

# 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* notes that everyone knows that the Irish are crazy for 7-Up. *Bruce* points out that while he didn't know this, he is freed of the need to use a headset because Georgina is up in Minnesota and cannot be annoyed by incessant Nerd talk. *Ernest* speculates that Bruce might not be wearing pants, which everyone else just thought was obvious. Except *Paul*, who can be heard but who cannot hear anyone. *Tim* is just here to play some kind of RPG, he's not entirely sure what. *Patrick* is too busy dealing with dolphin sounds.

## Count Zodra's Manor



The characters have agreed to investigate the manor of the (probably Vampiric) *Count Zodra*, who lives on the outskirts of the town of Wymoor. They might also consider investigating his hedge maze, a grim place that oozes foul fluids that contaminate the river. Surely good things are happening there! There is also a mill, or the remains of one – it no longer has a waterwheel. Otherwise, it is solidly built of stone and is accompanied by a solid stone dam holding back the mill pond. Everyone knows that the Mystic King in Sewich has recently been replacing nobles with lycanthropes and the like, and that the horrible fluids coming from the manor is a new development only a few weeks old. The Count's servants all left

the area en masse, without describing much on the circumstances for their departure. And the Count himself claims only that the fluids are a byproduct of a revolutionary new agricultural process that will bring prosperity to all.

## Perhaps We Shall Start with the Mill

The mill, beyond being solidly built, is the source of a horrible stench. The waterwheel was apparently removed deliberately. The characters enter and find that while the millstones remain, the drive train has been removed. From the mill, the characters can see two streams of feculence come from the hedge maze and a nearby overflow pipe to contaminate the millpond, which is festooned with thin, milky filaments and has a distinctly unhealthful odor.

*Podrick* puts water upon a handkerchief and covers his face to spare himself the fetid scents. *Gallfred* does not – thanks to his upbringing he is largely immune to bad smells.

There are no signs of obvious violence in the mill.

## Manor House Is Next

The characters leave the millhouse in favor of the (probably deserted) manor house. They approach the front of the house to find that it is not completely deserted – there is a hulking *rat fiend* inside, and it bursts out of the front door. It doesn't appear to be interested in either hearing about the Jehovah's Witnesses or learning about how to save money on homeowner's insurance. Which isn't really relevant, because *Ned Wimbley* and *Old Man Fish* lead off by shooting spells and arrows at the creature. *Podrick* notes that both of them seem to be engaged in a fighting retreat – they each take their one shot and then back the heck away. This leaves him and *Hemp the Weaver* in the front lines to defend against the fiend's attacks. To their dismay, they find that the creature is covered in pestilent blisters that burst and spray anyone nearby with caustic pus.

*Gallfred Weasel* tries to hide around the corner of the porch. He isn't fooling anyone.

*Podrick* and *Hemp* strike at the fiend... to no good effect. *Gallfred* joins them and is also not successful in his strike. Apparently, the rat fiend saw him coming, because he wasn't actually hidden.

*Ned Wimbley* casts *invoke patron* and is rewarded with the appearance of a collection of *Tentacles of Palymbidis* that don't do a lot of crushing damage to the rat fiend. Then *Old Man Fish* manages to hit the fiend with an arrow, only to watch *Podrick* get sprayed with pus for almost as much damage. For its part, the rat fiend drops to the ground and lashes out at everyone with all four limbs, giving *Gallfred* a nasty gouging.

*Podrick* takes advantage of the rat fiend's vulnerable position to stab it right through the ghoolies. Everyone is well aware of the pus that will follow and avoids taking damage. And then *Hemp the Weaver* cuts straight through the creature's jaw and into its brain.

*Hemp* high-fives *Podrick*, "That's how we do it in Weebrook!"

Meanwhile, Gallfred is saddened to discover that the rat fiend is carrying no valuables. However, he does collect some rat pus and uses it to poison himself, suffering 3 HP damage and -1 STR loss (only recoverable by magical healing). He develops a big blister where the pus touched him. The others note that the blister looks a lot like the one that *Mordecai* got when he handled poisoned water outside Wymoor. Old Man Fish is able to heal his hit point damage, but not the STR loss.

Also, Ned Wimbley summons up a *killer bee* the size of a small dog.

## Someone Got Here First

The characters enter the manor house behind the killer bee. They find that the place has already been pretty thoroughly burglarized. Both Gallfred and Hemp conclude that it looks like the Count left town, but before he did, he took all of his salable valuables. And also, a rat fiend has been living in the place, which has done its own damage. There is a large rat fiend nest made from torn up papers, furniture, and bedding. It's nasty and full of pus. Nobody wants to check it too carefully.

The stables are empty. Any beast that was useful to remove valuables is gone, and any other beasts in the stables were killed by a rat fiend.

Hemp the Weaver is unwilling to accept that everything of value is gone. He collects a servant's shaving kit and a couple of new outfits. Ned Wimbley is always in the market for animal parts and finds a taxidermied wolf head. He takes the ears. And Podrick goes to loot the wine cellar.

## The Hedge Maze – Actually a Hotbed of Plague

The hedge maze is still massive and was once magnificent. The foliage has gone from green and verdant to brown and choked with weeds. A brownish-ochre musk hangs over the area, deadening sound. There is a row of four latched but unlocked ornamental gates at the center of the south side of the maze.

The characters open the second gate from the left. The ground that was once manicured lawn is now covered in a layer of rat droppings and other filth ranging from 2 to 8 inches deep. Podrick goes first. He quickly finds signs that something has burrowed underneath the debris. Gallfred notices something shiny in the debris, and he uses his debris-prodding dagger to uncover and recover a silver candlestick with the Zodra family crest (putative trade value 30 gp). He doesn't think anyone else saw it, so he just pockets it.

Then Podrick stabs the pile of debris. It explodes into a burst of feculence that hits both him and Old Man Fish. Podrick immediately suffers -1 STR damage and giant pus-filled blisters. This doesn't trouble Old Man Fish – he's able to heal his own boils.

Ned Wimbley has a variety of little earth elemental servitors at his side. He has them clean off the debris, exposing the carcass of a rat fiend that appears to have died of pus blisters. It has nothing valuable on its person.

A Plethora of Rat Creatures

Podrick turns around the corner to see a festering crowd of six rat creatures. They look very similar to the dead creature that exploded on the group. They leave him remembering fondly his days of playing *Magic: The Gathering* using a plague-rat-and-thallid deck.

The others crowd up behind Podrick. Most of them can't do much of use, but Ned Wimbley is able to cast *magic shield* on Hemp the Weaver, giving him +4 AC for the next 20 minutes.

Finding himself on the front lines, Podrick lashes out and cuts a rat in half. Hemp the Weaver fires with the *blazefire bow* but is dismayed to find that the rats are quite nimble and hard to hit.

*Mordecai* decides that raising a dead rat makes a lot of sense. He manages to animate just a claw, which he sends creepily clambering towards the hostile rats. Old Man Fish notices the thing moving by and decides that the best plan is to withdraw.

Gallfred Weasel tries climbing to the top of the maze. He finds that there is a cloud of feculent fog about a foot above the top of the maze. He settles for putting himself into a position where he can shoot sling bullets down on the rat creatures. This also gives him a front row view of the *field of tentacles* Ned Wimbley summons into the center of the rat swarm. Most of the rats get crushed to death. The lone survivor struggles for a while before it too gets crushed.

Gallfred concludes that he cannot see enough of the maze to produce an *accurate* map from the top of the wall, at least not without sticking his head into a poisonous (and opaque) cloud. However, the maze does look pretty simple – so he just tells Podrick to continue along the way. Ned Wimbley helps out by casting *enlarge person* on Podrick. Both of them are grateful that he doesn't grow to be 20 feet tall and die of poison. The spell also changes a human skull *Mordecai* was carrying into gold, and a flask in Ned's satchel into lead.

Podrick doesn't spot the remains of another dead rat creature. Old Man Fish sees it just in time for Podrick's passing to set it off. It explodes, and leaves Podrick infected with pustules. But because he's Lawful, Old Man Fish is able to heal him. Meanwhile, Ned Wimbley's earth-servants uncover a gold snuff box with mother-of-pearl panels (55 gp), which goes into the party treasury. He spots the next dead rat pile at a safe distance, and Old Man Fish sets it off from range with his bow. This rat was equipped with a Set of gold dentures with ivory teeth (40 gp). Again, into the party treasury.

## End of the Line

The characters reach the end of the pathway. Gallfred uses his specially designed extravagant secret-door-finding dagger. He finds a cleverly designed movable planter secured by padlocks. Unfortunately, the padlocks are on the wrong side of the planter – Gallfred can't reach them. But the walls are just made from plant matter, so Hemp the Weaver and Podrick just start chopping them down.

Hemp manages to cut away part of the wall. Suddenly, part of the wall lashes back at him. He evades past the lashing branches and calls for Podrick to help out. Podrick is able to cut open a path to... a pen holding a bunch of rat monsters! Beyond that is a 90' x 60' patio enclosure. The entire place is a cacophony of sound and industry. Desperate, pus-infected peasants herd rats, feeding them chunks of

infected flesh and then butchering them upon a nightmarish mechanized axe line. The activity is overseen by a gigantic 8' tall rat figure and a squad of human cultists. Another huge rat-fiend runs a giant hamster wheel to power the rat butchery. And the whole scheme is controlled by a cloaked *rat revenant*.



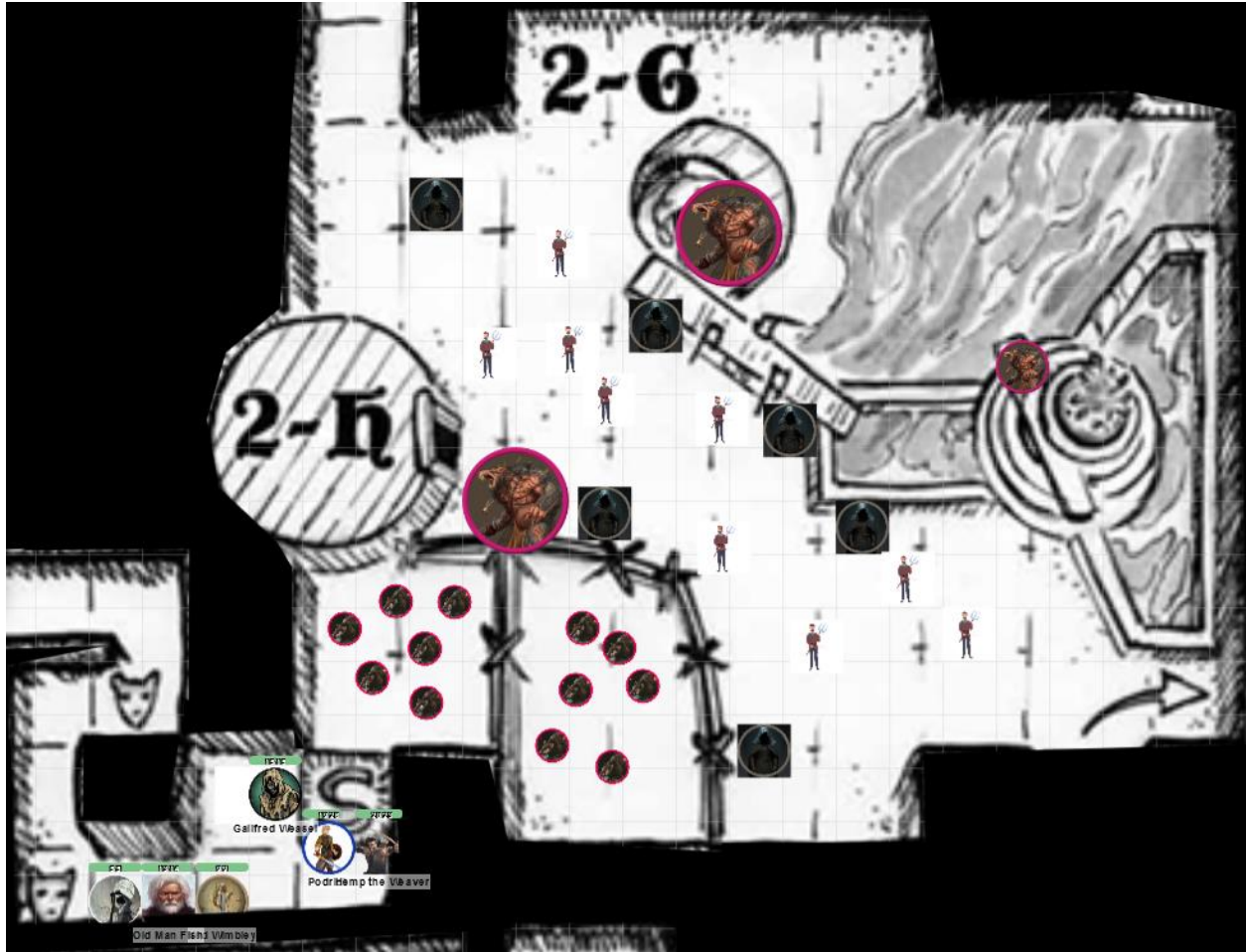
Podrick is enlarged and enthusiastic about direct action. He charges into the rat cage, immediately drawing the attention of one of the giant rat ogre supervisors. Normal-sized rats nibble at his heels to no real effect. And he manages to fend off the ogre's attacks. Gallfred climbs to the top of the nearby (ruined) gazebo, though the rats have a couple of chances to bite at him.

Mordecai attempts to summon a bear. Things go entirely wrong – the creature gets summoned *inside* the hedge, killing it instantly and leaving its body horribly embedded in the dead shrubbery.

The second rat ogre steps out of the giant hamster wheel as a swarm of freed rats spreads out attacking both cultists and peasants equally. Podrick is horrified: he had hoped that the rats would attack only the cultists.

The rat revenant wants to put an end to this situation. It casts *choking cloud*, engulfing Podrick, Gallfred, and one human cultist in poison. Gallfred suffers 4 damage and loses 3 AGL; Podrick suffers 4 damage

and loses 4 AGL; in both cases for 2 days. They also take a -4 penalty on all rolls while in the cloud. They can hear the choking sounds of the poisoned cultist.



The characters observe that cultists are herding the peasants towards the south, leaving the two rat ogres to kill the characters.

Ned Wimbley casts *enlarge person* on Mordecai, growing him to three times normal size and rendering him (theoretically) able to simply storm through the hedge maze walls. Ned intones, "By the power of m-f-ing Grayskull!"

Podrick moves underneath the rat ogre's claws and out of the gas cloud, ending his move just in time to slash a cultist. The cultist collapses. Gallfred *also* leaves the cloud, but he does it while hiding so nobody knows where he is.

Everyone knows where Mordecai is. He stomps through the enclosure and crushes a cultist.

Two rat ogres engage Podrick, slamming him around like a bean in a can. Old Man Fish shoots one of them from hiding, leaving the creature mildly disoriented. Podrick slashes one of them. The creature

staggers back, allowing Gallfred Weasel to stab it twice from behind. The creature bellows with pain! It's ally slashes down and hits Podrick deeply, but amazingly the warrior still stands!

The rat revenant doesn't like anything that's happening right now. It attempts to *invoke patron*, but things aren't going its way – the invocation fails. The characters rejoice. Hemp puts a point on that message by firing an arrow at the creature from the *blazefire bow*. He yells, "For Aphiel!" The arrow passes through the revenant's nose and head, delivering a disfiguring wound that also eliminates its sense of smell. Also, the revenant gets set on fire.

Mordecai stomps across the battlefield. He casts *magic missile*, drawing life energy out of a cultist and several nearby peasants to pierce the rat revenant in the side. The rat revenant steps down from his tower of corruption to directly engage Mordecai.

Podrick sees Hemp the Weaver land a burning arrow into the wounded rat ogre. He cuts the creature, toppling it, then withdraws to Mordecai. Gallfred Weasel, realizing an opportunity, drops down into the ruined gazebo and hides.

Mordecai casts *magic missile* straight down at the rat revenant, drilling the creature through with four powerful missiles. He tells the revenant, "Surrender before the powers of Death!"

The revenant responds in a rageful chirp, "The Rat King is everywhere!"

You know, just ordinary evil wizard banter.

The surviving rat ogre lumbers after Podrick. The creature takes an arrow from Old Man Fish as it does, which doesn't please it at all. Meanwhile, the rat revenant casts *flaming hands* upon Mordecai. Mordecai survives, but the cultist that was standing next to him does not. The single surviving cultist unlocks the way out into the hedge maze.

Podrick moves away from the rat ogre and cuts the rat revenant. Mordecai follows up with a barrage of *magic missiles*, tearing the rat revenant apart and wounding the rat ogre. The rat ogre goes for Hemp the Weaver with both claws, but Hemp's *mage armor* keeps him safe. Then Hemp, Old Man Fish, Ned Wimbley, and Mordecai surround the creature and strike it down.

The remaining rats scatter for their lives.

The characters look for available loot. They find:

- The rat-revenant's blade *Pestis*, a dagger that is probably magical; and
- 14 trinkets looted from the estate, worth a total of 50 gp.

While Ned studies the dagger, he has a sense that it agrees with him: all the world's Kingdoms should be destroyed one by one. He tells the others that he wants the dagger. He doesn't know exactly why. Nobody stops him.

The remaining peasants are showing off their cowering skills for Mordecai. Mordecai and Ned give them some food and send them on their way.

The giant mechanism that had been creating a feculent fog out of rat corpses starts to slow down now that nobody is feeding additional rat corpses into it.

## The Source of Rats

Podrick inspects the gazebo. He's previously seen that most of the rats in the pens had come from the gazebo, and they're still coming out. Perhaps there is a gateway to the Elemental Plane of Rats inside? He looks inside, wary. He sees a timber-walled mine entrance sloping down along a 40' tunnel.

Everyone agrees that taking some time to heal and rest before going underground is a good idea. Besides, Mordecai is too large to fit into the tunnel anyway.

Ned Wimbley persuades Gallfred that the rat cultists were probably feeding people to the rats – which means that the rats might have gold teeth in their stomachs. Gallfred spends some unproductive time chasing down rats with *Shadeslayer*, looking for gold teeth. He finds none of them.

And Old Man Fish heals up both Podrick and Gallfred. As a nice benefit, he also heals Gallfred's case of boils.

## The Rat-Demon's Nest

The characters move down into the tunnel. At the end they find an enlarged nest. And inside the nest they find a huge, writhing rat shape. As they draw closer, they are able to see that the creature's entire body is made up of rats. The creature's head includes a ghastly round mouth, lined with ever-descending circles of corroded rat teeth finally ending in a reddish glow that could only emerge from the deepest pits of Hell.

The characters debate how to attack the *Rat Swarm*. Hemp's proposal to collapse the tunnel and bury it sounds good, except that it's made from rats and would probably eventually just burrow out. So, they advance upon it instead, blades in hand.

Mordecai casts *invoke patron* and gets +5 STA worth of creepy subcutaneous pumpkin seeds that he can use to spellburn away.

The rat swarm doesn't act on its own. Instead, it spawns *rat servitors* that rush to the attack. Specifically, that rush to attack Podrick. Ned Wimbley casts *magic shield* on Podrick (giving him +4 AC for the next 30 minutes) and on Mordecai (+4 AC for 5 rounds).

Gallfred bravely volunteers to hold a torch for the others.

Hemp the Weaver moves up to the Rat Swarm and shoots it with the *blazefire bow*. He learns that the creature has demonic protections and is immune to weaker weapons. Podrick recognizes this and settles for wide sweeping attacks against the creature's spawned rat servitors.

Mordecai moves into the Rat Swarm's nest. He thinks, "I wonder what that thing is. It looks horrible!"

Ned Wimbley casts *magic shield* on Gallfred Weasel (+4 AC, 20 minutes) and then runs into the Rat Swarm's room out of eagerness to learn more about demons. Sadly, he does not learn. To him, demons are just too hard to understand.

Old Man Fish tries a shot at the Rat Swarm with a mundane bow. He confirms that yes, nonmagical weapons do nothing to the creature. Hemp the Weaver shoots it again with the *blazefire bow* and demonstrates that powerful magical weapons *do* harm demonic entities. Huzzah!

Podrick is just too busy slashing apart rat servitors.

And Gallfred Weasel approaches the Rat Swarm with *Shadeslayer*, deeply unhappy that he is being called on to be brave.

Mordecai has no such compunctions. He casts *chill touch* upon his blade and walks forward to freeze bits out of the Swarm. The Rat Swarm responds by exploding outward into a swarm of many rat servitors! They surge across the characters, gnawing and nibbling away hit points. Then they all vanish in a puff of smoke and brimstone as the demon returns to its home dimension.

The characters carefully search the demon's nest. They find:

- 8 valuable items from the Lord's manor, worth a total of 422 gp in exchange value

## The End of the Session

Each character gains 10 XP. Podrick gains +2 LUCK for banishing a powerful demon from this world. Ned Wimbley and Mordecai each gain +1 LUCK for serving their patrons. And everyone gains +1 LUCK for their victory.