

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 notes that Spring last year was very dry, which caused a lot of problems for several industries including agriculture. Now, as our economy spirals down the drain at least we have a lot of rain to go around. *Chris* nods solemnly. *Bruce* refrains from mentioning that it's all *George Soros'* fault.

Chris notices that *Patrick* has joined and redirects the conversation to *The Pitt*, a compelling drama about people working in a rather ghastly hospital in Pittsburgh. *Paul* hears *Bruce's* stories about A/C creating old socks smells and points out that he recently experimented with an old humidifier that left him choking and gasping with phlegm and allergies. It turns out that you need to clean out humidifiers from time to time.

Tim calls in just as *Chris* is describing how easy it is to hire psychopathic developers who will lie to you. Generally, you can tell on the first interview!

Ernest makes it to the event later on, because he is an actual member of a community and sometimes has responsibilities as a result.

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

Maybe, just maybe, the characters will be able to return the *Swamp Witch's* granddaughter to her and undo the curse.

This Is Just Like *Fallen*

Last time, the characters used a *Book of the Planes* to go to Hell and retrieve the granddaughter of the Swamp Witch. Now, they are back in their proper plane and standing in the Book Room. They are pretty

sure that the undead *Silver Warlock* can possess both the living and the dead and are not at all certain how that works.

The characters quickly come up with a couple of plans for dealing with the wizard. First, they could take the skull and fling it into a different plane using the *Book of the Planes*. Perhaps, the plane of infinite oceans. Second, they could just fling it down into the hole in the river that seems to extend down to hell. Both *Podrick* (Gallfred) and *Ned Wimbley* like these ideas.

Then *Gallfred* (Old Man Fish) points out, “These are good ideas in theory, but we really don’t know how that possession trick works. We need to know that. Granddaughter – have you seen him possess someone?”

“Why yes. He was possessing the body of a shepherd and riding upon a giant flying lizard when he abducted me.” She also mentions that the wizard is properly *Duke Magnusson I*, and that all that’s left of him is his silver skull. The ring of salt around the skull prevents him from possessing anyone outside the cave – but once he possesses someone he can leave the cavern. This prompts a problem, because the only way the characters have to get out of the crypt is through the cavern.

Podrick (Gallfred) asks, “How did you end up in Hell?”

“He sent me there to be sacrificed, as part of his ritual.”

Ned Wimbley thinks that destroying the Silver Skull should get rid of the wizard. The obvious plan is to send one person in to get possessed, then restrain them while *Luigiphon* flies up to destroy the skull. The key flaw is that whoever gets possessed will suddenly have all the powers of an ancient wizard.

Ned summons up a very large raven, using the fletching of an arrow as an animal component. He casts *magic shield* upon Podrick (Gallfred), giving him +4 AC, immunity to *magic missile*, and resistance (DR 10) to mundane projectiles. Gallfred (Old Man Fish) gets *magic shield* for +4 AC and *magic missile* immunity. And then he loses the spell.

Into the Cavern

The characters enter the cavern to find that Duke Magnusson has taken the precaution of possessing a peasant’s body. Now, the dead body has a silver skull for a head and is riding around the cavern on the back of a pterodactyl. Gallfred (Old Man Fish) bemoans the characters’ failure to burn or mutilate the bodies of the dead peasants.

Gallfred (Old Man Fish) steps out and screams out insults and challenges to the undead Duke. Podrick (Gallfred) is horrified to see his body trying to actually attract attention. This is successful. The Duke spools up a *lightning bolt*. Ned attempts to counterspell the effect. Things work out spectacularly well – the Duke loses his spell as Ned invokes an *earthly cyclone* that will bludgeon any of his enemies that should be so unwise as to draw within 30 feet.

The Duke urges his pterodactyl down at Gallfred (Podrick). Podrick (Gallfred) sends a crossbow bolt at the beast, but the shot goes wide. Gallfred (Podrick) uses the *cloak of Cheret the Lost* and vanishes from

sight. The Duke pulls away from his dive and attempts to strike Podrick (Gallfred) with a *magic missile*. Things go badly – he loses the spell and suffers Patron taint. Twisted horns grind out from his skull, as the powers of Hell warp his form.

Ned Wimbley decides that the pterodactyl needs to go. He casts a massive volley of magical bee-shaped *magic missiles* at the creature and skeletonizes it. The luckless Duke Magnusson falls 50 feet to the ground and breaks multiple limbs. He lies upon the ground, crippled. Time to possess a new body!

Podrick (Gallfred) attempts to stab the crippled wizard with *ulftheonar's wolf-spear*. Even though you might think that stabbing a crippled corpse would be fairly easy, he still misses. Gallfred (Old Man Fish) uses his sling to drop a vial of *draconic acid* at the wizard's body. He hits him hard enough to drive the body to the ground.

Duke Magnusson decides to possess Gallfred (Old Man Fish). His attempt is almost pathetically bad. Gallfred (Old Man Fish) doesn't even realize that he's at risk of being possessed.

Then Luigi grabs the Silver Skull and flies over the hell-pit. He drops the skull. There is a horrific noise as the hell-pit releases an awful toxic cloud. The characters all avert their gazes, and when they are able to look again the pit is gone. Then with the passing of the 13th Duke, the column (which has thirteen concentric rings, one for each generation) collapses, falling towards the entry to the chamber holding the *Book of the Planes*. The characters all manage to avoid the falling stones, but the doorway is sealed by the collapse. More fortunately, the Swamp Witch's granddaughter manages to escape certain death or being trapped underground through GM fiat.

Kingspire. It Might Not Be Home, But... It's Really Not Much of a Town After All.

It is the 11th of Umbro as the characters depart the Crypt of the Silver Skull and head back towards Kingspire. They start by recovering their old campsite and resting for the evening.

Gallfred (Old Man Fish) sleeps early so he can keep watch. The night is still and cold. He spots movement out beyond the guttering fire of the camp. He sees a group of six to eight cloaked figures bearing staves and lanterns. They are heading towards the Crypt with a sense of purpose and dedication. Some of them talk in low tones. They are not being particularly stealthy.

Gallfred (Old Man Fish) wakes the others to warn them. He suggests that they are likely just cultists involved in their own drama but warns that the group might need to kill several people. Podrick (Gallfred) is eager for bloodshed. He puts out the fire so the approaching cultists are not warned of the group's presence. Gallfred (Old Man Fish) and Old Man Fish (Podrick) both hide in ambush. Ned Wimbley summons up a dire wolf.

Pterodactyl

Init +2; Atk bite +8 melee (1d10) or claw +2 melee (1d4); AC 15; HD 6d8; hp 26; MV 10' or fly 50'; Act 1d20; SV Fort +6, Ref +5, Will +2; AL N.

The cultists on the path see the fire go out. They raise their lanterns. Ned calls out, "Who goes there?"

The tallest among them, obviously the leader, steps forward. He raises his hands to show he has no weapons. He explains that they are seekers, looking for the Temple of the First Light which once stood in the area.

Ned knows that the Temple of the First Light was dedicated to an entity that existed between darkness and creation, a force both strange and old. The temple once existed but was cast down amid stories of terrible practices and sacrifices carried out in the liminal hours between dark and dawn.

"Where is this temple that you seek?"

"We heard of ruins near the mountains and sought to explore them."

"There is a castle that is now in ruins. It is full of hungry shadows, take bright light sources with you."

Ned finds it strange that these pilgrims are traveling at night, but maybe given their religion it makes sense. Podrick (Gallfred) suggests that they travel by night to conceal their horrible malformations, an idea that is consistent with stories suggesting that the worshippers of the First Light were no longer entirely human once they reached the higher levels of the religion.

The leader asks, "You have been there. Did you bring back any artifacts?"

Ned denies anything, "No. There was a portal to Hell, but we found an artifact and used it to close it down. Now the artifact is gone."

"To Hell. That's interesting. We know nothing of Hell. We wish the best to you, your companion, and your giant wolf." (the Swamp Witch's granddaughter is hiding in the tent). They head on their way.

Cursed Werner Herzog

The next morning the characters reach the plains outside Kingspire. Gallfred (Old Man Fish) spots a strange, large figure shambling across the countryside. It might be bound in chains. Gallfred (Old Man Fish) decides that not investigating is the best answer. He hides the group.

The thing moves close enough that the characters can hear that it is muttering strange phrases with haunting resonance. Ned Wimbley thinks that it is repeating phrases from an ancient curse. He thinks the curse is about twisting and corrupting the land. The thing is moving to the West.

Podrick (Gallfred) advises leaving it alone, but Old Man Fish (Podrick) isn't willing to. He protests that it is corrupting the land. Ned, as always, does what he likes. Which in this case is casting *enlarge* on Old Man Fish (Podrick), growing him to twice his normal size (+4 AC, to hit, and damage; +10 hp, several other benefits). Gallfred (Old Man Fish) agrees with Podrick (Gallfred). Unfortunately, Ned explains that Pain Shambler organs are valuable for making several kinds of potions. He cries out, "Hey, pain shambler! We're over here!"

This doesn't draw the creature's attention.

Old Man Fish (Podrick) takes a shot at the creature and misses.

As the thing moves closer, the characters can see that it is a giant creature whose chains merge with its rotting body. It clutches a book inscribed with arcane symbols. Its empty eye sockets glow with sickly green light. It moves towards the characters, exuding a horrible stench. It clobbers Old Man Fish (Podrick), knocking him to the ground.

Podrick (Gallfred) stabs the creature through the kneecap, rendering it unable to move and inflicting an incredible injury. Luigiroth flies in from the flanks and strikes with the *coprolite club*, leaving the creature disoriented. And Ned Wimbley casts *mirror image* to surround himself with five protective images.

Gallfred (Old Man Fish) flings a vial of *draconic acid* at the pain shambler. It burns and is disoriented for 4 rounds.

The pain shambler regenerates. The characters are pleased to note that it doesn't regenerate the damage from the acid – but it has taken plenty of additional damage that it can regenerate. It lashes out in random pain.

Podrick (Gallfred) stabs again with *ulftheonar's wolf spear*, disabling one of its arms and robbing it of a clawing attack (-4 penalty to damage with one claw). Ned casts *enlarge*, tripling Podrick's (Gallfred's) size (+6 hit, damage, & AC; +20 bonus hit points).

Ned casts *enlarge* on Gallfred (Old Man Fish), tripling his size (+6 hit, damage, & AC; +20 bonus hit points).

The pain shambler lashes out but is so crippled that it cannot connect. Then Old Man Fish (Podrick) takes it down.

The thing swiftly regenerates and stands back up. The characters recognize that they need fire. Old Man Fish (Podrick) starts lighting a torch while Gallfred (Old Man Fish) takes it down again. Briefly. Then Luigiroth knocks it down. Ned douses the thing with lantern oil. And finally, Old Man Fish (Podrick) gets his torch lit and sets the thing on fire. It writhes in pain for quite some time as its regeneration slowly loses the battle against the flames.

Ned watches its spellbook burn and sheds muddy tears. Luigiroth sees this and rescues the book, though not before taking some damage from the flames. Then the dark chains emerge from the book to wrap around Luigiroth. Things look grim, right until it turns out that Luigiroth is *immune to curses* (a newly discovered power). Luigiroth tosses the cursed book back into the flames.

The Swamp Witch Fixes Everything

The characters bring the Swamp Witch's granddaughter around to the witch's hut. She is pleased to see the girl again and to hear the characters' tales of Duke Magnusson and the Silver Skull. She creates a ritual circle out of bones and fetishes upon the ground and reverses the body-switching curse. Everyone is back to normal! Mostly.

Some Treasure Distribution

Gallfred keeps the athame *Abathon* but is forced to give up the *bracelet of swimming and climbing* to Old Man Fish. Old Man Fish is a little concerned about just how evil *Abathon* is, but the others point out that holding it will be good for Gallfred. They don't really specify *how* it will be good for him.

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.

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.

The Characters' Current Quests

- Gallfred needs to bring the jeweled horn to the Order of Vilom in Fythorp.
- Old Man Fish wishes to gain the power to transform into animal shapes but has no clues.
- Podrick wants to cleans the *helm of Chistu* at a location south of Wymoor.
- Ned is drained by his frequent encounters with Death and wants to find a way to recover some of his lost STA.
- Hemp the Weaver wants to establish a Patron bond with *Aphiel*.

Evening Activities in Kingspire

Ned Wimbley visits the Swamp Witch to learn ways he might regain some of his lost STA. She suggests, "Heh heh haaa... If you want such a thing you should enter the Tournament. They regularly hold Wizard Death Matches upon the Isle of Dagon. The island itself is hidden, concealed by fogs and crashing storms. It is never found by accident, only by those who wish to find it. Many wizards have traveled to the island to take part in these matches, and the legend is that those who do survive gain unnatural stamina, arcane secrets, and other treasures. But only the most cunning and powerful can survive!"

Ned thinks this sounds like a great idea.

The Swamp Witch gives him a ritual to contact the Isle of Dagon but warns him that only the most powerful spellcasters can perform the ritual and gain an invitation.

Gallfred spends 900 gp with the Swamp Witch to buy poisons:

- 4 doses **Lumphat Extract** 25 gp Wound DC 18. Successful save causes -1 to all AGI checks; failed save halves target's movement speed. Effect lasts one hour.

- 4 doses **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.

Daily Activities in Kingspire

The next morning is Goldday, the 13th day of Umbro. Hemp the Weaver asks Gallfred, “Want to go gambling?” It turns out that Gallfred has already found a dice game. Gallfred loses 10 gp. Hemp gains 10 gp. And nobody is surprised by this outcome.

Old Man Fish finds a bootmaker. He commissions the most comfortable, most water-resistant boots possible, with waders. This costs him 4 gp. He pays with a ring worth 5 gp.

Ned Wimbley examines the ritual the Swamp Witch gave him and collects up all the necessary ritual components. He finds a nice quiet spot and performs the ritual.

Hemp the Weaver admires Old Man Fish’s boots and asks, “Where did you get those?” Old Man Fish tells him. Hemp goes back to the same bootmaker and buys his own pair. He gets boots made from alligator hide with a classic “swamp pattern”.

Ned Wimbley sees Hemp’s boots and asks the exact same question. Again, he goes to the same bootmaker. The man isn’t quite sure what’s bringing all the new business to his door, but he’s certainly not going to complain.

Gallfred ruins the trend, because he doesn’t actually wear boots. He wears sneakers. The kind that you have to pump up to improve his ability to jump.

Later in the afternoon, Hemp closes all the windows in his room in the inn and uses his magic whistle to summons a *tutelary shadow*. The demon tells him that there was a powerful magician, a worshipper of Aphiel, some 330 years ago. He served the god with utter devotion, as did his brother. They traveled the land as mercenary generals. But the young son of one of them fell gruesomely ill and died. He was buried beneath a rocky cairn out in the wild hills. One of the brothers became even more zealous, while the other fell to grief and rage. His faith was shattered and he came to hate and defile Aphiel. Finally, the faithless brother almost killed the other, then imprisoned him in a magical coffin of orichalcum bound with chains of adamantite. The shadow demon tells Hemp the location of the cave where the coffin is hidden. It is located southeast of Wymoor, some 4 hexes from the town. Hemp laughs his best villainous laugh.

Old Man Fish visits the Swamp Witch, looking for guidance on how to become an animal shapechanger. His approach could use some improvement: “Crone! Have you switched bodies with your granddaughter yet? I command you to tell me what I want to know!”

She cannot help him. In fact, she seems downright unsociable. In fact, she commands him to leave her hut before she is forced to evict him.

Old Man Fish learns nothing about changing his shape. He warns Gallfred, “Don’t go by the witch’s hut today. She’s in a really bad mood.”

Hemp still has ambitions to go back to his old life as a weaver (you know, after he turns into the avatar of Aphiel within the world) and spends 15 gp on various pelts that he can use for trimming on clothing. Gallfred is honestly not sure why Hemp is interested in trying to go from adventuring to running a tailor shop in Sewich.

Later that evening, Gallfred and Hemp go gambling. Gallfred hears a rumor about *Darkweather Mountain*, a mountain where magic berries grow. Those who wish to change to animal shapes seek to eat them, but the grove is protected by a *Witch-man*. More surprising, Gallfred doesn't lose any money gambling.

For his part, Hemp wakes up with a book he doesn't recognize. It's 100 pages on parchment. He leafs through it. It is titled *The Sassy Wizard Kid*. It is a book of well-known poems, each next to an illustration of a magical device. He can tell that the poems contain information about how to find, or possibly to make, the depicted device – but only if the reader knows enough supporting information to extract the clues from the poetry.

Future Travel Plans

The characters sketch out their immediate travel plans. The consensus choice:

1. Weebrook (maybe by crossing the Bloodfen River and traveling through all new territory)
2. Fythorp (via the Ley Road)
3. Wymoor (passing back through Weebrook and mostly following the Ley Road again)
4. Shrine of the Bethunes or Isle of Dagon

The End of the Session

The characters are still in Kingspire, preparing to head out to Weebrook. Each character gains 4 XP.