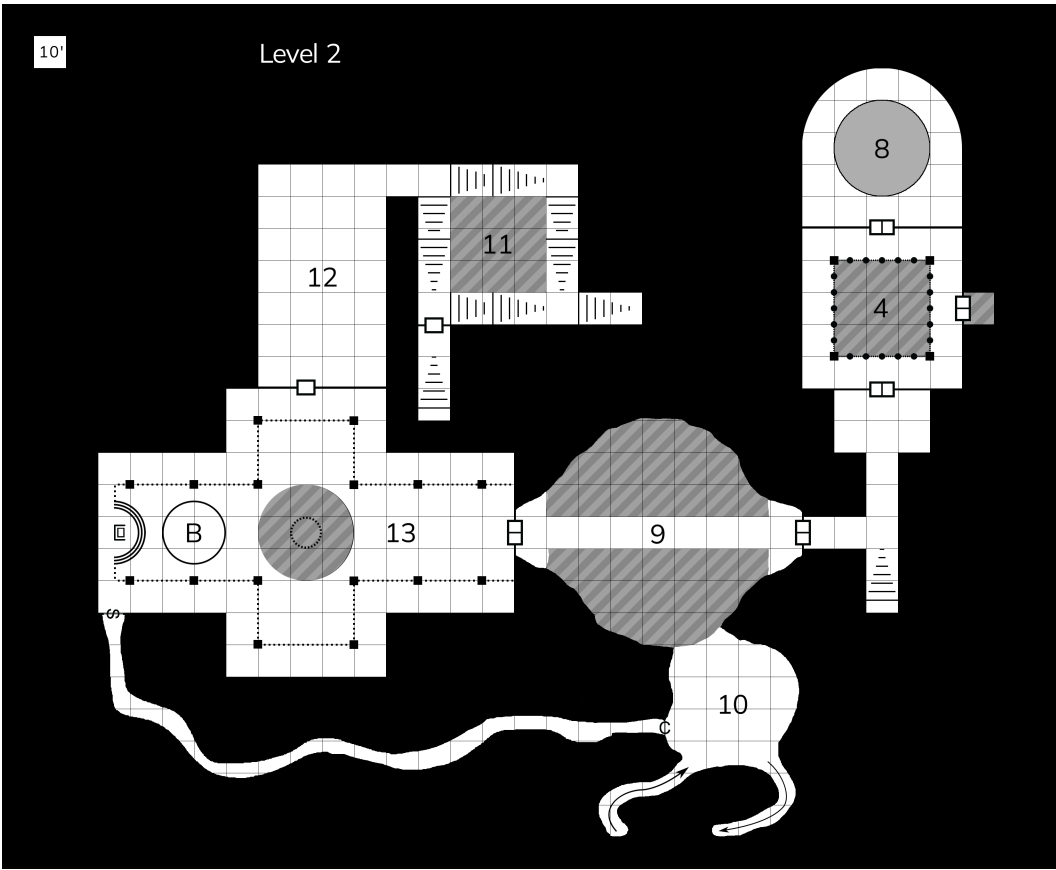
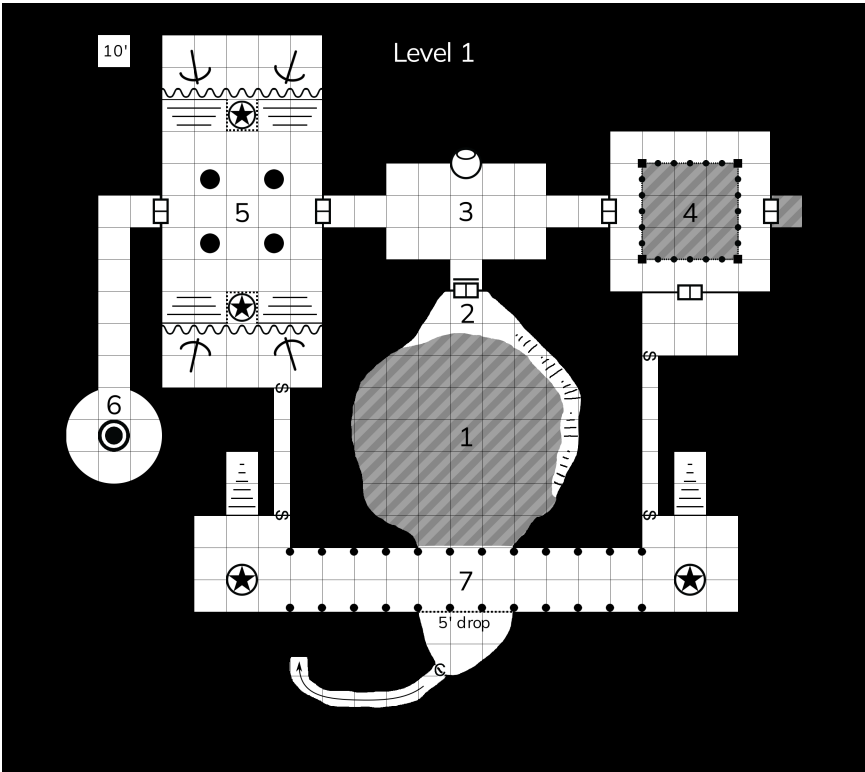
22. Tunnels and Cove. Warm, jagged-walled **tunnels** lead to a cove with a black pebble beach.

- Creatures touching the scalding **water** suffer 1d6 damage per round.
- Large creature can not fit in the tunnels. Humans wearing bulky armor must save or become stuck.
- The eastern tunnel is flooded and runs for 50'.
- The northern tunnel descends to an adventure location of the GMs choice.

23. Nimgobars Lair. Choking, blinding sulfurous **steam** fills the air. A **hoard** of gold, gems, and treasures glitter on the bottom of the black seething lake. **Nimgobar** slumbers, like a cat in the sun, upon a hot basalt-column island.

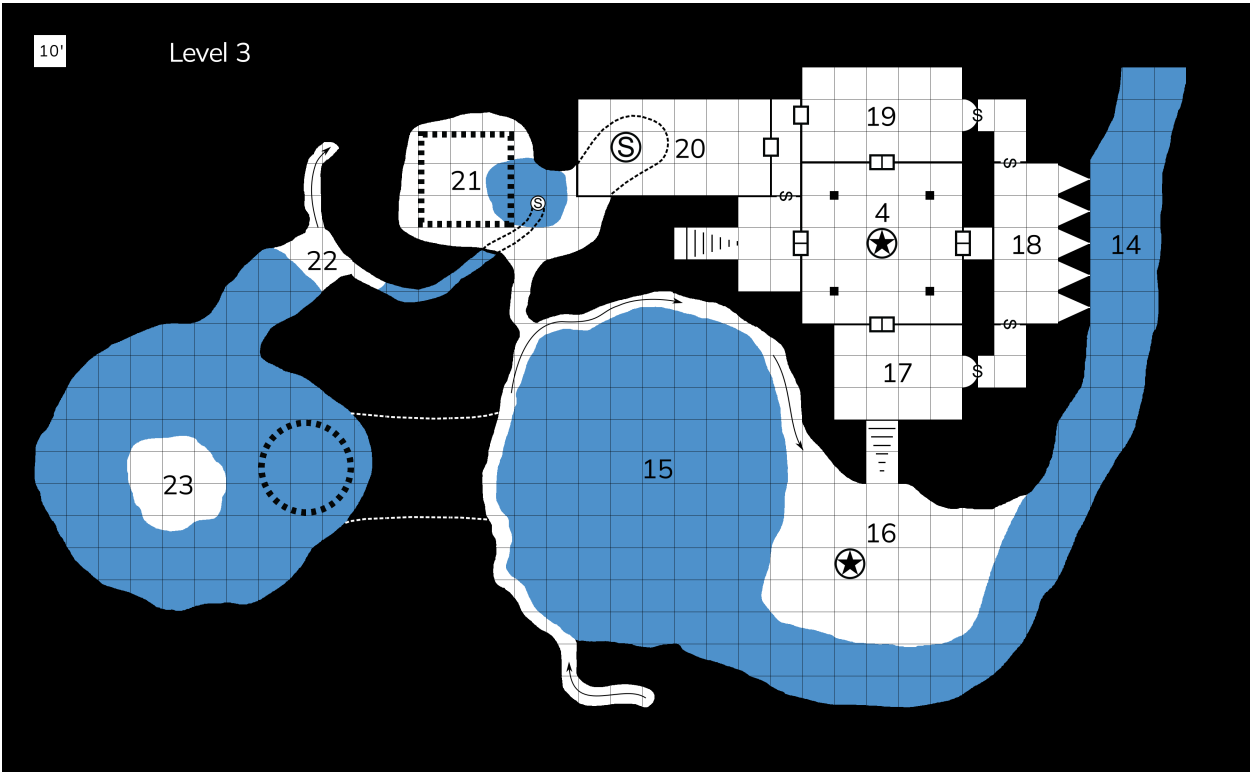
- Creatures touching the scalding **water** suffer 1d6 damage per round.
- The thick **steam** obscures vision beyond 20'.
- For each **loud sound**, Nimgobar stirs in his sleep, with a cumulative 10 percent chance of waking.
- **Hoard:** 3,000gp; 10 x gems (100gp), exquisite marble statue of a philosopher (2,000gp, 1,000lbs), a sapphire (2,000gp); a diamond (4,200gp), a copper crook (Wand of Lightning Bolts, 10 charges), a gold coin necklace (as Luckstone), and a mirror-polished bronze shield +2 (10% spell turning).
- **Nimgobar** is immune to heat damage. He will use the steam and boiling water to hide and outflank the characters.

Nimgobar: HD 9; AC 2 [17]; Atk 2 x claws (1d8), bite (3d10); Mv 90'/240' flying; HP 36; Spec: immune to heat, breath fire (3/day, 90' cone, 36 damage, save for half)



10'

Level 3



1 sq.
= 100'

Overland Map

