

# 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

*Bruce* calls in to hear *Tim* complaining about spending hundreds of dollars a month on something that doesn't actually pay for anything when you need it. He immediately guesses, "We're talking about health insurance?"

Yes, yes we are.

*Chris* tries to change the mood by describing relatives of his who went to Disney just before Thanksgiving told lots of stories about it over the holiday meal. He regrets that his relatives do not have the same polished storytelling style as stand-up comedians who retell and workshop the same tale hundreds or thousands of times.

*Patrick* and *Paul* recognize that they can only lose by participating in this conversation.

*Matt* is out for the week. He is off on a trip! He's only flying back today!

*Ernest* arrives by the time *Tim* and *Bruce* find themselves on the wrong side of a generational argument with *Paul* and *Patrick* on the subject of the *Twilight 2000* RPG. *Paul* in particular is confused by the fact that the novel *Twilight* was only published in 2005 – so the game must be some kind of prequel? He says all this while completely ignoring the way *Bruce* and *Tim* are twitching in agony.

## Everyone Is Pretty Messed-Up

The characters are all outside of the Pit and grateful for their own survival. They think back upon their experiences: *Ned Wimbley* is barely able to move because he is wasted down to STR 2, *Podrick* died twice and was magically restored (and thus lost 2 Stamina permanently), *Gallfred Weasel* died and was restored only once (so, only 1 Stamina lost), and while *Old Man Fish* missed everything he shot at with his bow he was absolutely on target with the magical healing.

Also, *Hemp* tells the others that he got a really nasty hangnail while he was watching guard. It was super painful. He continues to tell them about this experience several times, utterly failing to read the room.

But on the plus side, the characters managed to rescue eight peasants from servitude, and the peasants live locally and are willing to plead the characters' case at their home village.

And in terms of timing, the characters have another eight days before the *Sunken Tower* sinks again for another ten years.

The group faces a choice: camp in the mountains, or take more time to get back to the village. Gallfred Weasel suggests, "We should choose the mountains – we have a ranger with us who has proven to be useless at archery, but who is awesome at keeping us alive."

Old Man Fish defends himself, "It's not me, it's these damn arrows! I need to go on a quest to find some good arrows."

## Gorilla-Bear Misadventure

On the way to a camping location, Hemp asks the villagers if any of them were implanted with anything during their time in the Pit. The villagers insist that they have not been: they were forced to work a millstone that was grinding up tentacle parts that the cultists used to make a kind of potion. But none of them drank it.

Ned Wimbley checks the villagers for moustaches. He finds one, on the face of a guy named *Myrgruud*. He is convinced that you cannot trust anyone with a moustache, so if anyone is infected with tentacles it's him.



Contrary to his reputation, Old Man Fish's talents as a wilderness guide fail the characters. He fails to notice the signs of a gorilla-bear in the area, much to Hemp the Weaver's surprise. It grabs him in a bear hug, an experience that he survives. He is so surprised that he frees himself from its grasp and chops it clean dead in a single amazing slash. Hemp has clearly learned the intricacies of the slaver axe very well.

Hemp's follow up is to pull out a flensing knife and skin the creature. He hopes that someday he will have a gorilla-bear hide, even though he's more a weaver than a furrier. Not being an idiot, he enlists Old Man Fish's help, but even with the two of them working on the

**Gorilla Bear:** Init +1; Atk bite +4 melee (1d8) or claw +6 melee (1d6); AC 16; HD 4d8; MV 30' or climb 20'; Act 2d20; SP Keen senses, bearhug; SV Fort +6, Ref +2, Will +8; AL N.

These aggressive monsters have the head, body and legs of a gorilla with the sharp teeth and powerful arms of a bear. They have excellent hearing, smell, and eyesight, making them hard to sneak up on or surprise. If both claws hit a single target, the victim is pulled into a bearhug that does an additional 2d6 damage.

Once a victim is caught in a bearhug, the gorilla bear can use one Action Die to automatically do 2d6 damage while attempting to bite the same target at a +4 bonus to hit. A victim can escape with a successful Mighty Deed of 4+, or an opposed Strength check vs. +4.

project they don't manage to produce a particularly good pelt.

Ned Wimbley takes a talisman from the creature's claws so he can summon gorilla-bears in the future. And then he rests, because he is able to do little else. He regains 1 STR.

Old Man Fish locates the gorilla-bear's cave and makes a very respectable camp there. He knows that because the whole place is full of gorilla-bear scent it is very unlikely that anything else will come around to explore. Ned Wimbley explores the place for cocaine and is disappointed to find nothing. Gallfred Weasel notes that as a Guild Beggar he has a well-developed talent for the preparation of variety meats. He cooks up dinner from gorilla-bear steaks and nobody goes hungry.

While the rest of the group bickers over who needs to sleep more, Old Man Fish volunteers to stand watch because he's just that kind of stand-up guy. Late at night, he sees a chimera performing a strange ritual upon a distant outcropping of rock. He slips back into the cave unseen, allowing it to continue tracing odd designs into the ground.

When Ned Wimbley finally wakes, Old Man Fish tells him what he saw. Ned demands to see the site of the ritual. Old Man Fish obliges. Ned finds evidence that the beast was performing some kind of arcane ritual. Ned had not previously heard anything to suggest that such creatures were capable of performing magic. He examines the signs and concludes that the chimera had been engaging in a ritual to the demon lord *Thazzamun*. Ned takes careful note, because the day might come that he wishes to find his own arcane patron and knowing how to contact a demon lord might be useful.

For later – Thazzamun is a demon lord who loves to watch powerful beings destroy each other. He has been known to go to great lengths to instigate conflicts among the powerful. He is *very* chaotic.

## The Swamp Hydra Visits the Mountains

The path from the mountains down to the village of Cartwell is quite dangerous. The characters are struck by a landslide that sweeps Gallfred Weasel down the slope. A moment later, they find the cause of the landslide: a 5-headed hydra.

The creature stares down at Ned, "Are you a wizard?"

"Ye... Yes?"

"My powers are unstable. I will die unless healed of this magic."

"I can try..."

Podrick prods Ned forward, "Yeah, give it a shot." Hemp hands him a bottle of A-1 Sauce, just in case.

Ned goes up the slope. He knows that hydras normally heal very swiftly – but this one is not, it has a wound that remains open. He concludes that the hydra is under a curse, and tells the hydra so. He offers, "I could try to break the curse, but that would be quite a quest to accomplish."

"I have traveled far from my swampy home in the Bloodfen Swamp in search of a cure. I was headed to Cartwell, because I have heard that there are fire-priests of Aphiel there."

Ned asks, "Hypothetically, if you get to the village and they cannot help, what would you do?"

The hydra is very forthright, "I am at my wit's end. If they cannot help, I would have to destroy them."

Ned is uncommonly understanding for a chaotic wizard, "I'm going to make it a condition of my assistance that you not destroy the village. Are you familiar with Thazzamun? There is a local chimera devoted to him. Now, Thazzamun loves conflict so you might need to fight the chimera to get the demon lord's help. Or I could go into the village and see what they can do."

"That is agreeable. But beware, I shall track you."

Ned returns to the group and explains that while he has agreed to help the hydra, it is also weakened and cannot regenerate – so if the group wanted to kill a hydra now is the time.

Ned returns to the hydra to ask about the nature of the curse, and whether the hydra knows about the lich rumored to lie in the swamp. The hydra explains that the curse probably came from a witch. He ate her, of course, but that didn't break the curse. And he hadn't previously heard about a lich in the Bloodfen, but he isn't too pleased about the thought of bringing it back to active unlife.

## A Bright Welcome to Cartwell, Heretofore the Nameless Town

The fire-priest *Loptir* and the other villagers of Cartwell give the characters a hero's welcome. Everyone is first amazed that the characters returned alive from the Pit, and even more amazed (and pleased) that they also returned with some of the village folk who had been taken by slavers.

The priests of Aphiel tell the characters that the cave on the other side of the Great Rift is said to be the resting place of the *blazefire bow*, a legendary bow crafted from the wood of enchanted fire-bearing trees, its arrows burst into flames upon release. Arrows shot from this bow leave trails of fire in their wake, striking enemies with searing heat and causing chaos on the battlefield. Of course, getting to the other side of the chasm is a heroic task in and of itself, even before you venture into the cave in search of the resting place of the bow.

### Aphiel, God of Victory

**Domains:** War, Victory, Fire

In the realm of chaos and battle, amidst the fiery turmoil of conflict, reigns Aphiel, the God of Victory. Known for his unyielding passion for war and mastery over flames, Aphiel stands as a formidable deity in the pantheon.

With a blazing aura that embodies the fervor of battle, he empowers warriors with the strength and tenacity to triumph over their foes. The clashing of swords and the roar of flames form the backdrop to his divine presence, as he inspires and fuels the desire for conquest. Though an embodiment of chaos, Aphiel's followers seek to harness the chaotic energies of war to achieve triumph

Over a century ago, a warrior called the *Feast-Lord of Crows* fought on behalf of Aphiel. He ravaged the local kingdoms and he bore the *blazefire bow*. When he died, the bow was interred in his tomb – and the location of the tomb was hidden by the priests of law for generations.

For the rest of the day, Old Man Fish goes out to the river and has a very successful day of fishing. He has the fish smoked and salted for later use. The people of Cartwell are more than willing to help out. Hemp also “goes fishing”, but he uses this as an excuse to just sit in the sun by the river and rest.

Gallfred Weasel finds a local landowning family who think that he is a true hero, a person of extraordinary virtue and daring. More important, a family willing to make up a spare bed for him and willing to assign their very attractive daughter to feeding Gallfred soup and delicacies until his landslide-induced wounds heal.

Podrick is ever the dutiful squire. He buys torches. He pays full price. Then he works on his equipment, ensuring that it is nicely polished. And finally, he gets a *potion of fire empowerment* from Ned, who got it from Loptir.

Later that evening Old Man Fish goes out drinking. He wakes up with three empty vials next to him. He has no idea what was in them, or where they came from. Gallfred Weasel goes out gambling. He ends up losing 30 copper pieces, almost everything he has. Which isn't too surprising, given that he has LUCK 2 at the moment. Ned Wimbley goes shopping, relying upon money from the party treasury to bankroll his purchases. He finds the trader *Zydis* and buys two longbows and one lantern from him for a single gold basilisk horn. Zydis throws in arrows and quivers as a freebie.

Now that he's found some traders willing to exchange dungeon treasure for goods, Hemp does his own bargaining. *Richil Mercouri* is a trader related to the local brewer – she negotiates with Hemp for some leather armor only after taking him to her cousin's place to sample some of his mead. They find that Ned is already there, and he's heard a rumor that bands of knights have been roaming the land looking for something. They have been getting into skirmishes with bands of undead skeletons.

## Return to the Hydra

Ned Wimbley manages to sell the characters on the insane plan of lying to the hydra about performing a ritual to eliminate the curse, and then to kill it. Ned takes the lead. He approaches with various ritual components and a story that the hydra clearly does not buy. Gallfred Weasel is nowhere to be seen, because he thinks the best part of this plan is that it allows him to hide. Ned is optimistic, “And backstab, too, right?” Gallfred is noncommittal on that.

Podrick observes that the hydra is already wounded, some heads hurt more than others. He puts this down on the thin list of things going in the characters' favor.

Ned Wimbley blazes away at the hydra with a *magic missile*. He kills one of the heads! Amazing! And his *mystic twin* gives him a short-lived *magic shield*. But in spite of that, the hydra notices that Podrick is closer, so it focuses upon him. The hydra's first head carves through him, his second goes through his

shield, and the third kills him. And with Podrick out of the way, the hydra's fourth head bites clean through Ned.

Gallfred Weasel tries to use his sling to convince the hydra that there is another attacker off in the distance. The hydra is not fooled.

Hemp manages to shoot and kill another hydra head. Huzzah! He knows what's coming, so he displaces as fast as he can. Meanwhile, Gallfred Weasel manages to drop his sling. He hides.

It turns out that hydras are pretty slow, so even at full speed the creature doesn't manage to close range with Old Man Fish. Old Man Fish runs and shoots, ineffectively. At least he didn't drop his bow. In contrast, Hemp manages to kill another head.

The hydra finally manages to engage Old Man Fish. He slashes at it, but it evades his sword. From behind, Hemp kills the next-to-last head on the thing, but that doesn't stop the hydra from latching on to

Gallfred Weasel loots Podrick for an ivory comb (worth 15 gp). And then he feeds him the *potion of fire empowerment*, which gives him back 10 fiery hit points. He sits up like Uma Thurman in *Kill Bill*. Gallfred whispers in Podrick's ear, "It's time to run now!"

Podrick obviously hears Gallfred clearly. He stands up and looks into rejoining the fight.

Gallfred sighs and moves on to check Ned Wimbley. He finds that Ned is alive, barely, and has 7 gp that he'll never miss. Ned doesn't miss the money, he's too busy losing -1 STA.

Hemp shoots and kills the hydra, then runs over to try to save Old Man Fish. He has no idea what to do, but Podrick does and provides life-saving first aid. Old Man Fish loses -1 STA but gains a horrible scar.

Ned doesn't have the ability to say much, but he does say something about hydra liver being useful for magical rituals. Old Man Fish might be almost dead, but he does what he can to help Hemp skin the hydra. Hemp and Podrick manage to extract the equivalent of 5 hydra pelts. They also take the liver. And then everyone staggers back to Cartwell. Or is carried, for those characters who can't walk at the moment.

## Cartwell Doesn't Really Have a Hospital

Gallfred Weasel finds the priest Loptir and tells him, "The good news is, your town is no longer threatened by a hydra. The bad news is that your town now has a critical shortage of bandages and healing poultices, because we need them all." Loptir doesn't put up much of an argument.

Hemp already knows a trader with connections to the local leatherworkers. He cuts a deal with Richil Mercouri to make two sets of *hide armor (+1 nonmagical)* in exchange for all five hydra pelts. This will take a while, four days in total. And then Hemp goes out carousing with her. He gets in a fight, and earns 4 XP for it.

Gallfred Weasel has no patience for canoodling with leather dealers. He hunts down the same crew he gambled with earlier and loses another 7 gp to them. There's no question but that the local gamblers will be happy to see him if he shows up to their table again.

## Skeletal Warriors!

The characters approach the Pit and a horrid scene. The edge of the Pit has recently been the scene of a ghastly encounter between a group of skeletons and a squad of knights. The skeletons have clearly come out on top – there are three of them, led by a grim leader whose broken blade drips with gore. The knights appear to have been the Knights of Lushnia the characters met some time ago, and they made good account of themselves before falling – there are several destroyed skeletons visible.

The skeletal leader sees the characters approach. It fixes its deathly gaze upon them. Gallfred Weasel hides, or at least he thinks he does. The thing stares at Podrick, trying to fill him with the fear of death. Fortunately, his helmet interferes with his perception and partially shields him from the effect. Unfortunately, the skeleton master is stronger: Podrick feels his bones attempting to tear themselves from his flesh. He suddenly has a gruesome understanding of how the skeletons replenish their numbers.

Ned Wimbley casts an awesome *magic missile*. He sends out swarms of mystical bees at the skeletal master and one of the lieutenant skeleton, destroying both of them.

Gallfred Weasel attempts a surprise attack. He wasn't hidden well before, and he wasn't well prepared to attack. He trips and falls in front of it. It stabs him. Then Hemp cuts it in half with his slaver axe.

The characters check the knights. They are all dead. Some of them are those the characters met before, but not all. And some of them were the skeletons the characters just faced. Fortunately, both Hemp and Gallfred have nothing against looting the dead. Unfortunately, most of the knights were operating under the irrational auspices of a vow of poverty so they had little actual coin. They do have good kit otherwise. The characters recover some gear from their bodies:

- 4 chainmail
- 4 shields
- 4 swords
- 4 long bows
- A map, with markings describing where to find the *Helm of Chistu*. The map leads to ruins south of Weebrook.

Hemp notes that the skeleton master was wearing the (long-ruined) armor of a Royal soldier of some significant rank.

One of the dead knights is *Sir Alaric Ironheart*, with whom the characters (especially Podrick) had spoken



some time ago. His body is recognizable from his tabard. Podrick takes it as a way to prove his passing to the knights' chapter house later on.

## Into the Pit

Ned Wimbley suggests casting *feather fall* on some number of party members so they can jump straight to the bottom of the pit, where the local Pit Monster can eat them. Gallfred Wimbley notes that Ned's tactical choices are not going to get much priority for a while. Podrick suggests following the same path as before and hopefully reaching the cultist boss quickly and directly. Everyone likes this plan much better.

The group carefully heads down the stairway around the edge of the Pit. Just as before, they find four cultists waiting for them with vicious knives ready. Ned Wimbley starts out with a volley of three *magic missiles* that obliterate the lead cultist.

Hemp takes a shot at a cultist, but loses his footing on slippery stairs and falls. Fortunately, he does not fall off the edge into the misty depths. Podrick shows him how it's done – he spears a cultist right through his tentacle mass, killing both at the same time. Old Man Fish takes out the third. And then Ned Wimbley takes out everything else with another *magic missile* barrage. Hemp disposes of the last tentacle mass to finally clear the way.

This time, the characters decide to force the stone door rather than going through the (former) basilisk caves. Between them, Hemp and Podrick are able to push the door open revealing a short corridor leading to an altar. There are four glossy black stones placed upon the altar. Old Man Fish moves in first, and is first to discover the cultist lurking inside to deliver a surprise attack. Fortunately, Old Man Fish has excellent reflexes and avoids the cultist's blade. His sickle catches upon Old Man Fish's armor and *breaks*. Hemp steps in and stabs him.

With the situation secured, Gallfred checks the altar for traps. He notes that there are scrape marks on the floor, implying that it can be slid aside. The altar is apparently made of solid stone, but is actually made from a stacked series of smaller blocks. It is decorated with the same circular-themed icons as the door. And beyond the four smooth-polished stones there is a brass censer. Whatever is inside the censer is generating terrible scents. Old Man Fish takes the censer, dumps out the burning mass inside, and keeps it as treasure.

- Brass censer (10 gp)

Podrick moves the altar, revealing a 3' square hallway. Old Man Fish lights up a torch and examines it for signs of use. He sees definite indication that someone has been using it recently. He can see light coming in through pinprick holes in the walls. It appears to be possible to enter the passage and then watch what happens in the altar room through the pinprick holes.

## The Spy-Way

Gallfred Weasel leads the way down the spy corridor, very much against his better judgment. The way turns. Gallfred finds a trap at the turn, by blundering into it. It's a rusty blade, triggered by a tripwire. He continues on, past a pair of narrow chutes down to the tentacle column, and to another blade trap that Gallfred disables. The corridor continues, then reaches a T-intersection. One direction leads to a twisty, narrow set of passageways that drops quite rapidly. Thinking about Ned Wimbley's 10' pole, he backs up and goes the other way.

The other pathway leads to another altar room. Again, it is possible to peer into the room through peepholes. Old Man Fish does so, and sees yet another cultist standing watch. And yet another blade trap, which Gallfred disables.

Ned Wimbley arrives on the scene and kills the cultist using a *magic missile*, leaving behind a confused tentacle mass.

Unfortunately, there is no other way to move forward from there, so the characters turn to the narrow descending corridors. Ned Wimbley is forced to leave his 10' pole behind.

The bottom of the passageway is a tiny chamber only 5' across. There is a puddle on the ceiling, and water drips from the floor up to the puddle. There's nothing about this that looks natural. The characters engage in some rearrangement in the corridor so they can send Ned Wimbley's summoned bee in first. It doesn't seem to suffer any unusual harms. The water drips up from a crack in the floor, flows across the bee's body, and falls up to the puddle. Podrick pushes in with a cudgel and looks for a way to get out, but finds nothing.

## The End of the Session

The characters end the session in the Pit. Next time, the plan is to move out to the main Pit again and examine the third door on the side of the Pit. Each character gains 9 XP (for a total of 44 XP for those characters who have been here for all sessions).