

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

Patrick wants to know what *Tim* is doing these days. *Tim* explains that he's working for some folks who do oversight for various financial brokerages, looking for various shady behaviors. He isn't really sure what he'll do if he finds one of those behaviors. *Bruce* suggests that the obvious answer is that he should immediately attempt to profit from that knowledge. Which, truth to tell, is what his employer actually does. Except, that's their business model and it's not actually extortion.

Chris wants to know what's going on. *Tim* provides a simpler explanation: it's not difficult, and it pays well. He also (by means of deflecting *Bruce* from talking about semiconductors) mentions that there is now a Tarot-based RPG called *Hidden Isle*. It's quite narrative, and not very crunchy. *Paul* thinks, "This sounds like *Everway*."

Ernest calls out, "I'm here! I'm really here!"

Matt is unlikely to show up. We all hope the best for *Matt* and wish him a Happy New Year.

Up on Mount Tyche

The characters were and are at the temple complex on the top of *Mount Tyche*, where *Hemp the Weaver* is still reverberating (spiritually) from his new affiliation with the god *Aphiel*. There is a gift shop, and *Gallfred Weasel* gets a mug.

But they are not alone – they are also accompanied by an array of zero-level survivors from the *Not in Kansas* one-shot. These folks are all pretty disoriented, troubled by memories of dead heroes, and have an average of 2-3 hit points.

Character	Player	First Occupation	Second Occupation
Darryl	Ernest	Florida Man	Smuggler
Maynard	Chris	Meth Manufacturer	Halfling dyer
Rodrick	Chris	Computer Tech	Squire
Stacey Thompson	Patrick	Professional Screamer	Dwarven herder
Pierce McMann	Patrick	Space Valet	Gravedigger
Cloudy Dog	Patrick	Vazarian Gangbanger	Corn farmer
Abel Anderson	Bruce	Sailor	Ditchdigger

Character	Player	First Occupation	Second Occupation
Camille Crosswise	Bruce	Stenographer	Squire

Ned Wimbley is able to persuade *Maynard* to drink a draught of the *Palymbidis* potion. Maynard has historically been willing to drink just about anything, and he drinks it. He enjoys an hour of unconsciousness and communion with Ned's strange tentacular patron. Against all reasonable expectations, this inspires Maynard to become Ned's new 1st-level follower. Maynard ends up as a cleric of *Palymbidis*.

Also, the characters have (among other things) a broken *chronomantic medallion*, a *coprolite club*, and a magical tome that the wizards have long since taken for their own purposes.

Ned does his best to act trustworthy (which looks a lot more like a *Nosferatu* impression) and persuade the eight zero-level survivors that they should accompany the characters down the mountain to where they can rejoin civilization and embrace their new (preindustrial) lives. The characters don't exactly highlight the fact that their own immediate travel plans involve heading through a swamp and the possibly visiting the cult-riddled nightmare town of *Kingspire*.

The characters (and their new followers) rest for the evening, then descend the mountain to rejoin their horses and head into the swamp. Their eight new companions follow with a sense of dread.

Traversing the Marshes

The characters enter a quagmire. This slows them down badly, especially given that they have eight other people, plus horses and a hand cart with them. *Old Man Fish* directs the group towards the river, on the grounds that couldn't be any worse than pathfinding straight through the marshes.

Along the way, Gallfred points out that there is a dilapidated hut up ahead. "Someone is living out in the swamp?"

Hemp asks, "Bobby Bouchet hut or Shrek hut?"

Gallfred responds, "I don't know who those people are, but there was smoke coming out of the chimney." He explains that the hut had a thatched roof, mud-and-wattle walls, and the bones of small animals hanging from the walls.

Everyone thinks that sending Gallfred to scout is a good idea. He sneaks up and verifies that it is in fact an old hut. Gallfred's previous experience with people who live in the middle of swamps tend to put snares and deadfalls around their property. He doesn't find any, but he does find signs of lots of large crocodiles. He also notes that the hut has no windows, and a single very low entrance that would require crawling to enter. He smells bitter herbs and burned fat. This makes him hungry. He calls out, "Hello in the hut! Hello in the hut!"

"Ohh! A visitor! Come in, but mind the pickle jar!"

Gallfred stoops and enters the hut, avoiding the giant vat of pickles on one side. He notes that it is large enough for someone to sit inside, even if they didn't really want to. And the inside of the hut is larger than the outside. A hideously old, nearly skeletal old woman wearing rags and animal skins stirring a twig into the dying fire. Her hands are dark from soot and grease. Her fingernails are uncut.

Gallfred approaches. "Hello Mother. What are you doing out in the wilderness?"

"I live out here. I love the damp and earth and life in this place." The walls of the hut are hung with skins. Birds and beasts hang in cages hanging from the ceiling.

Gallfred asks if he can bring his friends over. The old woman agrees, so Gallfred leaves the hut briefly and signals the others to come near with the universal sign of, "Come over, creepy old woman in a hut." He explains that the last time he remembered, Kingspire was a miserable cult-infested sort of place and the one thing they all hated was the Marsh Witch. Which, in his view, really speaks well of the old woman.

Most of the others agree to join him in the hut. *Podrick* indicates that he'd prefer to stay with the others. They are all surprised by the larger-on-the-inside effect. And the caged animals, and hides, and bones, and the huge pickle jar (currently empty). Both Gallfred and Old Man Fish met the Marsh Witch before – and the current woman is similar but not identical.

The Marsh Witch looks at Old Man Fish's armor and tells him, "That looks like the hide of the hydra who killed my sister!" The characters remember that when they met the hydra it was diseased, unable to regenerate, because it had been cursed by a witch in the swamp. They note that the hydra hadn't mentioned that it actually killed the witch.

Old Man Fish asks, "Mother, do you have a sister living here near Kingspire?"

"Oh yes, I had two sisters. We were Princesses of a nation long dead, but we have lost our jewels and our titles, traded away or lost in the swamp. I have only this left." She pulls out a greasy, golden necklace hung with a bird skull. Gallfred thinks the necklace might be worth 25 gp.

Gallfred asks, "What has taken it all, Mother?"

"Time, many ages and aeons. Since the age of the Elder Kith."

Old Man Fish asks, "Folk in Kingspire – they are descended from the Elder Kith?"

"I don't know. My living sister lives near there. My other sister was killed by the hydra, but she left it quite a curse!"

Old Man Fish preens (he is wearing the hydra's skin). "My friends and I are going to Kingspire. Do you have anything you need from there?"

"Oh, I have nothing to do with that place. I have everything I need from my own little kingdom." She places her hand on the ground and spiders crawl up onto it. "You are all such good boys, who would never rob an old lady..."

"You want me to rob an old lady?"

"She's not trying to hypnotize you, Gallfred!"

"Ahem... I still have the gift of the evil eye. And there were others who were not so wise as you." She gestures at the caged animals.

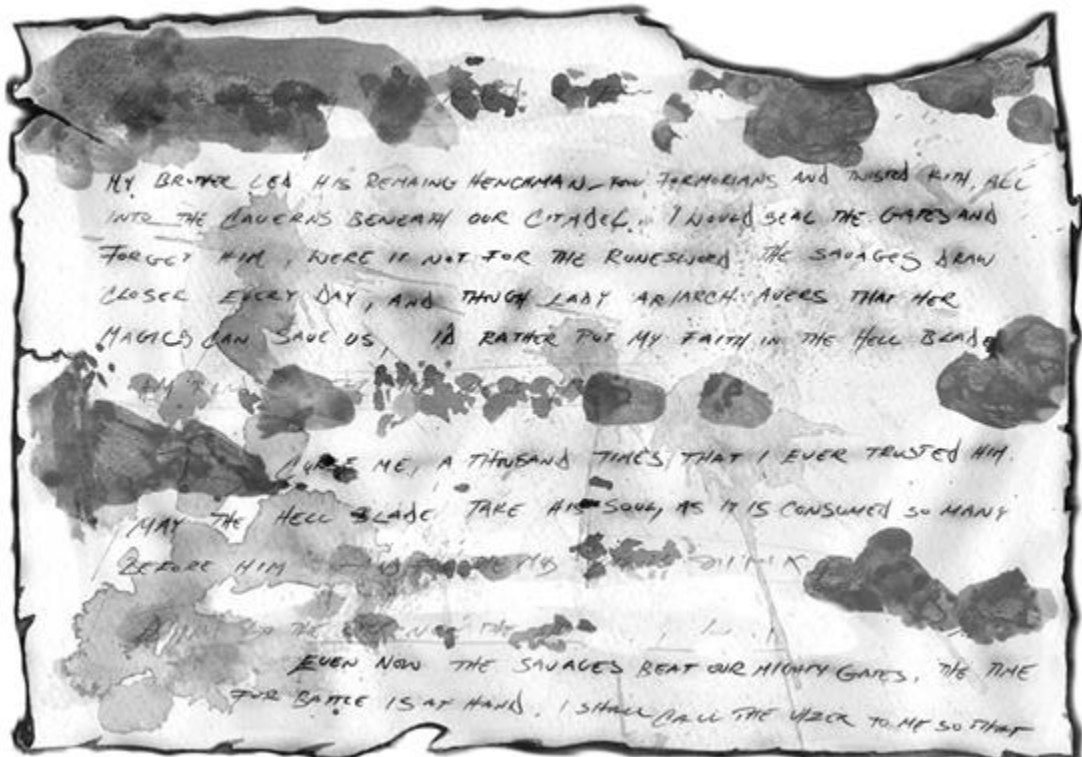
Gallfred tries to buy spider poison from her. She isn't interested in gold but is interested in the hydra liver Podrick is carrying. She produces two bottles. "This bottle contains a spider poison distilled into deadly form, and this bottle contains a healing draught that can be administered to one on the edge of death to restore them. You can have both." The bottles are identical and unmarked. She trades both of them to Gallfred for the hydra liver. She does explain that the spider venom must be injected into the blood.

Gallfred gives her a small cask of mead as a gift.

Swamp Camp

The characters camp nearby, after the old woman assures the characters that the crocodiles will keep them safe.

While making camp, Ned Wimbley spots a figure hunched



low to the ground and perfectly still. He tries sneaking forward, reasoning that the figure might not have seen him yet. He finds a man in his late 40's, dressed in muddy rags, with a pair of arrows lodged in his back. He does not answer to a query, nor does he move.

Ned tells the others, "I just found a dead body."

Hemp examines the arrows. They are fletched with black feathers and are the same as the arrows carried by the Watchmen in Kingspire. Old Man Fish searches and finds that he had a sheet of parchment tucked into his belt. It is covered in mud but still readable, mostly. The characters puzzle their way through it and determine that it is *probably* a lament written by an aristocratic warrior-lord bemoaning the betrayal of his brother, who is now served by men turned into fomorians.

While Gallfred is dutifully transcribing the note for the others a crocodile lurches out of the water and bites him. The creature is maddened! Gallfred lurches out of the water and flings the body in its path. He puts some distance between it and him while it chews on the corpse. Hemp opens fire with the *blazefire bow*. His arrow pierces the creature's eye. It lashes about painfully and then lies still.

Podrick approaches and pokes the creature with his spear. It is truly dead. He announces, "Gator meat for dinner!" Darrell volunteers to butcher and cook the gator.

This is the last day of Tenebrous. Tomorrow morning, it will be the first day of Umbro!

There Are Swamp Gnolls Out There

The characters enter the swampy woods to the West of Kingspire. Old Man Fish sets the course, and Gallfred scouts the way. He spots ten club-wielding people with hyena heads wearing animal skins and building a shrine under the direction of a shaman. They are clearly gnolls.

Ned Wimbley knows quite a bit about gnolls. He tells the others that they are dangerous even to other goblinoids, that they frequently seek out people and animals to sacrifice to their collection of evil elemental deities, and they are notably both primitive and violent. They do not know metalworking, relying instead upon simple clubs and animal skins. And, apparently, they are sometimes born from diseased hyenas.

Podrick is the first and loudest to indicate that the gnolls are vermin who deserve nothing better than extermination. Even Gallfred considers this to be sort of a dismaying attitude, but he is carried away by the others' enthusiasm for bloodshed. And then Ned Wimbley explains that gnolls are goblinoids, which means that *shadeslayer* can strike them at range.

The gnolls are assembling their shrine on a small island within the swamp. The characters approach across a crude wooden bridge. Podrick leads the way, riding down the gnoll outriders on his horse. Hemp the Weaver uses the *blazefire bow* to pierce the gnoll shaman's throat.

The gnoll warrior watches Ned Wimbley shoot a *magic missile* at him. He responds by shooting an orc-sized arrow back at Ned, hitting him right in the mouth. Ned spits up blood and a tooth. And then the gnolls mob Podrick, who does a creditable job of fending them off.

Ned attempts to cast another *magic missile*, using spellburn to support his power. It all goes wrong, leaving him looking shriveled and involuntarily twitching.

Hemp shoots the gnoll shaman down. The gnoll warrior is shaken by the shaman's demise, but he still manages to land another arrow in Ned Wimbley. Ned spits up more teeth, twitches, and reflects on the idea that bypassing the gnolls might have been the better plan.

Gnoll warriors move around the characters, ignoring the bridge in favor of moving directly through the water. One of them suddenly dies as Gallfred throws *shadeslayer* at him. A second gnoll realizes where Gallfred is standing and charges, only to perish to Gallfred's blade.

Old Man Fish approaches Ned Wimbley and heals his wounds, including his missing teeth and bloody throat. He has his work cut out for him, because a moment later Podrick is unhorsed and gashes himself badly with his own blade. He hurts his spine and finds himself lying upon the ground, unable to move normally. His horse acts to protect him, kicking out to kill a wounded gnoll.

Hemp finally manages to kill the gnoll warrior with a blazing arrow. He cries out, "Fire! Souls for Aphiel!"

Two gnolls hammer away at Podrick, who is still struggling to move.

Old Man Fish attempts to invoke the favor of Tjaptar. His patron is hostile to his request and afflicts him to show that displeasure. The others notice that Old Man Fish is now radiating a chill, unpleasant cold.

Ned Wimbley summons up a pair of dire wolves and casts *enlarge person* to double Podrick's size. Podrick struggles to his feet as the dire wolves tear two gnolls apart. Hemp's arrows kill another gnoll. And Podrick kills the last gnoll.

Gallfred notes that the others have the gnoll situation well under control. He sneaks over towards the site of the shrine, convinced that he will find chunks of raw gold there. He doesn't find chunks of raw gold, but he does find an array of other items:

- 28 gp
- two talismans worth 8 sp and 9 sp
- a choker worth 9 ep (== 90 gp)
- a gold and platinum crown studded with rubies and sapphires worth 11 pp (== 1100 gp)
- a broad-brimmed *farmer's hat* that could also be a cooking pot

Gallfred manages to pocket (and conceal) the crown. He shows all the rest to the others as treasure to be divided up.

Old Man Fish puts on the *farmer's hat*. He discovers that it makes him more folksy and charming, giving +2 to PER rolls when dealing with people. Also, it can hold 10 gallons of liquid in an extradimensional space. It is (of course) a *10 gallon hat*.

Hemp the Weaver distributes 60 gold to each character from the party treasury.

The gnolls were making a shrine to *Ithha*, the Prince of Elemental Wind.

Seeking the Kith

The characters (inspired by Old Man Fish's interests) start searching the swamps near Kingspire, looking for signs of the Kith, or at least signs of the local Kith cult. Old Man Fish in particular wants to gain the ability to see in the dark and believes that he can do this if he finds Kith Eyes. They find that the swamp is deeply unpleasant, and that most of the trees are long dead. The characters initially find nothing, though everyone starts to suffer a strange chill (except for Ned Wimbley, who seems to be immune).

As the characters explore, they see a ridge with a ruined castle atop it. They approach, but in front of them the brackish water explodes up in front of them. Reaching undead hands grasp out for their horses, threatening to drag them (and the characters atop them) into the water to drown. The characters haven't been able to heal since their encounter with the gnolls, some of them are still pretty badly hurt.

Things go pretty well until Podrick and Ned both get dragged into the water. Podrick observes that he has *ulftheonar's wolf-spear* and can use it to stab the zombie dragging him to pieces. Ned struggles but isn't able to get back above the water surface. Fortunately, Old Man Fish is easily able to see which thrashing is Ned, and which is the zombie. He strikes but isn't able to hit the zombie without hitting Ned. Podrick tries to wrestle them apart but fails.

Ned panics and flails wildly. Also, he stabs with his magic knife. Fortunately, he stabs the zombie. The zombie survives. Then Old Man Fish stabs it. The zombie doesn't survive.

The others drag Ned back out of the water.

The End of the Session

Each character gains 5 xp.