

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 fears that the Internet will fail him at any moment. It is a nearly-paralyzing fear. *Georgina* tells him that this is just part of country living, which causes various Warren Zevon lyrics to spring up and live rent-free in his mind. *Paul* is drinking white tea from his subscription box and is very pleased about it. There aren't any relevant Warren Zevon lyrics for that situation. *Patrick* calls in just in time to hear Paul explain how he's been doing AI image generation on his new PC. Woohoo! Wave of the future!

Tim has discovered *Severance*. In the space of a week. That is perhaps more *Severance* than anyone should be exposed to in a short period of time. But then, he's already been fully aware that we are trapped between *The Truman Show* and *The Prisoner*, so this hasn't changed much.

Chris learns that half of the group has willfully joined the Cult of Kier. He doesn't know what the cult is, nor does he desire to know. *Ernest* arrives having just driven through a storm. He's absolutely on board with joining cults, the weirder the better.

Into the Tunnels

The characters have just dispersed the cloud of darkness that allowed *Lady Skeam's* powerful undead full mobility during the day. They've also eliminated *Brother Sarvo*, an undead overseer, and an apple-born golem at the Cider House. Unfortunately, *Ned Wimbley* is also low on spells – which suggests that retreating to rest would be a good idea.

On the other hand, the characters have a magical bell that can resurrect Brother Sarvo for a few minutes so he can be interrogated. Before bringing him back, *Gallfred Weasel* goes through its pockets, finding:

- 3 gp
- A dagger
- Some poison – *apple-blight oil*, DC 12 Fort save or blinded for 1d4 rounds as their eyes swell up.

The characters ring the bell. Brother Sarvo inhales suddenly, then stands up like Uma Thurman. Gallfred spins a story about how his service to Lady Skeam resulted in his death. Brother Sarvo is adamant that she must be warned, and Gallfred plays along. "Your time is limited! How can I help you warn Lady Skeam?"

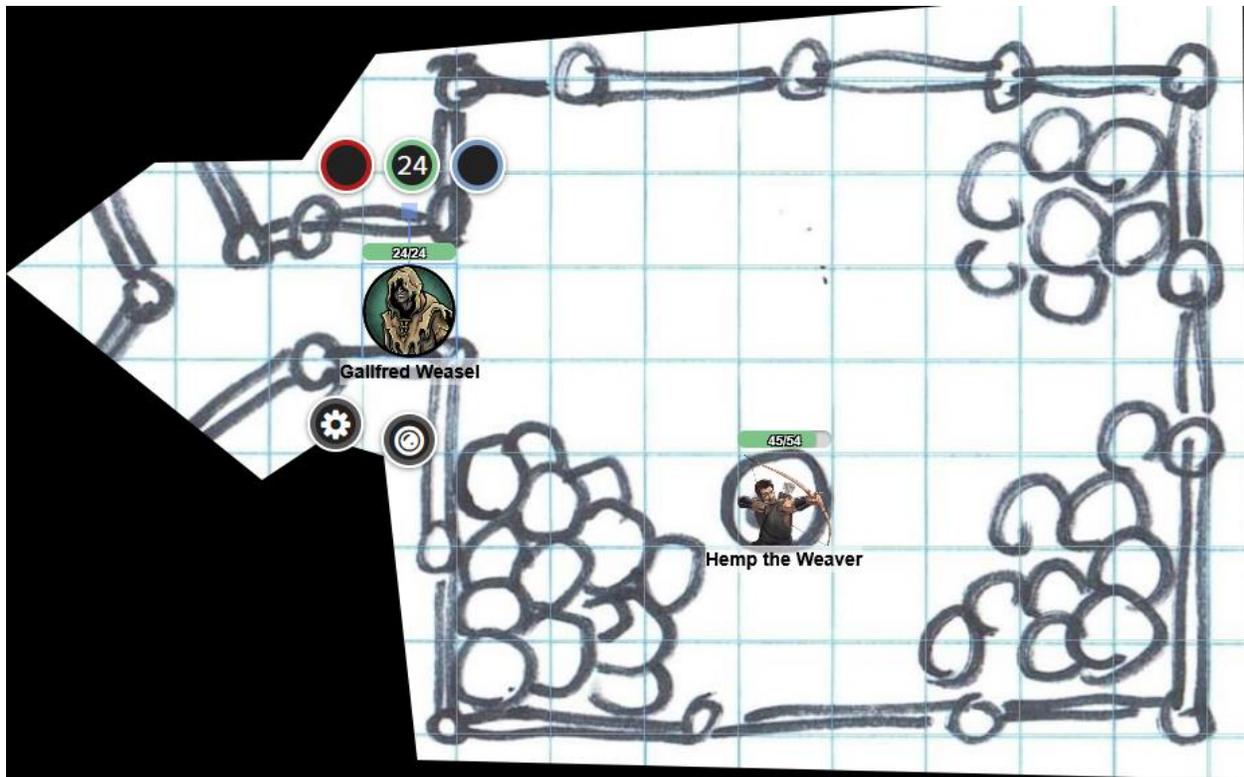
Brother Sarvo explains that the way into the old smuggler tunnels to the mine entrance is hidden under his bed. He urges Gallfred to tell her the bearer of the helm is here, and that she must take it back.

Gallfred tries to persuade Brother Sarvo to make him a member of the Order of Vilom. Brother Sarvo is displeased that the characters already blew the Horn that he asked Gallfred to bring. He wants to know if Gallfred has the Earth Key (that is, the key to the Earth Dungeon). Gallfred honestly explains that he does not – because the key is currently in party treasure. “You! You wasted the chance! You blew the horn! I would not sponsor you for membership, you cannot follow orders!”

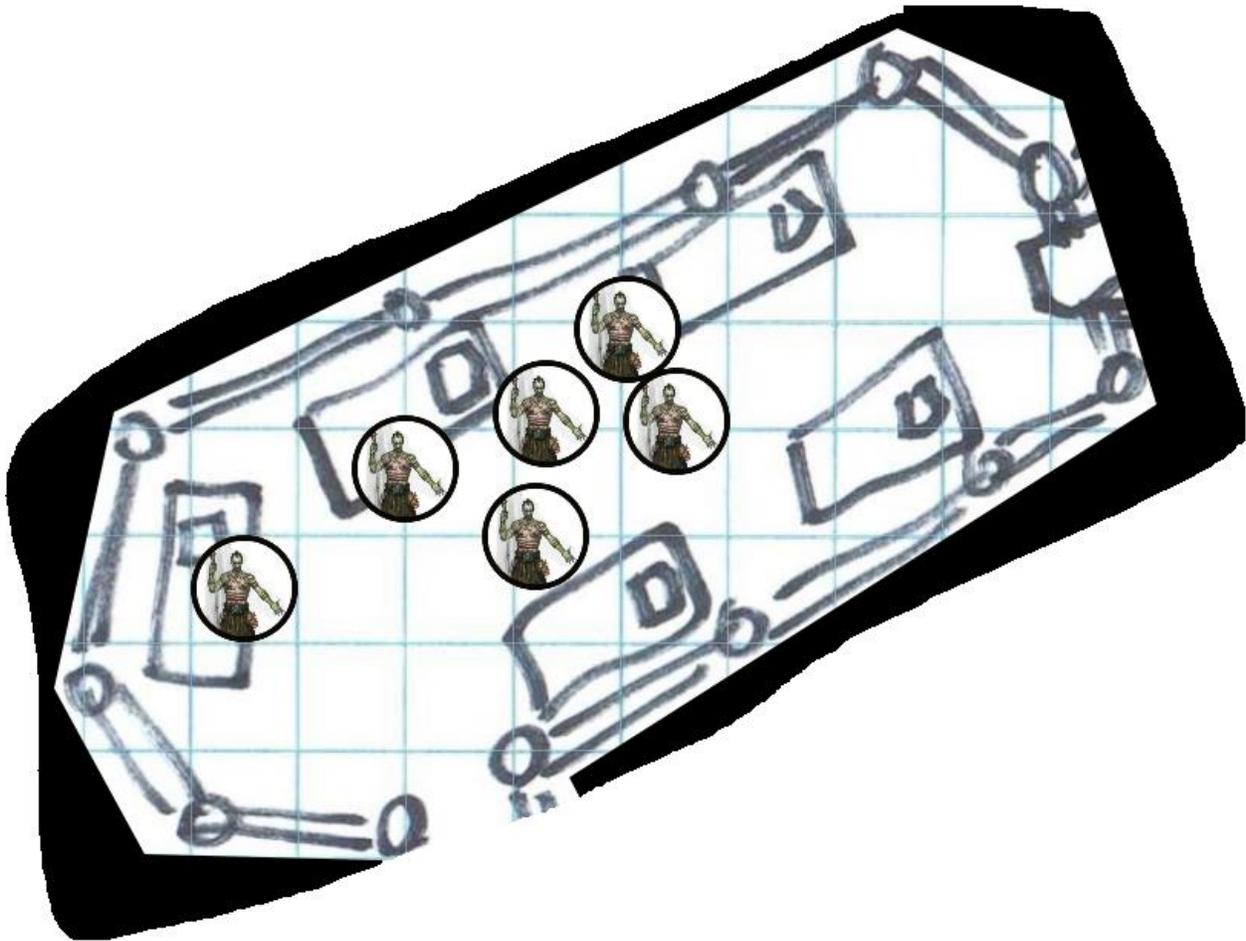
“Why do you think I would follow orders? I follow Chaos!”

Brother Sarvo gasps and dies as his time runs out.

The Apple Barrel Room



Gallfred goes down through the concealed door in the floor to find a root cellar filled with apple barrels. Most of them seem to have been converted to contain a horrible mutagenic rot. He moves onward to find a split in the passage, and to hear someone talking towards the northern branch. The sounds are coming from a barracks room: there are a half-dozen monks there, quietly discussing monk things. Mostly parcheesi and macrame. And how working for Lady Skeam is a terrible deal – which none of the characters pick up on in time to avoid slaughtering them. Woops.



Hemp the Weaver moves in first, orders the monks to stand down, and promptly shoots an arrow into the floor. The monks rush to attack him with utility knives, but not very well. They're obviously not the *fighty* kind of monks. Then Podrick shows up and starts slaughtering monks. Luigiroth and Gallfred kill a couple more. Ned Wimbley *curse*s one with partial blindness. Podrick steps among the survivors and executes a whirlwind attack that eliminates the rest of them.

Gallfred, Podrick, and Hemp waste time searching the dead monks while Ned and Old Man Fish continue searching. They find a well-appointed poison lab, while Gallfred and company find nothing worthwhile.

There is also a door leading to the cider pressing room upstairs.

Brother Sarvo's Bedchamber

Gallfred disguises himself as one of the dead monks. He is so effective that he now partially believes himself to be a monk of Vilom. And then he enters the door to the northeast to find Brother Sarvo's bedroom. As promised, there is a tunnel under the bed that (probably) leads to the Salt Mines.

The characters search the room in full awareness that Brother Sarvo was a master poisoner. They find:

- 107 gp worth of cash, jewelry, and art objects, probably stolen in part from the other members of the Order of Vilom who fled.

The loot includes a “Poisoner Precious Moments” figurine that’s sure to bring a good prices. It’s collectible!

The Brine Cathedral

The characters go through the tunnels from the Cider House into the Salt Mines. The passage is low, half-flooded, and full of stale air. Part of it is completely submerged, so the group relies upon *onyx teeth* to get through without drowning. Hemp and Ned both discover that there are *salt leeches* in the tunnel, but neither actually gets bitten by one.

The passage opens out into a larger chamber ahead. Ned casts *magic shield* on Podrick as a precaution. They emerge into the Brine Cathedral, a mine chamber converted into a ritual chamber. Brine flows *upward* into fonts suspended from the ceiling with chains. Boxes of cursed items are stacked across the chamber. The entire chamber is lighted with dim green phosphorescence. A stone platform is topped with a bloodstained altar. There are *salt-tongue cultists* hard at work, preserving bodies in salt for inclusion into the Soul Lattice. *Anevra*, the Wound-Sister of Skeam, supervises the work. She is armed with a glaive and looks very serious. *Ashlun Vale*, whom the characters once knew as an acolyte of Alar, appears to be an active participant in the effort.

Spectral Shackles

The person wearing these bonds must make a DC 15 Will save. Failure means that they are rendered unable to attempt to escape.

Record of the Dead

A magical book recording all of the souls converted into undead in the town of Fythorp. Also includes a timeline on the completion of the Soul Lattice.

Gavel of Judgment

If a Lawful cleric strikes this gavel against stone forces all nearby undead to make a Will save or stop all action for 1 round.

Gallfred sneaks in to place himself behind Ashlun Vale, ready to garrote him.

Old Man Fish (followed by the rest of the group) approaches Sister Anevra. Everyone is disguised as a monk of Vilom. He explains, “We are here bearing a message for Lady Skeam about the Horn of Kings.”

“And it requires eight of you to deliver this message?”

“Each of us was entrusted with only one part of the message.”

Sister Anevra stares at the characters. She is suspicious. The salt-tongue cultists draw their bone blades.

Podrick decides that the time is right. He charges straight through the cultists to stab Sister Anevra with *ulftheonar’s wolf spear*. She is grievously wounded by his strikes. He shatters her right arm, but notices that her wounds do not bleed as a living creature’s would. She drops her glaive and reaches out with her other arm, channeling power from the brine fonts. Salt from the fonts is drawn to her and her wounds

start to close. She unleashes a *necromantic command* against Podrick, who is well-protected against such effects and shrugs it off. Then Hemp shoots her down with the *blazefire bow*.

A salt-tongue cultist flings a *salt bomb* at Old Man Fish, who neatly sidesteps it. He watches as the bomb explodes harmlessly to the side.

Ashlun Vale decides to hide rather than attack. He takes shelter behind the altar. Which works until Gallfred chokes him out. Ashlun is just tough enough that he isn't also blinded by the *apple-blight oil* Gallfred had on his garrote.

Hemp's two barbarian followers clobber two salt-tongue cultists. Both cultists go down and don't get up again. Podrick takes out the last of them.

Hemp the Weaver moves up to the outgoing tunnel to overwatch, just in case there are any reinforcements moving up. The characters put the *spectral shackles* upon Ashlun Vale to keep him in place.

Ned examines the Brine Cathedral. He tells the others, "This area is used to ready materials for Lady Skeam's rituals – rather than to actually perform the ritual. They are preparing the salt bodies to be included into the Soul Lattice.

Podrick and Hemp the Weaver make a point of knocking down the three salt fonts. This weakens Lady Skeam's rituals, dropping the DC of her ritual effects (against the characters) by one.

Ashlun Vale's Story

Old Man Fish heals Ashlun Vale, so he can be interrogated.

Gallfred demands, "Tell us everything."

"They forced me to work for them! I was a priest, they made me use my knowledge of rituals to help them."

"They fed your entire town into an undead meat-grinder, and yet you live?"

"I didn't want to be undead!"

Hemp demands, "What would Father Paseka say to you?"

"I have done things that destroyed my faith. I have lost my clerical powers. Yet I hope that redemption is possible."

"The Temple is restored. Now, tell us about what these cultists are doing?"

"They take the mummies down into the salt crypts and store the mummies there. They use their energy to fuel the ritual. There are constant patrols down there! The vaults are guarded by wraiths, but they are none too intelligent. Lady Skeam is going to be at her ritual works in the Soul Lattice Chamber."

“Anything else?”

Ashlun notes, “I have heard that there is a conclave of drug users who have remained hidden and safe.” Ned observes that the narcolepers (the Snuggoo worshippers) do not appear in the *record of the dead*. Apparently, they managed to sleep through the entire catastrophe.

Hemp hands him *the grasping band* and sends him back upstairs to defend the Temple of Alar against the undead. Ashlun is happy to do this, in hopes of repenting for his deeds.

Some Cursed Items

Ned examines the cursed items stored in the chamber. He comes up with three that look worthwhile.

- **The Lantern of Lost Echoes.** Appearance: An iron lantern etched with screaming faces; the flame burns blue without fuel. Minor Power: Once per night, the bearer may use the lantern to speak with a single dead soul within 60 feet (as speak with dead). The voice issues only from the flame. Curse: Each time the lantern is used, one random secret or memory from the user’s past is stolen—forgotten forever and whispered to nearby undead creatures, giving them +1 to attack rolls against the user until the next dawn.
- **The Grasping Band.** Appearance: A ring formed of interwoven bone-white thorns. Minor Power: Grants +1 to all spell checks made to control or turn undead. Curse: Each time the wearer uses this bonus, a spectral finger appears clinging to the ring and cannot be removed. Once five appear, the wearer’s hand blackens and becomes undead itself—useless for normal tasks and permanently vulnerable to turn/rebuke undead effects.
- **Vellum of the Forgotten Rite.** Appearance: A scroll of ancient human skin, inked in black ichor, whispering when unrolled. Minor Power: Once per week, a caster can read it to cast any spell they do not know (up to level 2) with a +2 bonus. Curse: After use, the caster must make a DC 13 Will save or forget one spell they already knew (Judge chooses randomly). On a natural 1, the spell is not just forgotten—it is erased from existence for that caster, permanently.

Old Man Fish decides that he’d like to have the *lantern of the lost echoes*. Gallfred takes the *vellum of the forgotten rite*.

Realm of the Dream Cultists

The characters decide to go find the old Snuggoo caverns. They know the way. Before, the paths were warded with strings of strange mucous. Now, they are completely blocked by a solid barrier that is slightly warm to the touch. Hemp the Weaver has used *lamprey milk* in the past, so he tries to compose a mental message of peace and welcome. He touches the barrier. He feels a pleasant numbness spread from his hand, and heals 3 hp of damage. Then he peels it away to create a pathway through.

“It’s fine! They’re waiting for us!”

The others aren’t sure if they can believe him, but they follow him up the stairs into the Snuggoo Temple, which is still set up as a giant pillow fort with lots of blankets. The comfy mass of Snuggoo sits in

the center, a body of huge warm comfort and mucous. There are several dreaming acolytes around. The guardian approaches the characters, "I remember you! Have you come to sleep?"

"We're here because that crazy zombie chick has taken over and nobody can rest, man. Can you spare us some lamprey milk?"

"We've only got three doses. Do you have any food, man?" Hemp gives them some tubers and squash, plus a jug of strong wine, in exchange for the lamprey milk. Hemp keeps two doses, and gives one over to Gallfred.

The guardian *Euologist Drimzz* notes, "It'd be great if you threw that screaming zombie chick out. That lattice thing she's building makes it super difficult to sleep. It's like a giant torch or something."

The Eulogist tells the characters about a secret passage to Lady Skeam's ritual chamber. It goes through the back passage and is full of runoff from the salt mines, but it goes right to the soul lattice chamber.

The Soul Lattice Chamber

This chamber is some 100 feet across. The soul lattice is a crazed mass of crystals and metal rods floating in the air at the back of the chamber above a pit. A salt circle radiates out from it, and *Lady Skeam* stands before it, bloated with the powers of death and salt. Four rune-carved pillars are placed in an arc across the center of the chamber, guarding the lattice.

Hemp the Weaver knocks back a drink of *wizard's blood wine*. Old Man Fish joins him, because there's nothing quite as invigorating as wizard's blood.

The lamia *Amathies* charges headlong at Lady Skeam. Gallfred takes the cautious approach, hiding and sneaking up.

Luigiuroth flies in swiftly and clubs Lady Skeam with the *coprolite club*. He scores a hit! A palpable hit! Yet, it is deeply obvious that she has many, many more hit points. She is a lich!

Podrick walks in, the *helm of Chistu* upon his head. It glows as soon as he draws close to the soul lattice, and gives him several additional one-use powers:

- Turn 2d6 HD of undead automatically
- Blind Skeam for 1 round (Will DC 14 negates)
- Absorb 1 lattice pulse (once only)



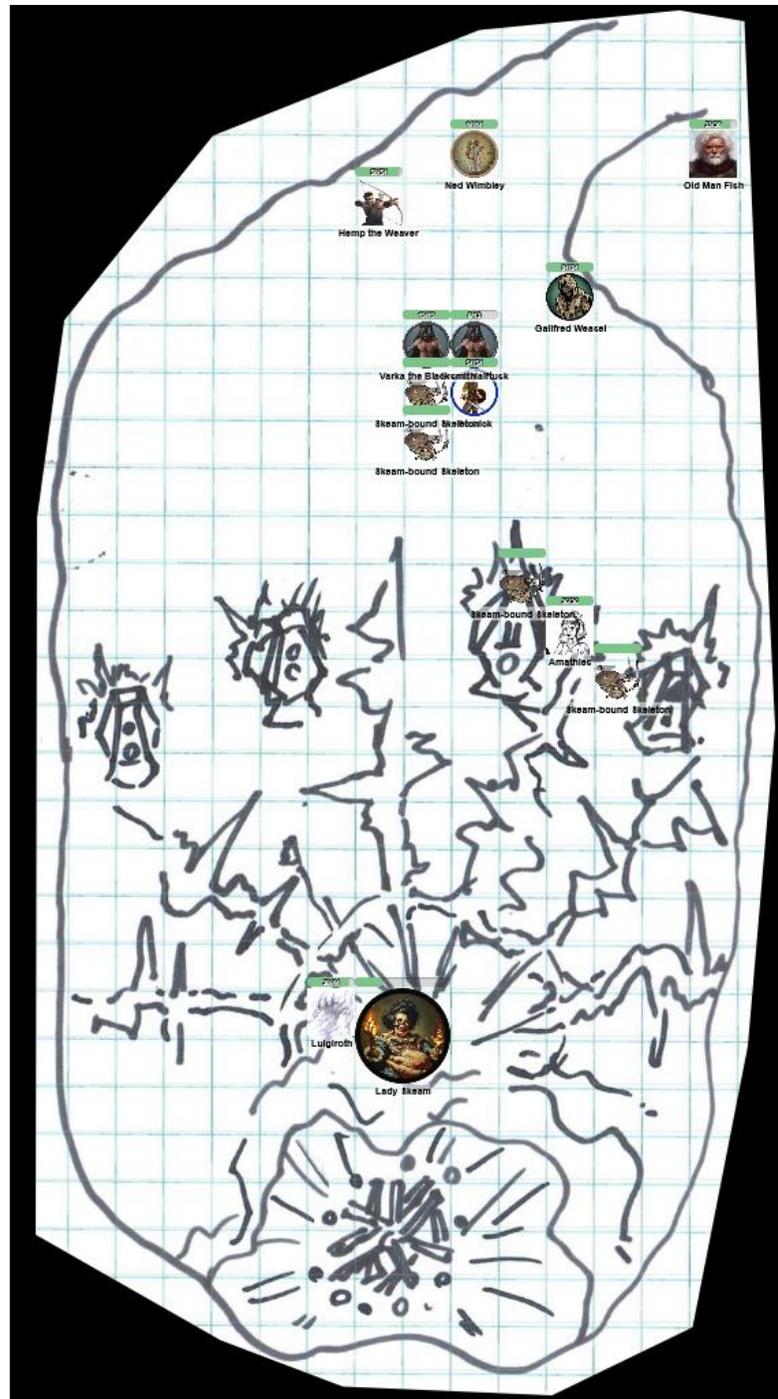
Lady Skeam starts with a soul lattice pulse. A wave of glowing energy washes across the group. Podrick sees a vision of his own death and suffers psychic damage. Luigiroth sees *something* disturbing and also takes damage. Then a chain emerges from her hand, which she uses to try to bind Luigiroth – who has the benefits of both incredible AC and a *magic shield* to keep him safe. Then she lashes him with a *withering gaze* that draws away some of his strength.

Hemp the Weaver fires the *blazefire bow*. He strikes Lady Skeam in a way that causes her own chain to whip around and strike her. She is both damaged, and on fire.

Then four *skeam-bound skeletons* emerge from the four pylons. Two of them converge upon Amathies and two rush Podrick. A melee breaks out just beyond the arc of the pylons as the barbarians *Grond Halftusk* and *Varka the Black* move in to engage the skeletons.

Lady Skeam sends another soul lattice pulse out, which Podrick absorbs with the *helm of Chistu*, then attempts to strike Luigiroth with her *touch of unbinding*. She sees Podrick rushing into the attack and floats higher up, out of his spear reach.

Hemp sees Lady Skeam getting away. He fires a *cupid's arrow of levitation* (from the old Valentine adventure long ago) at Podrick so his ally can follow the lich upwards. His second arrow strikes Lady Skeam true, leaving her almost destroyed. Huge, nauseating slabs of fat from her flanks render and drip upon the floor below. Luigiroth strikes her with the *coprolite club* and destroys her. Podrick invokes the power of Kamue, the Goddess of Mischief and floats up to Lady Skeam. He invokes the power of the



Bethunes to purge her soul from the world. He recognizes that as a lich her soul will fly to her phylactery and he hopes to stop that from happening. He sees it and stabs it through with *ulftheonar's wolf-spear*, which has the magical power to strike and trap incorporeal creatures. Lady Skeam's body crumbles away to dust.

Almost unnoticed, another skeam-bound skeleton shows up. Hemp's barbarians destroy two of the first wave. Amathies destroys a third and cripples a fourth.

Podrick invokes the powers of Chistu to turn Lady Skeam's soul and destroy her forever. The effect is breathtaking, or at least as breathtaking as a 1980's effects house can manage.

Freed from Lady Skeam's power, the soul lattice starts to collapse, but the pylons are still active. Old Man Fish rages and attacks one with the *useful dagger*, then Gallfred shuts it down with Disable Device. Amathies and Luigiroth destroy a second pylon. Hemp destroys the third and fourth pylons with the *blazefire bow*. The remaining skeletons collapse to the ground.

Podrick drops back to the ground and walks to the edge of the pit beneath the soul lattice. He invokes the power of Chistu and is able to release three souls from the lattice. And when the last pylon crumbles, the remaining souls are freed. The smith *Jhiro* appears before Podrick and thanks him on behalf of the souls trapped by the lich Lady Skeam. His blessing restores 3 LUCK to each of the characters (at least, those who are currently below their maximum).

Black Salt Ring

The emotion of fear no longer exists for the wearer. The wearer is immune to fear effects.

Tome of the Death God's Architect

This volume contains three spells that a wizard can use like scroll spells: *chill touch*, *scare*, and *consult spirit*.

As Lady Skeam disintegrates into dust, Gallfred's keen eye of avarice spots a ring falling from her hand. He recovers it. It is a black ring, and Ned confirms that it is magical. Neither of them can tell what it is, so Gallfred puts it on. He feels invincible – he is afraid of nothing. The emotion of fear no longer exists for him. It is the *black salt ring*.

Ned looks through the debris and finds the *Tome of the Death God's Architect*. It contains three spells that he can use like spell scrolls: *chill touch*, *scare*, and *consult spirit*.

The End of the Session

The session ends with Lady Skeam defeated and the ruins of Fythorp freed. Each character gains 6 EXP.