

# 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

*Bruce* joins the meet to find nobody online. He is bereft! Was everything canceled? Hardly. *Paul* joins a moment later, explaining that he was delayed by the need to consume some clam chowder (not a euphemism) and some crunchy Korean ramen snacks (also not a euphemism).

*Patrick* shows up in time to hear that *Bruce* is amazed and baffled. The others do not explain why, because that would spoil the mystery.

*Chris* doesn't worry about mysteries. He just wants to play a game, dammit. *Ernest* agrees, though he has some other obligations that result in his showing up somewhat late.

*Tim* is in Kansas. No other explanation is necessary.

## On the Shore, With the Chained Coffin

The characters, plus *Amathies* the lamia, are back on land near the Secret Cave. The *Chained Coffin* is there waiting for them on the characters' cart, along with various other companions – principally the haunted woman *Morgan* (weird and drug-addled; she stays in the cart) and *Hemp*'s three berserkers. They find that the entire Wizard's Duel only took a single night – it is the morning of the 22<sup>nd</sup>, Spring Renewal.

*Hemp the Weaver* notes, "Hey, *Amathies* isn't anybody's side piece yet."

*Old Man Fish* hushes him.

The group heads towards the town of Wymoor across largely unknown territory. They hope to reach the town in time to catch part of the festival. By late afternoon the sky is stormy and gray. The wind whips across the grasses.

Ahead, the characters see a large three-headed beast standing inside a roughly-drawn ritual circle surrounded by blood and bones. It is a *chimera*. There are cuts and wounds all over the chimera's skin. Its goat head is bleeding and seems distressed. The dragon head is hissing uncertainly. And the lion head is chanting ritual phrases.

Hemp uses his newfound powers to (briefly) curse the chimera. For one round. Grumble.

Podrick shoots a poorly-aimed crossbow bolt at the chimera. It's poorly-aimed, so it has no effect.

The chimera takes notice of the characters. The lion head snarls, "Back off! This is not your concern!"

The goat head bleats, "Please! Stop me! I can't resist!"

The dragon head hisses, "Finish it! For Thazzamun!"

*Gallfred Weasel* and Old Man Fish both hide in the underbrush while Hemp, Amathies, and two of his berserkers move to attack on the left flank. Hemp shoots the creature right in the lion head, silencing its chant. "There you go, goat-man! I've silenced your naughty lion head!"

The chimera shrieks, shivers, and shudders within the ritual circle.

Hemp takes a shot at the ritual circle, hoping to break it and interrupt the ritual. His shot strikes! The circle blazes up with the fires of Aphiel and the chimera collapses.

The goat head moans, "It's quieter now! The hunger is less!"

The lion head chokes upon its own blood and bile. And the dragon head cautions, "Fools, you've only delayed the feast."

Podrick steps up to the chimera and destroys it, over Hemp's arguments that he wants to emulate *Venger* and ride a chimera around.

### Berserker bodyguards

Grond Halftusk, Varka the Blacksmith, and Scarn Two-Scars.

Berserker: Init +2; Atk axe +2+1d4 melee (1d8+2+1d4, crit 19+); AC 14; HD 2d12; hp 13; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SP battle madness; SV Fort +3, Ref +2, Will +0; AL C. Crit table 1d14/III

Berserkers are savage warriors. When in combat, they fly into a battle madness that makes them even more dangerous. A berserker fights normally until wounded. When first wounded, he undergoes the battle madness. He gains +5 hit points and a +2 to all attacks, damage, and saving throws while in combat. After 1 turn this madness fades. He then loses the extra hit points and drops dead if this brings his total below zero.



The characters are left with a ritual circle to the demon lord *Thazzamun*. Hemp mocks Podrick, “You may not know who that is, but you’ve just sacrificed a chimera to him.”

The ground within the ritual circle is dead and gray and the magic seems to be gone. The chimera’s demonic idol is shattered. But Podrick definitely senses a massive, unseen presence watching him while he stands within the circle. And Podrick gains +1 LUCK for destroying the minion of a demon lord.

Old Man Fish is more practical. He knows that the teeth, claws, and horns of chimeras can be sold to wizards. For money! He has the barbarians drag the body out of the circle so he can harvest it. He looks around the area and concludes that the chimera was acting alone.

## Drinking and Debauchery

The characters make it to Wymoor in time for the Spring Renewal festival. The doorways and fence-posts are lined with lanterns and the air is filled with the sounds of bells, singing, and carrying-on. The characters drop off their wagon at their house, then head immediately to the festivities.

The crowds are gathered around the large tree at the center of the town. The townsfolk’s faces are painted in green and yellow paint with the symbols of Findire of the Staff. Children run around chasing each other with sprigs of green leaves. And the tables groan under the weight of foods: honey bread, cheese, cider, and more. And a woman with a crown of wildflowers invites Old Man Fish to dance. He finds himself dragged into the dance circle.

Gallfred spots a group of men and older boys gambling upon an egg-balancing contest. He puts down 10 gp, expecting to lose. He ends up winning 70 gp, then spends 50 gp getting everyone in the area drunk on hard cider.

At the end of the evening, the youngsters of the town hold a procession to bring good fortune and drive away monsters and blight. Half of the young people seem somewhat drunk, thanks to Gallfred. Podrick asks for a blessing and gets one.

Old Man Fish quietly leaves some items at the local priest’s door: charms and statues of Findire the Staff worth 40gp.

Hemp the Weaver finds the characters’ companion *Darrell* (Florida Man) wrestling a swan near a pond. The bird seems to be getting the better of him, as he note by howling out, “This is way harder than wrestling a crocodile!” After the bird finishes with him, he drags off to where Gallfred is handing out hard liquor.

Hemp the Weaver stays up late carousing. He learns a rumor: nobody in Fythorp can catch a ferry across the lake. And the apple trees near the city whisper the names of passers-by to them. Something terrible is going on there. When Hemp asks, “Is this because the place is taken over by undead skeletons?” it’s the first that the guy he’s talking to has heard of it.

Old Man Fish gets into a brawl and gets beaten up. He takes 16 points of damage. It turns out that the woman who invited him to dance has a boyfriend, a very burly farmhand. Old Man Fish gets slammed

headfirst into a table and put into a headlock until he taps out. A local healer gives him some herbs to chew on afterwards. They make him see weird colors and cause him to confess his love to various strangers but have no other effect. And he gets a lot of goodwill from the locals for being such a good sport.

## Morning in Wymoor

The next day, the characters have a late start. Podrick stops by the Chapter House of the Knights of Lushnia and the priestess *Nylin* who runs it. He finds that there are several Knights in attendance, having paused in their efforts to fight for the cause of Law in the largely-barbaric realm the characters occupy. Podrick walks in and announces that he has both found and cleansed the *helm of Chistu*. They are pleased, and they promote him to *Knight-Banneret*. He tells the others that he intends to travel West to confront the undead forces that threaten the realm, and that he will have no part of cowardly ideas of hiding the Helm away from sight – he intends to wear and use it! He might even have accused the other Knights of being “timid fishwives” for even suggesting such a thing. They are shamed and agree that his judgment is best.

Also, the Knights want to hold a celebration to mark his achievement and his elevation in rank. They point out that he needs to design his own banner as well. The Archivist wants to hear his story in detail, so it can be added to the Archives of the Chapter House. Podrick offers his regrets because time is a factor – he must head West without delay.

## The Road to Weebrook

Even with a late start, the characters expect to reach Weebrook by the end of the day. As the group crests a low rise, Gallfred sees an altar of lashed-together femurs and skulls. Six ghouls and a ghoul acolyte have a bound peasant tied to the thing. The conclusion is clear – kill those guys, save the peasant.

Podrick moves in and tries turning the ghouls. Sadly, they don’t even notice.

Hemp fires the *blazefire bow* at the acolyte. He shoots for the creature’s arm and hits, sending the acolytes’ black dagger away from his hand.

The ghouls mostly mob Podrick, with a couple running to engage Hemp’s barbarian allies. One of them claws Podrick and causes a horrible infection. His flesh blackens! Then the paralytic venom takes hold, leaving him frozen for the next four hours. Not good at all!

Old Man Fish rides down the ghouls around Podrick on horseback, then uses his magic to unparalyze Podrick. The fact that the ghoul gets bonked on the head by a sling bullet from Gallfred is more insult than actual injury in comparison. One of the other ghouls confronts Amathies, who tears it to shreds. And a third gets cut down by *Skarn Two-Stars*, a barbarian berserker.

Hemp shoots the acolyte again, kills him, and leaves him burning like a tire fire.

Podrick gets bitten again. And paralyzed. Rats. Then unparalyzed again by Old Man Fish. Huzzah! He celebrates by killing a ghoul, then stumbling over the creature's spilled viscera (giving the creature's allies a +2 bonus to attack him). This may not be a real problem – Hemp rides in and shoots down a ghouls at close range and the barbarians kill the last of them.

The barbarian berserkers celebrate by hooting like Sandpeople.

The characters find that the peasant is nearly unconscious. His name is *Brannic*. He reveals he was abducted from a nearby hamlet and says that the ghouls "spoke with a woman in black armor" who said Weebrook's fall is inevitable.

Old Man Fish finds a black stone fragment of an idol on the ghoul acolyte's body. He's also able to locate the black obsidian sacrificial dagger that the acolyte intended to use to sacrifice Brannic. He can find signs of where the ghouls traveled, but no sign of a woman in black armor. Then he convinces Gallfred that ghouls often swallow their valuables, prompting the thief to go through the disgusting task of cutting through the dead ghouls' innards. Gallfred finds nothing of value.

The characters decide to camp. Gallfred first tries setting camp on top of an anthill, but by sheer luck he notices that Podrick is getting eaten alive by ants and moves to a better place. Old Man Fish goes out hunting and comes back with a deer (5 meat, 3 pelts). He uses the meat to feed the group and gives the pelts to the barbarians because they need enhanced groin coverage.

### The Order of Vilom is Fleeing

Late that night, Gallfred sees some pilgrims. He recognizes them as the monks of the *Order of Vilom*, whom he knows quite well. There are four of them, in salt-stained robes, and they are moving very cautiously. Gallfred introduces himself, "I am Gallfred and I seek your Order. I have your horn. What can you tell me of Fythorp?"

"Fythorp is ruined. Those who are left behind work now for Lady Skeme, creating potions and poisons for her rituals within the mines."

"This leaves precious little space for us to operate in."

The monks tell him that the cider mill is now a place of making chemicals and solutions for Lady Skeme, rather than its usual products. *Brother Sarvo* is now the poison master there, working under an undead overseer. He is still of the Order, in fact he has declared himself leader, but in truth the monks say he works for Lady Skeme, a shriveled former noble with bile-fused bones.

"We flee to Wymoor now. Perhaps we can form a new refuge there."

Gallfred offers, "There is a house in Wymoor. Here is the location. There are people there, do not trouble them – but present yourself as monks and use it as a refuge." Gallfred is confident that none of the characters' allies will see through the monks' disguises.

The four fleeing monks are:

- *Sister Jallah*: Soft-spoken, middle-aged, silver eyes; poisoner.
- *Brother Senn*: Broad-shouldered, silent, missing two fingers.
- *Young Nirr*: Chatty, naïve-seeming apprentice—actually the deadliest.
- *Pilgrim Lorrick*: The talker, a former priest turned killer.

They give Gallfred a vial of *shadowmoss venom* (DC15, 1d4 CON damage) in thanks for his help. They go on their way, and Gallfred does not tell any of the other characters of their passing.

Hemp the Weaver thought he saw something. Gallfred explains that it was only some pilgrims, that the cider house in Fythorp has fallen, and that Brother Sarvo has betrayed everything he was once loyal to. Should the characters find him, they should kill him.

## The Ghost on the Bridge

The characters approach a bridge upon the road. It is covered and was once painted red and white but is now faded. Two-thirds of the way across, the characters see a glowing but solid-seeming man in his early twenties. He is washed of all color, and a jagged wound upon his throat weeps watery blood that hangs around his head like a halo.

Gallfred gazes upon the apparition. He notes, “Death bears no secrets from me.” He is unmoved.

Old Man Fish is likewise unconcerned. Podrick has mastered death long ago.

Hemp and his barbarians see their own mortality. They turn about and flee.

Gallfred, Old Man Fish, and Podrick approach the ghost. He does not speak, but raises his right hand with index finger outstretched, pointing downstream. Then he points at the group and opens his palm. And then he goes back to pointing downstream.

Gallfred silently points downstream. The ghost doesn’t respond. But Gallfred reasons that the ghost seeks something that washed down the river. He and Old Man Fish head downstream, looking for the ghost’s body and/or whatever token he seeks. Podrick heads back along the road to find Hemp and his barbarians. Hemp agrees that if the characters can find the ghost thing, then they can cross the river on the bridge.

Gallfred and Old Man Fish notice a pile of waterborne debris caught along the stony shore of the river. Old Man Fish thinks it marks the mouth of a cave. Old Man Fish marks the location and collects the rest of the group.

The cave mouth (once revealed) is two feet high and four feet wide. The interior is slimy and stony. Gallfred goes inside and finds a larger area. The air is damp, smelling of river muck. A trio of log-shaped creatures with red and black bodies swim around, propelled by their stubby legs. They look like giant salamanders. Gallfred searches the place, avoiding the salamanders. He finds animal bones and an even smaller cave at the back. He continues to find a small grotto about 10’ square. The floor is covered in thick mud, a layer perhaps several feet deep. Gallfred finds a mostly-straight stick and uses it to search

the depths. He finds (eventually) the old bones of a slain traveler (less the skull and right leg), held together by stiff leather clothing. There are score marks along the shirt suggesting that the traveler's throat was slit. He also finds an object sewn into the shirt – a golden wedding ring in antique style, worth perhaps 25 gp.

Gallfred takes the bones and the ring back. He tries giving the ghost the bones. The ghost isn't impressed. The others persuade him that he needs to give the ghost the ring, which Gallfred hands over under great reluctance. The ghost is transformed, his expression changes to one of beatific happiness. He smiles and walks away, on the road to Weebrook.

Gallfred hopes that the ghost took a ghostly copy of the ring and left the real one behind. He frantically searches the boards of the bridge but finds nothing.

The others follow the ghost down the highway to a ruined cabin. The ghost passes the cabin by, following a small trail that ends at a family graveyard. There, the ghostly shape of an elderly woman stands. When she sees the traveler, a look of shocked wonder crosses her face. The young man goes to one knee and speaks to her. The old ghost transforms into a young woman with a cornet of wildflowers upon her brow. They embrace and wave farewell. The ring falls to the ground.

But, of course, Gallfred is back at the bridge looking for the ring. The others don't tell Gallfred what actually happened to it.

Each character gains +1 LUCK for reuniting the lovers.

## Weebrook is Worried

The characters reach Weebrook in mid-afternoon to find a worried town. The residents know what's happening in Fythorp because the local Duke sent men to investigate.

The characters know quite a few of the people here:

- Jopha the Healer's Temple - Joyce the Ardent is the priest A4
- Duke Gilan, once a goon, now is sick A10
- Kreig, Orioc, Utherl, and Clohn the Bald are Thanes
- Sorcerer Sylle Ru – is now dead
- Aneth Knesor of the Rangers Guildhall (Old Fish knows her) A12
- Ames the grizzled dwarf wizard of the Ironfall Company (Ned knows him)



- Geoffrey Whitegrass the ancient elf (Mordecai knows him)
- Inn used to be the Bloody Arrow, run by Elean the dwarf
- Podrick Related to & friends of the Whitegrass family
- Hemp Friends of the Dragontear family
- Gallfred Weasel Related to (or friends of) the Leddy family
- Ned Wimbly Related to & friends of the Vintner family
- Father Mystery, a priest of Araril the Scribe of Omens

They note that the door of the *Bloody Arrow* inn is locked and boarded up. The characters hammer upon the door. After a while, *Elean*'s voice calls out, "If you are thieves, gods, or beggars, bugger off!" She eventually emerges, armed with a club made from a cider press, and is willing to let the characters and their retainers in. She cautions, "Be quiet, they can hear better now."

*Elean* is happy to see Brannic but cautions that the cooper was taken and returned last week, but he returned hollow-eyed and mute. Lady Skeme's undead patrols come sniffing around all the time, taking people as they please. She must have people in town working for her because her minions know far too much. *Father Mystery* only reads from his books and does nothing else. She tells the characters, "This town's got rot in its teeth. Somebody's got to have the pliers!"

Hemp offers, "We have plenty of pliers. Do you know who the collaborators are?"

"I suspect Father Mystery and Geoffrey the Elf."

The characters are pretty sure that there is no way their arrival in town (with a cart, several horses, and a variety of companions) went unnoticed. So they decide that they will go openly across the square to talk to *Joyce the Ardent* while *Gallfred* (who really doesn't want to deal with a priestess of Jopha) keeps an eye out for anyone spying on or following the characters.

## The Priestess of Jopha

Hemp, Old Man Fish, and Podrick stroll over to the stone chapel of Jopha. The place is pretty empty. There is a stained-glass depiction of Jopha fighting a black dog with a wolf-spear remarkably similar to the weapon

Podrick carries. The air inside the temple is scented with lemon balm and smugness.



The characters find Joyce the Ardent inside the temple. She isn't too pleased to see them, "You bring death upon your boots, but Jopha commands us to bind all wounds."

She has a brief theological discussion with Old Man Fish, making it clear just how far apart the two of them are on life philosophy. Podrick does better, because he is able to speak as a Knight-Banneret of the Knights of Lushnia, and bears the *helm of Chistu*.

Joyce is overjoyed to see the Helm, "You have brought the helm to me! Place it on the altar?"

Podrick is suspicious, "Why?

Hemp almost cuffs him on the back of the head and points out, "So Jopha can bless it, don't be a goon."

"I'll perform the Ritual of Revelation!" Joyce calls in an acolyte from cleaning the steps and the two of them prepare the altar for a significant ceremony. Podrick places the *helm of Chistu* upon the altar. It pulses and glows with a warm light. Hemp is forced to grit his teeth to avoid crying out when the light of Law falls upon him.

Joyce states, "This helm must never be allowed to fall into the hands of the forces of Chaos! Should they ever claim it, they will be able to loose the seals upon the ancient death god Chavanaugh."

"But this is unrelated to our current problems?"

"Oh yes, it's a different adventure. But we shouldn't take it on my crusade against evil."

"We shouldn't?"

"This helmet has been sent to test me!"

Podrick is dubious, "I'll take it on my crusade against evil then. And it hasn't been sent to test you."

Joyce is adamant, "I don't want to use force against you..."

"And I don't want to use force against you." Podrick reaches to get the helm back from the altar. He persuades her that he went through the Tests of Law at the Shrine of Reflection and went through an ordeal to cleanse the helm at the Shrine of the Bethunes and should be allowed to bear the helm upon a holy crusade. He gets the clear idea that Joyce the Ardent thinks of him as a side character in her glorious quest.

Joyce finally admits that she needs time to pray upon this, to find out if she needs to be a side character in Podrick's quest.

Through this whole exchange, Hemp the weaver is desperately trying to get Podrick to hit on Joyce. Podrick doesn't rise to take the bait.

## The End of the Session

The session ends with the characters in Weebrook. Each character gains 6 EXP. Also, Gallfred goes up to 5<sup>th</sup> level. He gains 3 HP and a host of other benefits.