

# DCC: World of Iriolis

## Our Group

Player	Character	Description	Class
Bruce	Gallfred Weasel	Guild Beggar	Thief
Chris	Old Man Fish	Locksmith	Ranger
Ernest	Hemp	Weaver	Warrior
Matt	Mordecai	Gravedigger	Wizard
Patrick	Podrick	Squire	Warrior
Tim	Ned Wimbley	Beekeeper	Wizard

*Chris* is bemoaning the loss of various fragile items due to the incapacity of workers to understand how to pile light things on top of heavy things, as opposed to the other way around. Somehow, this story ends in *Priscilla* crawling around an outlet mall long after dark, with all the lights out, and some kind of murderous vagrant prowling the area. Apparently, the Round Rock outlet mall is a lonely, scary place on a Friday evening. *Tim* is enraptured by the story – he’s always dreamed of the opportunity to be stalked in an outlet mall. In part, because *April* has the Rona. Also, he has gnats. Lots and lots of gnats. *Patrick* is grateful that his problems are nothing like this. *Bruce* is silent, but speculates that this is another piece of evidence that someone in *Tim*’s household might just be Baalzebub, the Lord of Flies. Again, *Patrick* is glad that he doesn’t have these problems.

*Paul*’s life is also full of troubles, but they all have to do with pu’er tea and he keeps them silent. He is much less silent about the lore and secrets held within the new *Marvels* movie. Apparently, if you see the movie you understand a lot more about *Secret Invasion*. Not enough to make *Secret Invasion* actually into a good entertainment experience, but enough to make it mostly understandable.

*Matt* turns out to have other commitments. And *Ernest* is off living his exciting corporate life.

## Knights of Lushnia

The Knights of Lushnia offer to allow the characters to camp with them, and to share food. No fools they, the characters are happy to take advantage of the Knights’ camp-making skills. *Podrick* studies their techniques carefully, all the while speculating upon his chance of stealing their armor. *Gallfred Weasel* is pleased that the Lawful character is starting to think Chaotic thoughts. He is displeased by the discovery that the Knights have apparently taken vows of poverty. Worthless knights.

Most of the characters rest through the night because they have burned characteristic points for various purposes (luck, spellburn, poison, poor life choices) and value a chance to get some of them back. *Old Man Fish* rests because he’s old and doesn’t get many chances to just sit down. He also explains to *Podrick* what a true knight’s campmaking technique is:

1. See a village
2. Raid the village

3. Sleep in villager's homes
4. Eat village's food
5. Complain

This does give the characters a chance to meet and chat with some of the Knights of Lushnia:

- **Sir Alaric Ironheart:** Shaved head, long beard, and brightly polished armor with the sign of the water buffalo.
- **Lady Seraphina Swiftblade:** Long blond hair and flexible armor to allow her to fight in the swift, furious style she is accustomed to.
- **Sir Percival Stormcaller:** A long, jagged scar across his right cheek, and armor adorned with thunderbolt devices.

Podrick strikes up a conversation with *Sir Percival Stormcaller*, who tells him that there is reported to be a huge tentacled beast at the bottom of the Pit. In generations past, it would rise up and consume everything around, scraping the land to the ground. A powerful warrior-priest organized sacrifices of a dozen virgins every decade. But ten years ago, the people rose up and refused the sacrifice. The priest's order was dishonored and disbanded. Now, gray-robed people come up from the Pit, herding tentacles before them, and all the people around fear for their safety. Or so he has heard.

Sir Percival speculates that the people of the Pit might be the descendants of the original warrior-priest

Gallfred Weasel knows that the People of the Pit once had a temple in the city of Sewich. The *Carbuncle Queen* hated them. When they were driven from the city, her crown vanished and many of her trusted allies abandoned her. The situation for the Beggars' Guild became much less secure, and that was one of the reasons why Gallfred traveled to Weebrook. He tells the others that it is important to stamp out all the tentacled cultists.

Podrick notes, "I didn't realize you were such a zealot!"

"You don't need to be a zealot to stamp out a scorpion when you find it. There is no sense in trying to live alongside scorpions you find in your bedroll."

Podrick is becoming confused, as he often does when Gallfred speaks. Ned Wimbley suspects that *Mordecai* might be slipping scorpions into Gallfred's bedroll.

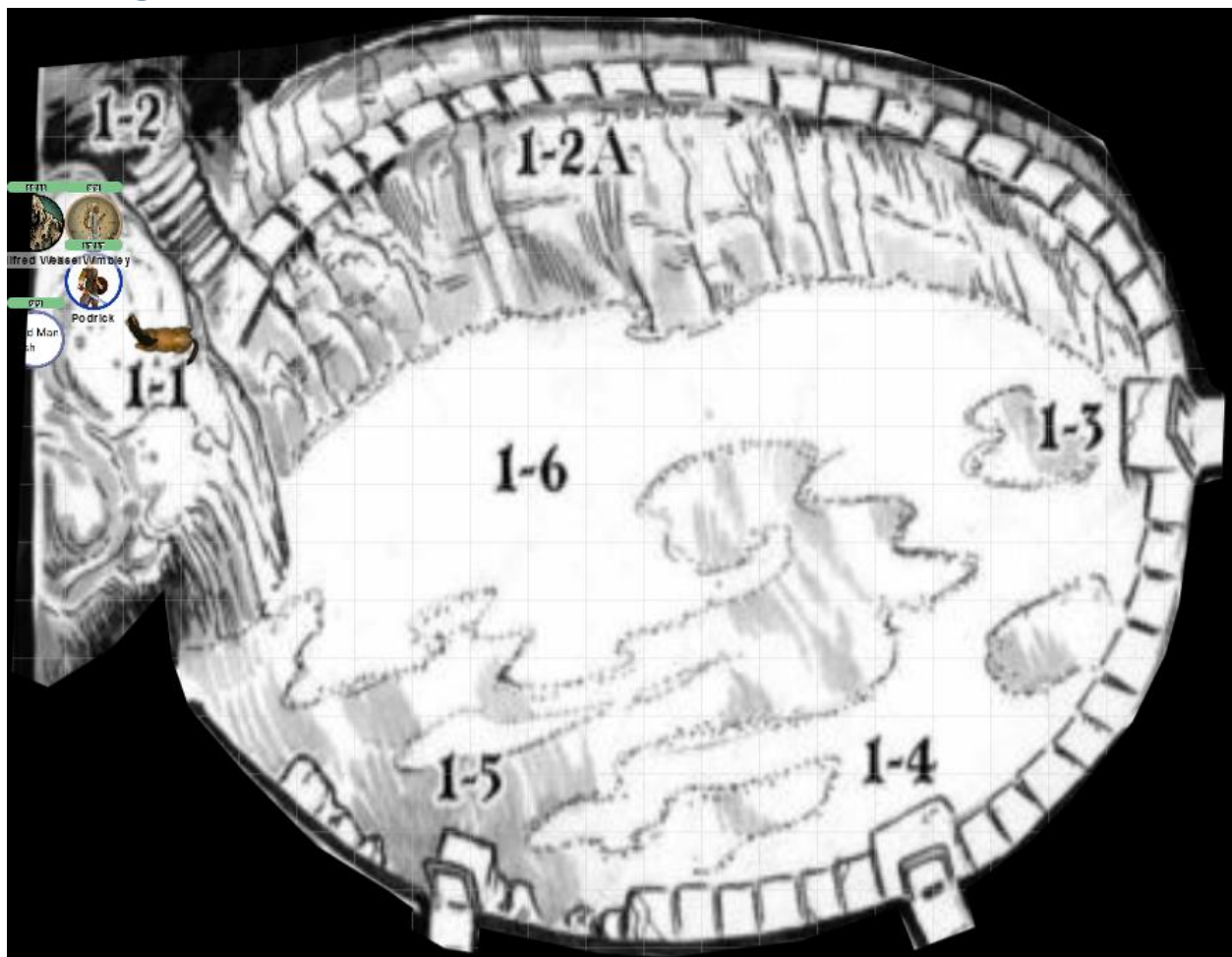
*Old Man Fish* talks to *Lady Seraphina Swiftblade*, who is interested in finding ancient artifacts that are lying around in dark, shadowed places that have been lost to civilized folks. She tells him of some rumors the Knights are exploring. She hopes that if Stormcaller's stories are not complete nonsense then the Pit might contain ancient artifacts that once belonged to the old warrior priests.

Podrick notes that when Lady Seraphina mentions artifacts, *Sir Alaric Ironheart* gives her a bit of a look, suggesting that she shouldn't say too much to outsiders. Sir Alaric is much more open to the fact that Podrick seems interested in joining the Order. Sir Alaric offers that he should stop by the Chapter House in Wymoor.

Ned Wimbley suggests to the Knights that they might find some ancient books, and though they might be inclined to destroy those books because they contain evil they should really deliver them over to Ned because he has been specifically trained on how to properly dispose of such things. The Knights do not immediately recognize just how untrustworthy Ned is – in part because he is able to contrast himself against Mordecai, who has a visibly glowing skeletal eye.

Later that night, Old Man Fish asks Sir Percival about what kind of artifacts the Knights seek. Percival chooses to confide in him, mentioning that the Knights are particularly seeking the *Helm of Chistu*, which needs to be guarded by the Knights of Lushnia. He knows very little about it, for example nothing about the powers it is supposed to have. He just knows that it needs to be held in the Knights' treasury.

## The Edge of the Pit



The next morning, the characters find a giant pit at least 100 feet across. A stinking gray mist rises from the depths. The bluff above includes an iron pole with a dozen lengths of chain hanging from it. The ground below is stained a rusty red and littered with broken lengths of chain. A staircase leads to a pathway down that skirts the edge of the pit.

Podrick looks down into the pit and tells the others, “I think there’s something down there, hidden in the mist.” The others see very little beyond some indistinct figures moving around. The fog conceals almost everything.

The characters move down the steps as carefully as they can. The mist smells foul and horrible, and the steps themselves are slick and treacherous. Everyone is very careful, because they cannot tell how deep the pit is. Ned tries to explain that everyone should tie on to a single rope because he trusts that his *feather fall* amulet will save them all, but nobody trusts him enough to actually do this.

## The Cultists Emerge

Less than a quarter-turn of the way around the Pit three gray-robed men wielding awful sickles emerge from the mist. Their faces are blank and featureless, and the material of their robes undulates in awful manner. They emit a ululating cry that shivers the barriers of reality and chills the characters’ souls.

From the back of his trusty horse (and animal companion) *Matilda*, Old Man Fish fires upon the cultists with his long bow. He kills one. The cultist’s body bursts asunder and a pulpy red tentacled mass emerges. The mass slithers up to Podrick, who cuts it apart and kicks the messy remains off the walkway. Gallfred Weasel hits the second cultist with a sling stone, which annoys the cultist. The two surviving cultists continue ululating, but they don’t continue for long – Ned Wimbley kills one with a *swarm of bees* and Old Man Fish shoots the last, leaving only a single threatening mass of tentacles. Which Podrick cuts down.

## The Basilisk Cave

The characters continue down to a stone landing and a doorway. The door is blocked by a solid stone door decorated with geometric patterns of odd circles and ovals. Podrick calls out for Gallfred to read the runes. Gallfred explains, “These runes predate humanity and are utterly untranslatable.” He is pretty confident that there are no traps around, though.

Both Ned and Old Man Fish realize that there is *another* opening on the side of the pit, beneath the doorway – perhaps 15’ below the level of the stairway. And it is an open, empty cave mouth with no threatening stone door. Ned provides the rope and Gallfred climbs down. He sees a humid, low-ceilinged cave. Stalactites hang from the ceiling, meeting the floor in many places. He lights a torch. The flickering light creates the illusion of movement through the cave. There is a constant dripping noise.

Gallfred secures his torch in a cleft in one of the pillars, then sneaks ahead to the limits of the torchlight. In the chamber ahead, he sees a pair of four-legged mineral-horned *mountain basilisks*. And on reflection, he realizes that some of the stone pillars are actually petrified humans. Each of the monsters is about the size of a horse. He actually knows that most basilisks are six-legged and only paralyze their victims. These are mountain basilisks – their gaze is able to slowly petrify their victims. And finally, their horns are made of solid gold.

Greed wins out over good sense. Gallfred tries to kill one from the darkness. He eviscerates the creature’s kidneys, but doesn’t manage to kill it in one blow. It takes him two hits. And five points of

Luck. Then he silently extracts the creature's golden horn. The others haul him back up again, where he tells the others that he killed one of the basilisks, but left the other one alive. He tells them everything he knows about mountain basilisks, except about the golden horns.

The characters explore a variety of doomed plans, including one that would have had Gallfred attempting to lasso a basilisk, before deciding to infiltrate the cave and kill the basilisk straight up. Podrick leads the way with his sword, delivering a massive chop. The others are able to see it clearly in the torchlight – a giant lizard that hisses and rages, with a golden horn. And attempts to petrify Gallfred Weasel. Against all expectations, Gallfred is able to avert his gaze before it draws him in. It consoles itself by biting and savaging Podrick's left arm.

Ned Wimbley recognizes that things are not going well, so he provides Podrick with a *magic shield* (+4 AC for 9 rounds, plus pools of slime everywhere).

Fortified by magic and ignorant of just how much pain he should be in, Podrick drives his blade into the creature's eye and through its brain. It perishes. Ned loudly proclaims, "Look at all the slime it pooped out! Basilisks are gross!"

Gallfred cuts off the second basilisk's horn and gives it to the others. Each horn is worth 100 gp, it turns out.

While Old Man Fish is using *lay on hands* to heal Podrick's arm, Ned Wimbley makes a quick deal with Gallfred Weasel – the two of them throw the other basilisk's body over the edge of the pit. In exchange, Gallfred agrees to share the proceeds from the second basilisk horn with Ned.

Old Man Fish notes that the mountain basilisk has very tough hide, maybe good for making armor. Unfortunately, he isn't able to skin the creature with the tools he has at hand.

## Tentacle Pit Time

Podrick (his arm feeling much better) reports that the cavern keeps on going. The others follow him into the darkness.

The characters find a chamber about fifty feet across with a deep hole in the center. A giant tentacle loops around the hole, extending down into the darkness. Someone has rigged up a rope ladder along one side of it. It moves towards the characters, as if it can sense their approach, but isn't able to move very far from the pit.

Old Man Fish grabs hold of the tentacle and finds that he can climb down the tentacle using the ladder. The others follow with some reluctance. Ned Wimbley notes, "At least this is a load-bearing tentacle."

### Ghosts Almost Suffocate Everyone

The group climbs down for about ten minutes, until they find a side chamber. They follow Old Man Fish into the chamber. It is a rough-hewn cave lined with seven wooden caskets, each marked with the eight-armed sign of Chaos. Bleached bones are visible through the holes in the sides of the moldering

caskets. Podrick moves forward to inspect the caskets for signs of gold or trinkets. He can tell that some of the dead were buried with grave goods. Old Man Fish and Ned Wimbley move up as well.

And that's when the ghosts emerge from the walls, silent spectral warriors in fine armor and bright swords. They start suffocating the group. They turn out to be really good at this.

Gallfred Weasel attempts to flee, cutting down a ghost in the process. Then he hides, because he's almost completely suffocated. Podrick fights bravely, cutting down another one with little concern for his own fate. Ned drops to almost no STA as he fires sling stone after sling stone to no real effect. He babbles incoherently. Old Man Fish kills another and finds that he can now breathe freely. And Ned Wimbley manages to dispatch the last (after Podrick does most of the work).

The characters loot the crypt. After all, they've suffered enough. They find:

- A necklace made of gold chain holding a star-shaped medallion
- A platinum ring inset with a band of astrological signs
- Shadeslayer: A matte-black short sword that radiates a faint darkness— even when placed under direct sunlight, it seems to lie in shadow.

Gallfred Weasel picks up the sword. He feels that the sword likes him. He likes it too. He tells everyone else this. It want him to punish interlopers, especially goblinoids. Gallfred has no problems with this at all. He tells the others what it wants, and notes that he objects to nothing it seems to want.

Old Man Fish is concerned, "Well, that's not entirely reassuring."

## The Mighty Wheel

The characters continue down the tentacle for another ten minutes, into a rocky cave. To the west is a grinding noise caused by a huge grindstone driven by a team of exhausted-looking peasants. The peasants are chained to the timbers, and it looks like they both sleep and eat in the chamber.

Gallfred Weasel and Old Man Fish examine what the wheel is grinding. It appears that the grist is dried tentacle detritus – suckers, bits and pieces.

Podrick tells them, "Stop the wheel!"

One of the peasants notes that if they do that, then "they" will come to investigate from the North. The characters understand that, and set up an ambush.

### Shadeslayer

+2 short sword with the following properties:

- Int 3 (empathy)
- AL: Chaotic
- **Banes:** goblinoids (unerring throw to 60' range)
- **Special Purpose:** Punish interlopers and those who interfere
- **Special Purpose Power:** Crippler (always roll crits as warrior of one level higher)

A couple of gray-robed cultists show up first. They do not last long, though one of them does last long enough to call out an alert to his friends.

Ned Wimbley casts *enlarge* upon Podrick. The first time, Podrick just becomes slightly more imposing. The second time, he grows to 9' tall and becomes strikingly more dangerous.

Podrick sticks his head out to check the situation. He calls back, "There are a lot more cultists on the way. And some of them are wearing different-colored robes!"

Podrick doesn't say it directly, but he is concerned that the new crimson- and yellow-robed cultists might be more dangerous. He is right: the crimson-robed cultists start a chant

to unleash the giant tentacle as a weapon. And the yellow-robed leader casts *arms of calymbdis*, summoning up a giant shadowy tentacle that lashes out to inflict STR damage.

The gray-robe cultists rush forward and attack Podrick, knocking him off his feet. Things start to go badly, as Old Man Fish, Ned Wimbley, and Gallfred Weasel all fail to hit anything of consequence with their arrows. Then one of them takes Podrick down! Another inflicts a deep wound upon Gallfred Weasel.





Old Man Fish steps in and uses *lay on hands* to bring Podrick back around, albeit with -1 STA and an impressive scar.

Then the red-robed cultists finally manage to get a response from their tentacle patron. A tentacle of the Pit Beast emerges from the other room. Gallfred Weasel avoids its grasp and hits it, forcing it to *recoil*.

Podrick stands up and stabs the last gray-robed cultist clean through, killing both the cultist and the tentacle mass at the same time. Old Man Fish manages to shoot the yellow-robed cultist, dispelling the *arm of calymbdis*. A moment later, nine feet of Podrick looms over the red-robed cultists, cutting one badly. Then Ned kills him with a sling stone. And, as predicted, the red-robe explodes into a tentacle mass, which Podrick cleans up. Along with the other red-robed cultist.

Unwilling to give up, the yellow-robed cultist summons yet another *arm of calymbdis* and drains more STR from Ned. Then he takes a sling stone from Gallfred and again, his spell vanishes. He screams in frustration and charges Podrick with a dagger. And stabs him clean through! Podrick collapses again! And Old Man Fish saves him again!

The yellow-robed cultist refuses to die, in spite of a series of hits from Ned Wimbley's sling. He stabs Gallfred Weasel, who collapses for a moment – until Old Man Fish saves him as well, while Ned Wimbley deals with the tentacle mass.

The characters all agree that now is the time to get out of the place, at least for the moment. They free the eight peasants and prepare to leave. But first, they find:

- An egg-shaped talisman of gold on a leather thong (on the yellow-robed cultist)
- Two egg-shaped talismans of bronze on leather thongs (on the crimson-robed cultists)
- 2 gp worth of transformed chain links (courtesy of Ned Wimbley's magical side effects)

The peasants are very happy that the characters are not attempting to explore the dungeon further, and are rescuing them instead. The peasants (and a magically-enlarged Podrick) are very handy, because Ned Wimbley is no longer strong enough to climb a ladder: he's been wasted down to STR 2.

The peasants are able to describe that there are a lot of gray-robed cultists who have only vestigial tentacles. The middle-ranked crimson-robed cultists have had their arms changed into tentacles. There aren't many high-ranked yellow-robed cultists, and they are even more tentacular. The single blue-robed cultist is in charge of the whole operation, and is the one wearing the Crown of the Carbuncle Queen. Also, they are able to spawn *toens*, who can be hatched into miniature (10') versions of the Pit Beast.

## The End of the Session

The characters end the session out at the dungeon entrance, just a lot more damaged than they were before. Each character gains 10 XP (for a total of 35 XP for those characters who have been here for all



sessions). Gallfred Weasel gains +1 XP for doing an infiltration and assassination. And everyone gains one Luck point for rescuing the peasants.