

The Barrowmaze

Session 1 20-9-23 Welcome to Helix

Next Session 28-9-23

In world time 08:00, in the second half of the summer months

Things to do in Helix

Morning finds the adventurers chatting with Bollo, the affable landlord of The Brazen Strumpet Inn where they have taken a suite of rooms. Bollo is a retired adventurer himself and a few yarns and war stories are exchanged in their friendly conversation. As Bollo bustles off they reflect on their past couple of nights staying in the town and seem well content with their new base of operations. Helix seems to have everything an adventurer might reasonably desire.

Leaving the Inn and strolling south takes them down to the mill where they meet Hendon, the miller, a retired Ranger who keeps a watchful eye over the surrounding lands, sometimes walking the moors and warning off some of the undesirable creatures and vagabonds that venture too close to his town. They are joined by Hendon's eldest son Tamson, an enthusiastic lad of 18 who has just qualified as a Ranger himself. Tamson is available for field guide work and Hendon is prepared to let the young man act as their guide for next few weeks or so for the usual rates. In fact Hendon seems to have taken quite nicely to the clearly experienced party with two rangers and a druid as just the sort of group that his son should be associating with so they arrange to meet Tamson early the next morning to set out for the Barrow Mounds. (Tamson, 1st level Ranger and area guide).

Since they are planning on plundering Barrow Mounds and there are tales of active undead in the area, the notion of an adventuring cleric as a hired retainer sounds like quite a sensible idea so they visit the church of St Ygg, the local manifestation of Lawful Goodness with a serious sideline in undead smiting. Here they meet the priest, Othar, a kindly friendly chap who entirely approves of their interest in "deactivating" any mobile undead they might encounter whether they are plundering evil tombs or just smashing them apart in the field, it's all for the greater good and he is absolutely satisfied with that worldview. He introduces two of his acolytes, twin sisters Bella and Cella pointing out that Bella is the more outgoing one however after being introduced to both they find they can't discern any noticeable difference. In any event, Bella, at least they think it's Bella, agrees to join them with Othar's blessing, as an adventuring retainer for the duration of their first foray, this for the usual daily rate plus a half share of any treasure to be donated to the church. (Bella, 2nd level Adventuring Cleric and scourge of undead).

Enough of dallying with Rangers and Clerics, Vlad has shopping on his mind, primarily for a fine suit of plate armour from the dwarven smithy he has spotted in the centre of town. Visiting the smithy they find owner and head smith Karg Barrelgut hard at work with a reduced crew since half of the family are currently away on clan business. He is obviously working hard through a backlog of orders but finds time to expertly measure Vlad for a standard dwarven plate set which will cost well above the odds however taking a close look around Vlad is able to see the quality of the work on offer and feels optimistic that he might have a chance of receiving a superior product so he leaves a 30 gp deposit and promises to survive to collect his suit. The armour will cost 200 gp and take at least two weeks to be ready. (Upon delivery you can make a 50 / 50 roll and if it comes up heads, you will have a suit of non-magical but superior armour with a natural additional +1 to AC, tails it will be a standard set of nicely made plate).

Passing by Turgen's Trade Goods they examine the many useful items for adventurers on sale at reasonable prices, concluding that Helix is doing quite nicely from its status as a trade and adventuring frontier nexus. Enjoying their downtime they take it easy around town, chatting and hearing a few rumours and titbits of information...

"Tribes of different humanoids make their home in the Barrow Mounds"

"These rumours are just folk tales, the mounds are just an old burial ground"

Other adventuring parties are currently active in the field:
Bertrand's Brigands and The Norse Whisperers.

The Barrow Mounds

Bright and early the next morning the Adventurers and their faithful torchbearer, Shadwell meet up with Tamson and Bella and with their Ranger guide leading, set off on the westerly road before picking up a southerly trail to head towards the forbidding mist shrouded morass. The going gets more and more difficult with Tamson leading them around many treacherous pools and concealed mires as the party's Rangers and Druid take careful note of the features of their route, beginning to form a mental and empathic view of the land that they are passing through. They recall Hendon's words, that they should be able to navigate themselves after a couple of visits and find themselves in agreement however for now they are grateful for the services of their young and enthusiastic guide as he threads his way through the treacherous landscape.

After about 3 hours of careful travel they find the landscape clearing towards the east revealing a mist enshrouded area, surrounded by treacherous bogs. Tamson warns them to remain on the firm ground as he makes a sweeping gesture before announcing, with as much gravitas as he can summon, "The Barrow Mounds".

Deciding to trust in Fenella's lead they move cautiously into the mist, exploring the open area before them and in a few minutes are rewarded as the shape of a barrow mound looms before them to the east but they notice that since it is fully turfed over, they will need to excavate it to reveal the entrance. Ignoring this one for now and leading them further north Fenella discovers another mound and spies two more further to the north, noting that the nearest one has an accessible stone slab blocking the doorway. Vlad assumes they are just mapping and scouting and suggests carrying on to the next one but the others are keen to delve so they unpack the sledgehammers and spikes and Vlad and Angus set to it, hammering noisily away for a good 10 minutes before cracking the slab and clearing the way, revealing a short dark passageway down into the mound itself.

Shadwell lights up his lantern on a stick and forming themselves into a suitable exploring formation they enter the dark barrow mound. A 30 ft diameter chamber is revealed with two stone slabs in the centre. Lying on the slabs are two skeletons draped in burial shrouds, a small bowl at each head and decorative amphorae at their feet. As the adventurers move towards them the skeletons animate and rise to attack but the party are well prepared and swiftly make their moves. Upon sight of the undead, Bella instinctively raises her holy symbol causing the skeletons to cower away from the cleric, rushing to the furthest wall, hotly pursued by Reme, Angus and Vlad. Reme swings mightily, cleaving the first skeleton elegantly in twain, finishing it in a tumble of dismembered bones. Angus takes a swipe at the other but in his excitement fumbles, leaving the skeleton to taste the sword of Sir Chyde, courtesy of Vlad the dismantler, which proves to be a terminating experience. It is all over in seconds and marks a fine start to their Barrows venture as Shadwell and Tamson high-five at the back. They carefully search the burial goods finding 50 gp divided between the bowls and the amphorae look worthwhile as well (50 gp each, 1-5 on a d6 chance of breaking if the bearer is in combat). Shadwell carefully wraps them up in cloth, hopefully they can keep them intact to sell in town.

In world time 11:30, the next day