

# 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* calls in to find that *Bruce* is off in the frozen Northlands, by which he means Minnesota. *Bruce* speaks in glowing terms about the pleasant April weather, and how downtown Northfield on a Sunday morning is pretty quiet, except for the coffee shops. In contrast, *Chris* is really enjoying New Braunfels, which is determinedly not frozen.

*Paul* is much more obsessed with monster tokens. *Patrick* is just pleased that he can be heard. *Ernest* will be along shortly, but is still displaying much more faith than the rest of the gang put together.

*Tim* calls in to report that there was a loud boom. Apparently, a house in West Austin exploded. Nobody knows yet if the cause was a gas leak or a meth lab, or maybe something else – but it was very recent, in the last hour. Wow! Except that *Paul* isn't impressed: one of his neighbors likes setting off explosives in his back yard, and apparently the cops can't stop him. Because Texas.

## Identity Swap Is Still a Thing

Several characters are still suffering from swapped identities. Current control is:

Player	Character
Chris	Gallfred Weasel
Bruce	Podrick
Patrick	Old Man Fish

The characters are on their way to the wizard's crypt in the North, because the *Swamp Witch* outside of Kingspire has promised to remove the curse if the characters can recover her granddaughter from the silver-skulled wizard who lives in the tower two hexes North of Kingspire.

## The Serpents Have Mauled Us

The characters are in the wilderness on the way to the wizard's crypt. They're camping, because their last meeting with a bunch of giant vipers took a lot out of them. And *Old Man Fish* (with *Podrick's* mind) managed to incur the displeasure of *Tjaptar*. Recovering from that will take a day or more of calm meditation surrounded by nature. And because both *Ned Wimbley* and *Hemp the Weaver* weren't

involved in the identity switch, they're just confused by the situation. Though, in fairness, the other three are also pretty confused. The fact that Old Man Fish is currently surrounded by a swarm of Northern lights with the faces of children doesn't help things at all.

It is currently the 9<sup>th</sup> of Umbro, which is the *Day of Justice* for worshippers of *Jopha the Healer*. The faithful normally spend the day in festivals and celebrations about upholding justice and bringing surcease to the innocent. Also, just maybe, hanging convicted criminals. Old Man Fish (Podrick) needs to spend a day communing with nature to clear his accounts with Tjaptar. He's not normally that interested in the doings of the gods, so he's perfectly fine with communing with a Neutral nature god on a day technically holy to a Lawful god.

*Gallfred* (currently in Podrick's body) reminisces fondly about past Day of Justice celebrations in the city of Sewich. He and his beggar cohorts used to go out into the crowd to pick pockets, or sit upon high-traffic streets begging. The fact that sometimes friends and associates of his were being executed as the main entertainment was an unfortunate detail.

Gallfred (Old Man Fish) decides to go out hunting. He is disturbed to find that many of his accustomed hunting skills are gone, though that doesn't seriously impact his success: he comes back to the camp with a rabbit (2 units of meat, plus 1 unit of pelts). Then he spends time cooking the meat, using a collection of "natural hobo spices" that Gallfred was carrying in his pockets.

*Podrick* (Gallfred) recognizes that the characters will be in camp for a while. He collects a supply of firewood and generally makes the place more suitable for habitation. He finds that he has massively more stamina and strength than normal, and is able to bring back a tremendous amount of fuel.

*Ned Wimbley* is disturbed by the sight of Podrick (Gallfred) sitting off in the corner of the camp near a huge pile of firewood, sobbing. He decides to investigate the curse by painting weird runes upon each of the afflicted characters. He concludes that there is a curse, and that painting runes on people amuses him. Then he examines the magical rope bracelet the characters took from Lone Ait. He determines that it provides a *bracelet of swimming and climbing*. The wearer gains a +2 bonus for all tasks involving swimming, climbing, and avoiding drowning. He tells the others, then applies himself to brewing medicinal teas and communing with worms.

*Hemp the Weaver* is secure in his own identity, and goes off hunting as well. He comes back with a rabbit (2 meat, 1 pelt) and gives it over to Gallfred (Old Man Fish) to cook. Then he attends to the characters' damaged and broken gear. By the evening, he fixes Podrick's (Gallfred's) net. Then he starts working on converting the giant preserved manta ray skin the characters pulled from Lone Ait into a tent. The thing is 30 feet from tip to tip and preserved by long-forgotten means, and it'll make for a really nice tent.

### Bracelet of Swimming and Climbing

The bracelet is magical and grants the wearer a +2 bonus to any checks involving swimming, climbing, or resisting drowning. PCs with nautical backgrounds can make a DC 10 Intelligence check to recall that some sailors believe rope bracelets grant protection against drowning. Others can deduce the fact with a DC 15 Intelligence check.

## Party Treasure Distribution

Each character gets 200 gp from the party treasury, except for Podrick (Gallfred) who contributes 50 gp so he can take possession of the small coral statuette depicting a whale with numerous lamprey eels affixed to it (250 gp value). Also, 2 pearls worth 10 gp each and 1 pearl worth 25 gp.

The characters dice for the *bracelet of swimming and climbing*, with Gallfred (Old Man Fish) winning the prize.

## New Devotion to the Taiga

It takes Old Man Fish (Podrick) two days of meditation before he feels a sudden, unexpected connection to the Taiga and to the entity Tjaptar. He is legitimately disturbed by this development, but the strange lights do diminish and his favor with his body's patron is restored.

## Strangers Approach the Camp

Podrick (Gallfred), Ned Wimbley, and Hemp the Weaver are in camp when a diverse group of individuals in rugged attire approach. They appear to be seasoned adventurers: a nimble elf, a burly dwarf, a mysterious person cloaked in shadows, and a woman dressed in the skimpy garb of a sorceress. Their eyes are fixed upon the characters' equipment and gear in a way that suggests flat avarice.

Hemp calls out, "Hold up there, guys! What's your business?"

The elf explains, "We are a group of bounty hunters!" He introduces his companions (three of them, anyway):

- *Windrider* the elf
- *Grohmtha Stout* the dwarf
- *Lilith Blackthorn* the underclad mistress of the dark arts

They claim that they are after a bounty called by the Arcane City upon cursed items and suggest that they would be pleased to take any cursed items from the characters for a reasonable payment.

Ned offers, "I assume you're interested in having us hand over our cursed coins?"

*Lilith* exclaims, "You have cursed coins?"

"No, not really..."

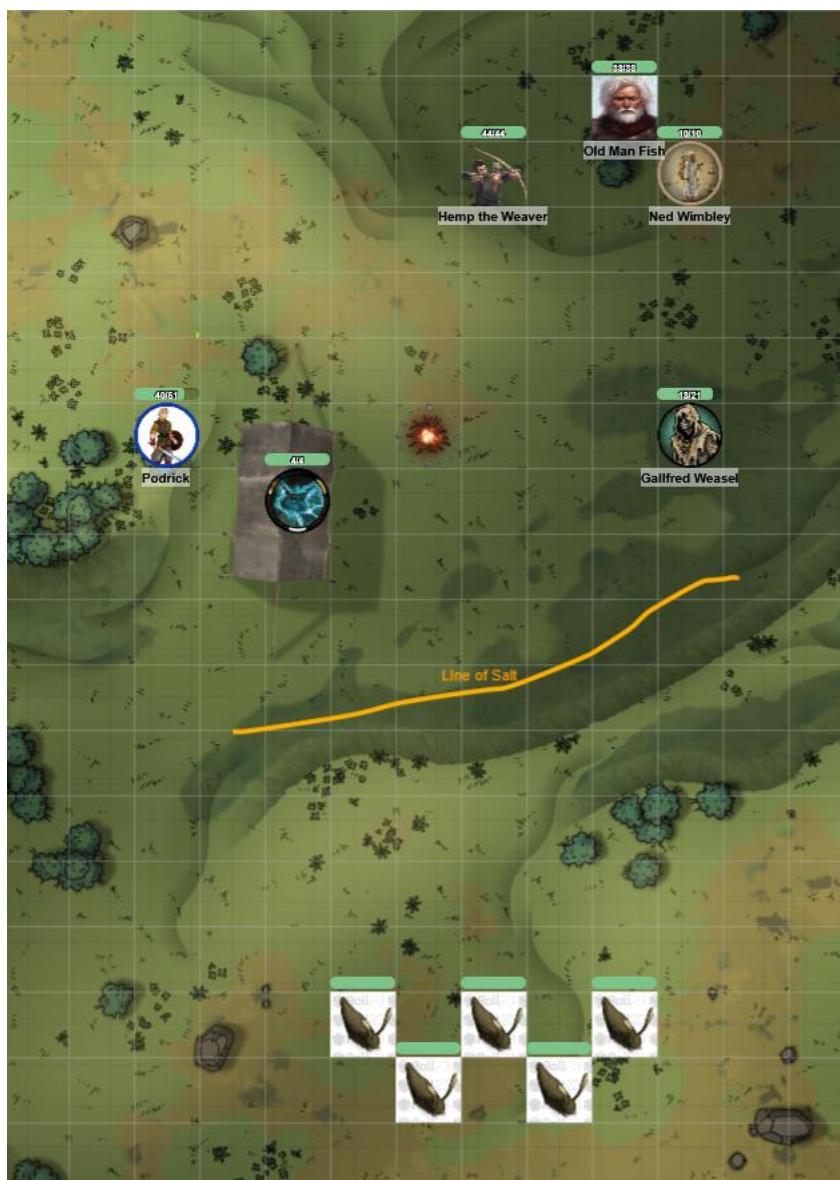
Hemp tells Lilith about the cursed rapier the group handed to the Oracle Tree some time ago. He's still quite convinced that she and her friends are likely to try and waylay the group, but it is difficult for him to concentrate with all of her personal attributes bouncing about in front of him. He also tells her about the cursed box that the characters sank in the bay. She is very interested, to the point that she brings out a notebook to record details.

She is unimpressed when Podrick (Gallfred) tries to persuade her that a gold death's head ring (worth 5 gp) is cursed. She rather gently explains that someone has deceived him.

After a while, they move on. Hemp and Podrick (Gallfred) are convinced that the bounty hunters will come back to ambush the group. They prepare a counter-ambush. When Gallfred (Old Man Fish) comes back from hunting with a rat and a deer and hears the others' story, he agrees. They set up a venison feast. Podrick (Gallfred) volunteers to eat the rat. And they stuff straw into spare clothing to create fake "sleeping bodies" to populate the camp at night. Ned Wimbley sets his unseen servant *Luigiphon* to move things around the camp to create a sense of activity.

## Slimy Visitors in the Night

The characters deploy around the edges of their camp and wait as the darkness draws in. Old Man Fish (Podrick) spots several dim red lights approaching. He identifies them as a group of giant slugs and calls out a warning. Podrick (Gallfred) holds up a bag of salt for *Luigiphon* to pick up and pour out in a line.



Ned Wimbley casts *mirror image* on Old Man Fish. Old Man Fish is pretty sure that the slugs aren't just a distraction summoned so a group of adventurers can lie waiting in ambush. Both of them (and the rest of the group) wait for the slugs to reach the line of salt.

The slugs move with surprising speed. They're clearly not normal giant slugs, and as they move their slime turns into a hard, sticky sap that mats down everything behind them. Ned muses, "That's just like my roommate in college!"

Gallfred (Old Man Fish) sends a perfectly-aimed sling stone to kill one of the slugs. The creature bursts glooshily.

Ned Wimbley continues casting *mirror image* on Hemp. Seven duplicate Hems spring up around the real thing. Hemp notices that the slugs are getting uncomfortably close to the tent. He whistles to his electric lizard *Zipzap*, then scurries out to try and drag the tent to a safe distance. Unfortunately, the tent is staked down, so he turns to shooting a slug with the *blazefire bow*. The creature dies instantly.

Podrick (Gallfred) steps forward and spears a slug, almost killing it. All of the creatures surge towards him, across the salt line (which, in fairness, does burn them). He finds himself slimed, fixed in place. Ned Wimbley helps the situation by casting *mirror image* on Podrick (Gallfred), so a half-dozen additional Podricks show up to confuse the slugs. Old Man Fish (Podrick) shoots one of the slugs, wounding it grievously. Luigiphon zips up and squashes a slug with the *coprolite club*.

Hemp destroys another slug with the *blazefire bow*. Now the whole area smells like burning slug.

The remaining slug destroys an illusionary image. Then Luigiphon mashes it with the *coprolite club*.

With all the slugs dead, the characters clean the congealed slime off Podrick (Gallfred), who is deeply disturbed, having discovered that he is not actually indestructible. Old Man Fish (Podrick) tries using his poorly-understood powers to heal the warrior. Again, he offends Tjaptar: a magical chill radiates from his body (until the next sunset). He continues trying. Things don't go well. He offends Tjaptar again, and incurs an immediate -1 penalty to all healing attempts until he undertakes a quest to benefit Tjaptar's influence.

After remaining awake for most of the evening, the group sleeps late to recover. Then Hemp teaches the group how to break down the group's new pavilion tent.

## The Keep and the Crypt

The characters locate a ruined keep at the top of a hill. Beneath the keep there is a cave mouth with spring water flowing out of it into a small creek. The keep is in terrible shape: the roof is collapsed, as are most of the floors. Little remains except for the stone shell. The water, far from being clean and pure like normal spring water, has an unhealthful sulfurous stench.

The characters make their way up to the top of the promontory. From that vantage, the keep is clearly nothing more than ruined walls – but the dungeons beneath are in surprisingly good condition. They are able to make their way down into a stone hall lined with unlighted sconces, ending at a closed door.

Beyond the door they find a 10' wide stone corridor. And beyond the corridor, they find an underground vault marked with the Magnusson family crest, a skull wearing a crown. A message is carved roughly into the marble, "The Magnusson family earned their iron crown by making promises no man should keep." The words look like graffiti left by someone with a lot of time on their hands.

Gallfred (Old Man Fish) investigate the door. It seems to fade away, though it also seems like it is still there. A ghostly figure in royal robes with the Magnusson family crest upon a gold chain around his neck appears. It points at Gallfred (Old Man Fish) and vanishes.

Podrick (Gallfred) tries to force the vault door open... and finds it too much for him. Luigiphon shows him how it's done. WHAM!

The characters walk across the threshold of the vault and are immediately afflicted by a mild curse: -1 to Luck and all die rolls while in the crypt. Beyond the crypt, they find a long chamber lined on one side with thirteen stone coffins and on the other with shelves full of bones. Gallfred wrenches the lid off a coffin and finds a body in rotted royal robes. It wears jewelry worth perhaps 50 gp and a signet ring. Uniquely, the body's head is missing. Hemp puts on the signet ring and feels the effect of the curse fade.

While the characters search the room they start to see strange shadows in the edges of the torchlight. Each of the characters' shadows have two or three reflections, most of them doing nothing related to the character's actual actions. Except for Hemp – he has only one shadow, and it matches his actions perfectly. Hemp gets out the demon-summoning whistle and brings up a shadow demon who confirms that the shadows are minor undead creatures. They are dangerous: they can drain strength. Getting rid of them is best done with clerical turning or *magic missiles*. Podrick (Gallfred), Gallfred (Old Man Fish), and Old Man Fish (Podrick) all light up torches to ward the shadows away. This is only partly successful: Hemp takes -1 STR damage. So do several other characters. Shadows are pernicious.

Fortunately, Ned Wimbley knows *magic missile*. He zaps four shadows, doing (as far as he can tell) significant damage. Hemp demonstrates that the flame of the *blazefire bow* actually hurts them as well. And then Old Man Fish (Podrick) spears a shadow with the light from a bullseye lantern and burns it away. The creature shivers and fragments like a spider under a flame.

Podrick (Gallfred) tries hitting a shadow with a torch, doing his best to light it on fire. It lights! Even better, he keeps his torch alight!

Ned's second volley of *magic missiles* hits three shadows, consuming them. There are only a couple of the creatures left, and Old Man Fish (Podrick) erases them with the bullseye lantern.

### More Coffins, More Missing Body Parts

The second coffin also contains a skeleton wearing about 50 gp of jewelry and a signet ring. This skeleton is missing both skull and right forearm. Podrick puts on the ring, and finds that it also neutralizes the curse.

The characters open enough coffins to give everyone a signet ring (warding off the curse). Each body is missing a skull and some other body part, and adorned with about 50 gp in jewelry. Podrick (Gallfred)



keeps on opening coffins. He's not that interested in which body portions are missing, but Ned Wimbley is because he thinks it might come in handy later. Eventually, Ned gets tired of watching Podrick (Gallfred) struggle and he asks Luigiphon to finish the job.

By the end, the characters have 600 gp of jewelry (total) and 7 spare signet rings. Hemp packs the extra rings into a little bundle with a note to the bounty hunters, in case they come in after the characters.

The thirteenth coffin conceals a stairway down. There is a message carved inside: "The Magnussons made their pact with the skull thirteen generations ago, and it has kept them in power all this time."

## Into the Coffin And Down the Stairs

...to Grandmama's house we go?

The stairway from the coffin leads to a giant natural cavern with a river flowing through it. The river ends at a cave mouth, clearly the river the characters saw coming from the cave underneath the ruined keep. A strange hole at the center of the river doesn't actually seem to drain it the way you'd normally expect. A stone pillar divides the center of the river into two. There is a large circle of twelve skulls, placed around a mostly complete (but headless) skeleton. And the skeleton is clearly assembled using bones from different bodies (probably twelve of them, but who's counting).

Ned studies the circle of skulls. He thinks this is part of a ritual, and that all that's needed to complete it is to place the skull of the thirteenth descendent of the original Magnusson bloodline into the appropriate location at the head of the skeleton in the center. And most likely, that would have the effect of resurrecting the original founder of the Magnusson dynasty.

The characters make the easy conclusion that the Swamp Witch's granddaughter is the thirteenth descendant of the Magnusson founder.

They then conclude that there is no situation in which they would want the ritual to be successful. But at the same time, it's unlikely that the skulls are unprotected. Ned Wimbley orders Luigiphon to smash a skull. It does so. And this prompts two strange creatures to come up out of the hole in the river. And the strange creatures are more than just notionally strange – they look like giant maggots with four jointed legs ending in hands (for feet?). Three eyestalks at one end allow them to see, and a single (!) wing allows them to fly in a strange, unnatural, flapping path.

## Worm Devils Attack!

Ned Wimbley plinks one worm devil with a *magic missile*, then orders Luigiphon to slam the creature with the *coprolite club*. The creature's body falls back into the hole in the river. Old Man Fish demonstrates that nonmagical arrows will still hurt these creatures, though not as much as a magical club made from petrified feces. And Podrick (Gallfred) discovers to his surprise that he has a magical crossbow that really, really wants him to enforce the law.

Examined more closely, the hole in the river really does look unnatural. The river currents split right around it, and a strange yellowish vapor floats out of it. It's 5' wide, and creepy enough that none of the characters want to wade out to stare deeply into it.

## The Other Bank

Ned Wimbley looks out at the space on the opposite side of the river. He sees a pile of bodies, perhaps four or five of them. They look like peasant farmers from their clothing. Ned asks Luigiphon to bring one of the bodies back so the characters can examine it. It brings back the body of a dead monk, apparently dead from being stabbed. Old Man Fish (Podrick) thinks the body was killed about a month ago. The other four bodies look like commoners, though from their goods they followed a variety of occupations.

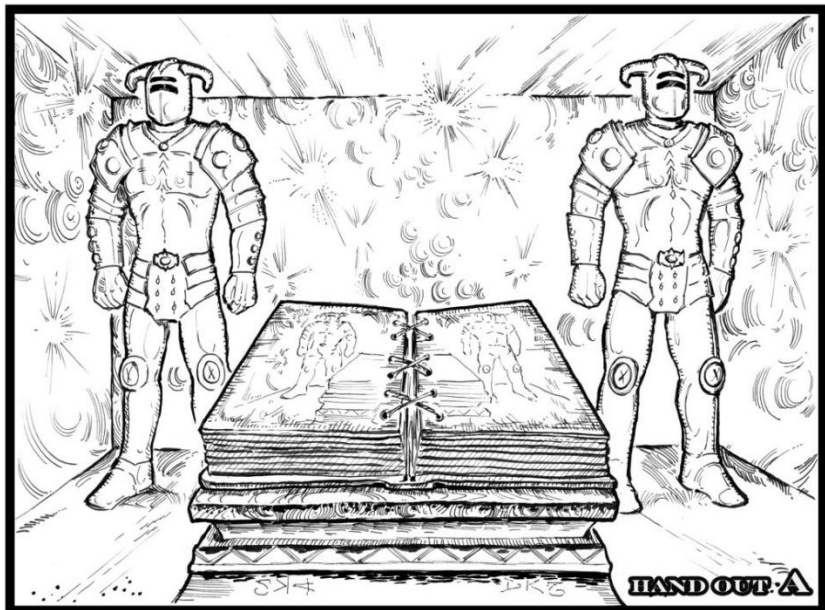
With the bodies explored, Luigiphon lifts a couple of characters over to the other side so they can see the rest of the area. Podrick (Gallfred) leads the way and finds a large square passage cut into the stone.

Ned Wimbley has an idea. He sends Luigiphon up to the top of the stone column and finds that it isn't actually connected to the ceiling. Instead, at the top there is a single silver skull surrounded by white powder (maybe salt?). Everyone concludes that this is a "later" problem. Hey, maybe the Swamp Witch's 80-year-old granddaughter is a powerful magician and she's already killed the wizard?

## The Room of Brass

The characters enter the carved corridor. They find themselves in a square room with walls of polished brass. A brass pedestal in the center holds a book with pages made of brass. The book looks like it might weigh hundreds of pounds, at minimum.

Two metal statues of fighting men stand in the corners. Podrick (Gallfred) notes that his *anti-golem crossbow* is potentially just the weapon for this situation. He cranks it down and loads a bolt. He takes careful aim at the statue on the right.



Ned Wimbley tries interpreting the book. All he can tell is that the current page shows the current room, including the statues and the pedestal. He decides that the worst thing that could happen if he turns a page is that reality could get reset. So, he turns a page. It's remarkably easy considering its construction. He finds a scene showing a different image, of a sandy beach bordered by a rolling ocean. And the



characters are now present upon a sandy beach, looking over an ocean inhabited by strange creatures. One of the statues is also still present, but now it is made of water and armed with a huge axe.

Podrick (Gallfred) and Gallfred (Old Man Fish) pick up a few shells. Podrick (Gallfred) picks out the ones he thinks will have the highest resale value.

Then one of the incoming waves surges upward and stays in place. A gurgling voice calls out, but nobody understands it.

## The Pits of Hell

Ned flips the page again. The group is in a dark, sweltering cave. The walls are coal and other black stone. Now the statue is an enormous fighting man made of coal. But the characters' attention is diverted by screaming! There is a woman bound in the middle of a pentagram while a spindly devil approaches her with a barbed blade in hand. The woman's ears are elvish – she might be the Swamp Witch's granddaughter!

The devil stands in a crouching hunch, hiding its eight-foot total height. It moves closer to the bound girl. To everyone's surprise, Gallfred (Old Man Fish) slashes the devil across the face, blinding it temporarily.

The devil responds by showering the area with a wave of barbed spines that kills the witch's granddaughter instantly and wounds the rest of the group.



Ned Wimbley annoys the devil with a *magic missile* and *enlarges* himself, while Luigiphon whisks away the girl's body. Then he hides behind the brass book. Hemp shoots the devil in the face, hoping to blind him with flames. And Podrick (Gallfred) spears the devil's dagger hand into his jaw... and then into his brain with *ulftheonar's wolf-spear*. The devil falls.

Old Man Fish (Podrick) heals the Marsh Witch's granddaughter, reviving her.

Nobody notices when Gallfred (Old Man Fish) steals the barbed devil's ritual dagger. The dagger urges him to harvest souls for its master. He decides that this is a horrible idea for the moment, but he wraps it up for later. Also, he finds that he can speak Infernal. And it has a name – it is *Abathon*.

Also, everyone takes a point of damage from heat.

Ned quickly flips two pages back in the book to bring everyone back to the room of polished brass. Then he starts thinking about what other destinations might be in the book and makes a move to peek. Everyone else leaps to drag him away from the book.

Old Man Fish (Podrick) heals everyone, and then everyone sits down with *Eriss* to explain how the Swamp Witch sent them to rescue her. She explains that the Duke won't be happy about the characters saving her, and further she points out that he can possess bodies of both the living and the dead. And as a bonus, he can control a giant flying lizard.

Gallfred (Old Man Fish) asks her if destroying the silver skull would hurt him. She doesn't know what effect that would have, though she does think that is his real skull.

### Abathon

Ceremonial +1 dagger (athame): Int 5; AL C; bane: men (19-20 crit threat range); communication: simple urges; special purpose: harvest souls for its master; special powers: improved vampiric touch (wielder heals 1 hp on any hit that causes 5+ damage); detect magic 1/day, detect invisible (ongoing); wielder speaks Infernal.

## The End of the Session

The session ends with the characters still in the Crypt of the Silver Warlock, debating how to deal with an undead magician who can possess both living and dead bodies. Each character gains 6 xp.