

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

Paul is very pleased with the new *Captain America* movie, though he doesn't understand the new hair coloration of the Red Hulk. *Ernest* notes that the after-credits scene really just suggests that Disney truly has run out of new ideas, not like there was any doubt of that. *Bruce* is confused by the whole "Red Hulk" concept – at least until *Chris* explains that in the comics there are between five and eight Red Hulks. They have a sort of a club! *Patrick* is silent – he has nothing to contribute to this subject. He is in fact deeply committed to *not* having anything to do with it.

Final Death Time

The characters are walking around in the fortress of the Elder Kith at the Kingspire, lost (maybe still) in a time-loop that reaches back to the time when the Elder Kith were besieged by a horde of primitive warriors. They also have a terrible Chaos sword that wants to kill everything and handed it off to *Ned Wimbley* because giving the monstrous Chaos artifact to the Chaos wizards seems like a great choice. It also turns out that anything that dies in the vicinity of the sword is killed permanently.

More pressing, the characters are fairly sure that the courtyard outside is full of primitive warriors. Angry primitive warriors. They have a clever plan to sneak across the corridor unseen and make their way up to chat with the Crow King again. And if they run across the Vizier on the way, murdering him would not be too strict of a choice.

The Hall of Four Panes

The characters find that crossing the hallway into the majestic Hall of Four Panes is remarkably easy: everyone else has a lot of other things to worry about. Now able to see the Hall in its original grandeur for the first time, the characters are able to see four huge stained-glass windows, each depicting a court of Elder Kith engaging in some kind of horrible debauchery: torturing four proto-humans to death, accepting the allegiance of tribes of subhumans and serpent-men, standing amid a field of fallen and butchered foes, and sitting in splendor in court as ranks of courtiers look on in jealousy and envy.

The group moves on. They are not attacked by a pack of subhuman barbarians. Instead, they are here a bit later in the cycle and find that the Vizier and his Kith Knights have already slaughtered the

barbarians. The Vizier and three Knights are the only survivors. The Vizier sees them and is upset, "You should not be here! My knights and I must see to the defense of the palace!"

But then the Vizier realizes that Ned Wimbley is carrying the *runeblade*. "Wait, wait! You! Bring that weapon here!"

Podrick disagrees, "No, we're bringing it to the King. It isn't for you."

"Yes! It should be for the King!" The characters don't think the Vizier is suggesting that the King should hold or own the blade.

Ned insults the Vizier, "You are a weasel and a coward!" The others take "insult the Vizier" as the signal to attack. Podrick is the fastest, spearing the Vizier through with *ulftheonar's wolf-spear*. Then *Hemp the Weaver* shoots the Vizier through the mouth with the *blazefire bow*. The Vizier chokes up blood and spits out a tooth. Notably, this doesn't stop him from trying to cast *magic missile*. It does stop him from *successfully* casting *magic missile*.

Two Kith Knights walk up to Ned Wimbley and cut him down.

Old Man Fish asks his patron *Tjaptar* to restore Ned. Ned is healed! Surprisingly, not nearly as healed as one might have expected, but still healed. And at -1 STA (which has the effect of losing him 5 HP). And he is terribly scarred. Ned whispers out, "Avenge me..." His *unseen servant* clocks one of the Kith Knights with a *torturer's mace* to the back of the head. *Gallfred Weasel* flings a dagger at the knight, hoping to poison him. He is deeply disappointed with the effects of *fermented mushroom toxin*: the knight completely ignores the poison.

Hemp the Weaver kills the Vizier with a single arrow that (somehow) blows the man's internal organs to jelly. Blood and viscera spray across the adjacent Kith Knight, forcing him to flee from combat. He tries to run, but Podrick trips him and gores him with the *wolf-spear*. He flings the knight into the back corner of the chamber.

The third Kith Knight strikes Podrick, shattering his shield. The wounded knight (who is immune to poison, apparently) tries to kill Ned Wimbley but delivers only a flesh wound. That Old Man Fish promptly heals away. Then Hemp shoots him to death and sets him on fire.

The *unseen servant* picks up the burning knight's body and beats the other wounded knight to death with it.

Ned attempts to cast *magic missile* but things go deeply wrong. There is an explosion of magical bees that injures Podrick and Old Man Fish.

Gallfred Weasel ignores the explosion. He stabs the surviving Kith Knight, poisoning him with *centipede oil*. The unfortunate knight loses 11 AGI for the rest of his life, which turns out to be only a moment because Podrick shows up to stab him to death.

The characters loot the characters. The Vizier had:

- A dagger of mithril coated in an oily substance.
- A gold chain (worth 50 gp)
- A platinum-tipped rod (worth 100 gp)

The knights are equipped with armor, swords, and daggers all made of mithril. Hemp the Weaver kicks the dagger over towards Gallfred Weasel, who wanted it anyway. Oddly, nobody else wishes to risk poisoning themselves. Old Man Fish takes a mithril long sword and a mithril dagger. Gallfred Weasel claims a couple of additional mithril daggers, because they're handy to throw.

The Great Hall

The characters move up into the Great Hall. In this age, the hall is set for a feast of 20 or more and decorated with tapestries showing the various triumphs of the Elder Kith over their subhuman enemies. A group of five servants scurry around preparing the feast (in the apparent utter absence of any kind of kitchen in this castle).

Nobody notices when Gallfred Weasel grabs a couple of chicken wings from the table. Ned, Old Man Fish, and Hemp don't worry about upsetting the servants. They do pause when they realize that the centerpiece of the feast is steaks cut from the bodies of dead subhumans.

Podrick doesn't pause even for a moment. He walks right through and upstairs to see the Crow King of the Elder Kith. The King is just as magnificent as he should be, seated upon his throne and surrounded by four Royal Guards. "You are back! And you carry the Runeblade! In honesty, I could feel it as soon as you entered the Citadel. I could feel this horrid immortality fading away!"

Podrick tells the King, "Yes, we treated with your Brother. Now, honor your bargain and return us to our time."

"Now that you have the Runeblade, there is one way. Lady Ariarch, Mistress of the Tower of the Magus, was once the unquestioned magician of the Citadel. It was her magic that cast us into this terrible demi-plane of endless violence and suffering."

Old Man Fish asks, "She wasn't the girl who died in the iron maiden?" He produces the cygnet ring she had been carrying.

The King is incensed, "The Vizier has betrayed me! Guards! Go and seize the Vizier!"

Podrick notes, "Oh, the protohumans already killed him."

The King crouches down, clutching his cat to his breast, weeping with anger that his vengeance has been stolen from him. The others just stand back while he has himself a royal temper tantrum. He recollects himself and tells the characters, "You have my full trust! I will do whatever you need to help you complete your quest."

Hemp is confused, "But isn't the sorceress dead?"

The others explain that the dead girl in the iron maiden was actually the Crow King's side piece. *Lady Ariarch* is fine, off in the Tower of the Magus. You can get to it across a bridge guarded by her gargoyles.

The Crow King also points out that while she is as beautiful as she always was, the passing centuries have made Lady Ariarch a bitter and angry woman. He thinks that the spell will end with her – if the characters use the *runeblade* to kill her. He thinks her amazing magical powers have been reduced to nothing more than a shadow of their former magnificence, with most of her strength spent upon trying to bring the Citadel back from the demi-plane.

An Interlude

The characters go off into the corner to discuss their plans. Key points include whether the Crow King can be trusted, whether he, Lady Ariarch, and the (dead) Vizier are utterly insane (yes), and which of them need to be killed with the *runesword* to bring the Citadel back from the demi-plane and out of the timeloop.

Formal Dinner with the King

In the fourth hour of the cycle the Crow King, Lady Ariarch, and five Knights of Ellyhai appear at the Great Hall for dinner. The servants aren't sure what to do with the characters, but the King claps his hands and demands that they be seated. And, fortunately, with the deaths of the Vizier and his Knights there are plenty of places.

Servants bring out goblets of crimson wine and steaks cut from the corpses of subhumans.

Lady Ariarch in particular cannot contain her eagerness at the sight of newcomers. She stares with desperate eyes, "How did you get here? Describe the circumstances?"

Podrick answers blandly, "We... found a wizard and he threw a gem at us." He notices that Lady Ariarch is accompanied by a pseudodragon familiar.

"You need to tell me all the details! Every one!"

Hemp notes, "Yeah, you seem to have yourselves some kind of time-loop pocket dimension going on here. Got to be careful about that. Have you failed to lift the spell?"

"NO! I have searched for thousands of years! That is why I need to know everything so we can escape!"

Podrick asks, "Is it true that every night you get shot by an arrow and die?"

"It is! If only Prince Rynth was here I could be satisfied in this eternal prison."

"Yeah, well. He had the Runeblade so he's been dead for thousands of years."

"NO! NO!" She becomes increasingly desperate, flinging food and utensils and throwing her own tantrum upon the table. "This cannot be! Surely you must be mistaken! He could not have died to something so mundane as time!"

Hemp offers, "Well, we found his tomb and his devolved relatives. He lived a rich life ruling over his subjects then deliberately set himself up a lovely throne tomb just like Conan the Barbarian so we could find it. And now, we have the Runeblade back so the timeloop can stop here."

Lady Ariarch, now lying on her back on the table, cries out, "Then there is no reason for me to be here any longer! Plunge the Runeblade into my heart and end it all!"

Ned mumbles, "Well, okay." He pulls out the Runeblade and shambles towards Lady Ariarch. The Knights step up as if to halt him, but the King stays there motion with a hand. He tells them, "If the Lady says so, then it is time to end our existence in this war-torn hell." The knights step back.

Lady Ariarch explains, "The Runeblade will undo all of my magics."

Ned hesitates. The Crow King reaches out his hand, "If you have not the stomach, give it here!"

Hemp suggests patience, "Why don't we just wait until the end of the cycle?"

The King notes, "At the end of the evening, the barbarians come in and kill everyone. Every time."

Ned needs to hear no more. He takes the blade to Lady Ariarch. Fortunately, she isn't trying to resist her fate. Ned reflects that by using the *runeblade* he is exposing himself to yet another dark fate. He plunges the blade into her chest. A wave of eldritch power surges forth as the characters see thousands of years elapse in the blink of an eye, with both structures and people corrupting and corroding into dust. Nothing remains of the Citadel, the Elder Kith, or the subhuman hordes.

When all is done, the *runeblade* remains, stuck straight into the floor. Ned recognizes that it is very pleased with him – and it will stay that way as long as he continues to spread chaos and violence through the world, killing as many Lawful creatures as possible in the process. He (and only he) can pull it out of the floor, and he can use it as a +4 blade. However, if he uses it he will suffer -4 PER because the sword utterly overwhelms his willpower.

Ned is reflecting upon his potential new career as Chaotic warlord when Gallfred comes out of the shadows, whispers, "Hey Ned, drink this!" and feeds him a dose of *lamprey milk*. Ned goes unconscious for the next 15 hours.

Ruins. Present Day

The characters find themselves back in the ruins of the Kingspire. There isn't anyone around. They head back to the base of the hill and the camp. They find that their followers have been waiting for over a day. They also have cultist beaten into unconsciousness and tied up as an extra bonus.

Hemp the Weaver hugs *Morgan* as if he had been trapped in a timeloop for thousands of years and he was Jean-Luc Picard. She responds in the normal vague lost-in-her-own-dimension manner. Meanwhile, Ned's apprentice *Maynard* is also lost in his own little world, exploring all of the strange fungi and herbs available in the swamp. He has also been trying to extract money from the others by charging them for his herbal concoctions.

Hemp kicks the cultist awake. "What's up?"

"Aaugh! The Edler Kith will protect me!"

"Not so much. They've all rotted away to dust. Here, let me tell you about Lady Ariarch. She was a babe, really stacked, but crazy. And also dead."

"Lies! Lies! They are eternal! They will come back and lead us with everlasting promise into eternity!"

"I don't think so."

"You are a heretic! I won't listen to the words of a heretic."

"That's true."

Gallfred quietly checks the cultist's pockets. The most valuable thing he's carrying is pocket lint.

Maynard, Ned's Apprentice

Str 11, Dex 13, Sta 13, Per 13, Int 16, Luck 14

HP: 7 (2d4: 1, 4)

6 spells:

- Animal Summoning, 53 (no chance)
- Enlarge, 75 (spell by proxy, cast from an ally)
- Feather Fall, 77 (call of the outer dark, entrance onlookers)
- Force Manipulation, 75 (spell by proxy, cast from an ally)
- Magic Missile, 72 (chain spell, +1 for second casting)
- Magic Shield, 100 (roll twice, 48, 61) must shout while casting

The others notice that the unnatural orange glow in the cultist *Arko's* eyes is the same as the glow in Old Man Fish's eyes. This allows Old Man Fish to get Arko to tell his own story, which turns out to be a long and involved story about getting lost in the swamp on a cold and rainy night, of seeing ghostly Elder Kith, and of being transformed by the experience. When he told that story to the other folk of his village they believed him, and in no time he became the center of an Elder Kith cult in modern-day Kingspire. And now, everything is ruined.

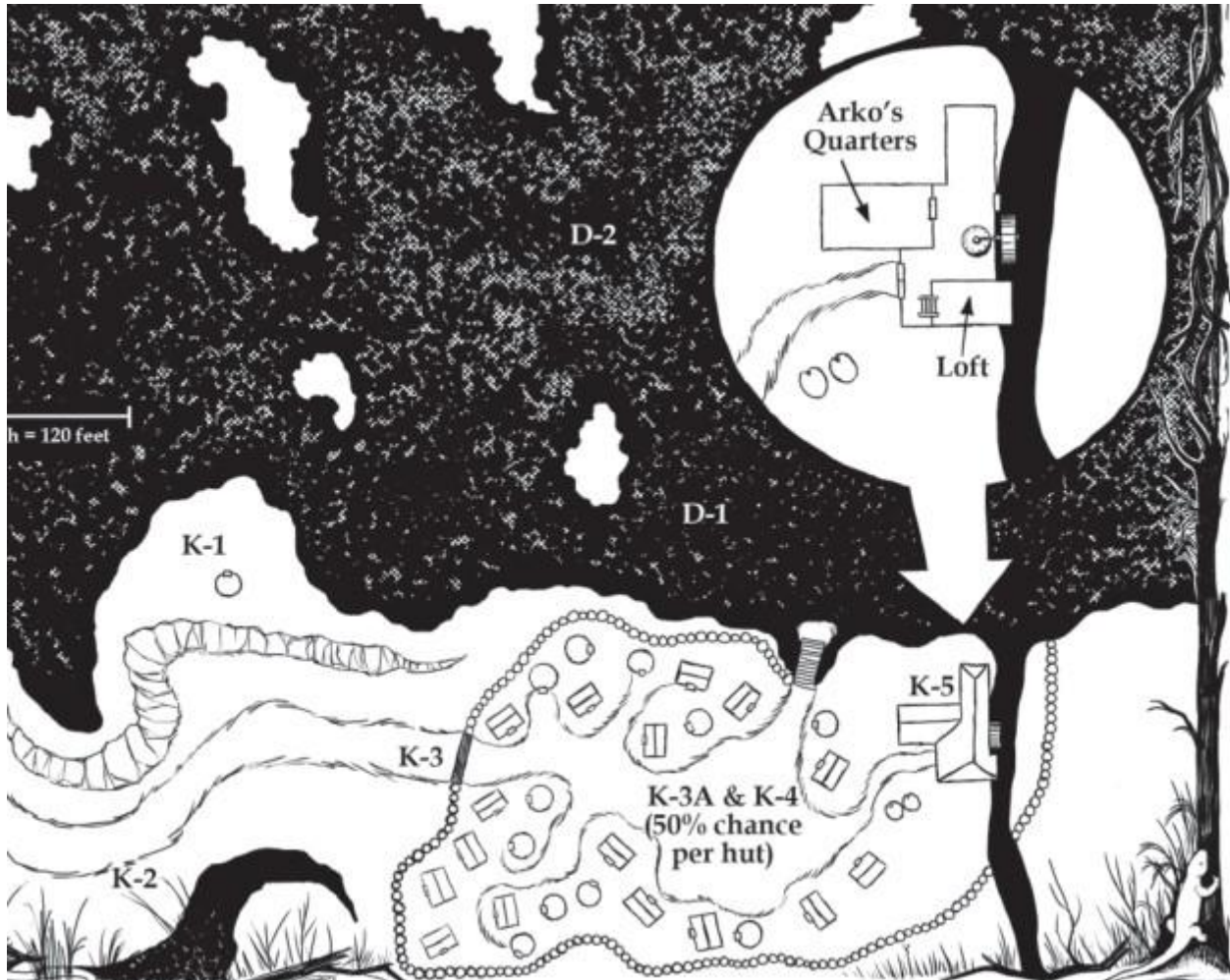
Hemp offers Arko an antique Elder Kith dagger as a consolation prize for ruining his religion.

Old Man Fish has an alternate proposal. He notes that Tjaptar needs sacrifices, and Arko might make a really good candidate. He reasons that this is only fair, because Arko and his followers sacrificed the local priest of Jopha the Healer early in their efforts to take over the village of Kingspire, and went on to sacrifice a fair number of other villagers who didn't want to get on board with Arko's Cult of the Elder Kith. Arko doesn't get much of a say in this, and the other characters don't object, so Old Man Fish performs the sacrifice.

Modern Day Kingspire

The characters head back to Kingspire bearing the eyeless head of Arko. The place has a lot of fond old associations for the characters: the strange old woman outside the town, the giant, deformed miller who pressed sacrificed residents for their juices, and the village full of slightly brainwashed cultists. Good times!

Old Man Fish suggests finding a boat and using it to approach the village from the water. Everyone except Gallfred likes the idea of approaching during the day.



Gallfred managed to convince Ned that he should be allowed to visit the old witch in her hut first. This is the only person he needs to convince, because it's Ned's *unseen servant* that is rowing the boat. He gets reacquainted with her – her blackened teeth and sagging flesh carry less dismay for him than they do for any of the other characters. He replenishes his supplies, then moves unseen over the palisade and into the village to meet the others.

Gallfred's shopping list includes:

- 1 Centipede Oil 250 gp Wound DC 20: On a successful save causes 1d6 temporary AGI damage; failed save means 2d6 permanent AGI loss.
- 1 Nullbrain Distillant 200 gp Touch DC 20: On a successful save target becomes disoriented for 1d6 turns (acts randomly); failed save means complete memory loss.
- 1 Ripflesh 100 gp Wound DC 18: Causes 1d4 points of HP damage each turn until successful save is made; effect persists for 1d3 turns or until a successful save is made.
- 3 healing potions (100 gp each): Heals 1 HD

- 3 draconic acid: Thrown, 100 gp each. 1d5 damage to a target each round, until the target succeeds in a DC 15 Fort save

Breaking the Elder Kith Cult

The characters join up outside the clay ovens near the mill. They're not running now, but they were baking all day so they remain warm. Old Man Fish uses his new darkvision tricks to see if there is any activity out at the mill. The waterwheel is stilled, but the sounds of the millstone are still audible: the giant miller must be hand-turning it.

Gallfred checks the door. It isn't locked, but he acts like it is and then tells the others that it is open. They enter to find the miller's apprentice, a gigantic misshapen pile of a man with his features stretched and twisted to resemble those of the Elder Kith, feeding the bodies of dead villagers and animals into the hopper of the grindstone.

The miller's apprentice growls at the characters, "You cannot defeat me!" He hefts a massive club.

Ned orders *Luigiroth* (his *unseen servant*) to grapple the apprentice miller. The miller slips free of Luigiroth's invisible grip and clobbers Podrick, breaking his new Elder Kith shield. Podrick returns the strike but inflicts only limited damage.

Gallfred slips into the rafters, looking for advantage against the miller's apprentice.

Hemp the Weaver fires the *blazefire bow*. The arrow burns the head from the giant's maul.

The miller's apprentice slams Podrick, trying to drive him into the grinding teeth of the grindstone. His helm is shattered, he is stunned, but he saves himself from a grinding fate.

Gallfred attempts to leap onto the miller's apprentice's head and throttle him with a poisoned garrote. This effort goes very badly, leaving Gallfred tumbled to the ground and the giant unhurt. But not for long: Podrick takes advantage of the distraction to stab the giant and push him towards the mill wheel. The giant stops himself only at the last moment. Hemp hits him but again fails to pin him to the mill wheel with an arrow.

Gallfred recovers and stabs the miller's apprentice in the leg with *shadeslayer*, incidentally poisoning him with *Centipede oil* and inflicting a -7 AGI loss on him. This drops the giant's defenses enough that Hemp is able to cripple him and Luigiroth is able to grapple him. Old Man Fish finally executes him with a single arrow through the eye.

The characters loot Arco's quarters in the mill. They find that he had a variety of Elder Kith memorability, plus a single beeswax candle. Old Man Fish sweeps it all into a bag. He also had a sheaf of paper that he used to record all of the dreams, visions, and inspirations he had regarding the Elder Kith and the Kingspire. It is gibberish. Old Man Fish leaves it behind.

Up in the loft, Podrick locates a worn bracelet of silver and gold with an ancient inscription in Elder Kith. It's not worth very much, only 7 gp. Old Man Fish finds that he is able to read the inscription with his Kith eyes:

Atop the Kingspire
We raise this Staff of Scorn.
And this Sword of Runes
Kith & Kin, Bound by Blood
May they never be Sundered

The others shove both Gallfred and Luigiroth into the crawlspace. The door is swollen shut with moisture – but that is no challenge to the *unseen servant's* strength. The area is full of sacks loaded with tubers and squash. Hidden at the back, Gallfred finds a corroded bronze coffer. It's not trapped, but it is corroded enough that opening the lock is actually kind of difficult. The coffer opens to a pair of rotted wooden trays. The top tray holds 21 soiled gp; each is heavily worn and bears the stamp of a dragon, with a sword and arrowhead on the reverse. Amid the coins is a shard of a broken mithral blade, bearing the stamp of a dragon matching the coin. Gallfred's expectations were notably higher. He is so disappointed that he just hands all of it over to the party treasury without trying to sticky-finger any of it.

The characters hoist Arco's and his apprentice's heads up on pikes outside the mill and wait for dawn. While they wait, Hemp the Weaver regales them with his empire-building plans and his intention to levy troops from this tiny, almost-deserted hamlet. The villagers assemble around dawn. The Watch Captain approaches with his spear, backed up by his men (four spearmen and four huntsmen).

He asks, "What is happening here?"

Gallfred hisses at one of the huntsmen.

Old Man Fish suggests that the Captain should come into the mill and discuss a transition of power. The Captain seems nervous about the prospect of leaving his men alone, but Old Man Fish is very persuasive. Old Man Fish tells the Captain that the cult is broken, that the characters are the new leaders, and that they have no grudge with him or his men. He promises that there will be no more sacrifices, and that he should expect the characters to come by seasonally to collect tax payments – and as needed to levy troops.

The Watch Captain tells his men to lay down their arms. He approaches and offers his spear to Old Man Fish, who accepts the gesture and invites him into the mill.

Negotiations for Power

In private, Watch Captain *Jon Ocat* tells the characters that he and the other villagers were pressed into service to worship some unknown power at the Kingspire. He assures Hemp and Old Man Fish that he stands with them now that Arco and his minions are dealt with.

Hemp and Old Man Fish do not bring up the fact that the Watch Captain would have been the #3 man in the Elder Kith cult arrangement. They are divided over what kind of new religion the villagers should embrace – the three options of Jopha, Tjaptar, and Aphiel all have their favors. They hand the Watch Captain the torturer's club as the new symbol of authority for the village. Hemp points out that the iron head of the club (which really meant something different to the Elder Kith) is a good way to symbolize that the Elder Kith no longer have any sway here.

The characters spend the next day (the 4th) in Kingspire, healing and resting. The evening of the 4th, there are a few locals who get together to drink and game with dice. Gallfred doesn't know the rules. But that doesn't stop him from wagering. He loses 9 gp.

Oddly, Hemp seems to have some extra gold in his pocket the next morning.

The End of the Session

Each character gains 8 xp and 2 LUCK.