

The Barrowmaze

Session 36 18-07-24 Gerald's Calling

Next Session 25/07/24 19.00

Wednesday the 27th day of Besemius, 09:10 in The Barrowmaze 47/3, Entrance to The Caves

Into The Caves

Standing at the entrance to the passage 3 cave system, while Morgaine and Phineas admire each other's new chainmail armour, the party take some time to reorganise their magical items. Fenella gives the Luckstone to Gerald and the Elven Brooch to Arnd on the basis that with his record of being poisoned, Gerald needs all the luck he can get and Arnd, as the party Thief, could benefit from being unseen and thus being able to attempt backstab attacks (+4 to hit, double damage).

Returning to the business at hand, Gerald insists on leading the party, since they are following the directions to the southeast given in his dream. Setting off through one of the promising exits to the east he is somewhat disheartened to immediately discover a dead end, which Arnd also unnecessarily informs him of. Gerald leads on to explore the passage to south while Fenella and Leo check out the western passage, just to get an idea of what might be behind them but discovering only further branching passageways they return to the group. Meanwhile Reme has taken command of the rearguard of Shadwell, Phineas and Morgaine and they take position, moving after the first group around 20 to 30 ft behind.

Alarming

Exploring to the south they pass two exits leading eastwards. In a quiet moment as they creep along they can discern a distant chittering sound leading Fenella to comment, "nothing good chitters" but it fades away and they continue to the south following the passage as it turns to the west and then north, "definitely not southeast then," mutters Arnd. Rounding a bend Gerald sees a small chamber and two fungal entities that shuffle slowly around the area. Gerald throws a lighted torch into the cave for a better look and as the light strikes the creatures they emit an ear splitting shrieking noise but otherwise don't seem to react so the party fall upon them, Leo charging in and cleaving one mightily as Gerald does much the same with the other. Fenella and Arnd try to attack but miss, however the creatures seem incapable of doing anything other than make their terrible noise so The Hammers attack again with Gerald and Fenella finishing the murder spree as the echoes of the now permanently silenced creatures die away.

"Hey boss, ye've found another of yer dead ends," quips Arnd helpfully as Gerald recalls south and east both being components of southeast, so maybe exploring northwest might not have been the optimal course of action. He can of course console himself that their rear is now cleared of harmless fungal creatures so he leads on, retracing their steps to the first of the eastern branches and discovering another dead end to the sound of Arnd's pointed silence.

The Beetles Reunion

Continuing back up the passageway, Gerald seems surprised by another eastern exit, having set his mind on one further to the north perhaps. In any event he decides to explore this one and leads the group into, thank the gods, not a dead end. The passage splits north and south so they take the southern branch finding an east/west corridor. To the west a faint rosy glow is visible. As Gerald describes the glow, Leo recalls that they have seen this before from Fire Beetles and suggests he come up to the front to assist in the pest control. Following this plan they find three Fire Beetles in a small cave and spring to the attack. Leo immediately finishes one of the Beetles but Gerald misses so Fenella stabs it to death with her spear. Wisely, the last one disappears back into one of the cracks in the cave wall. Harvesting the glowing plates from the dead Beetles Gerald and Leo give themselves a reasonably effective cold light source for the next few days (1d6 days = 3 days). Returning to the corridor and moving east they discover another small nest of Fire Beetles but the creatures retreat into the cracks in the walls before the obviously more powerful party.

Fishing from Above?

Following the passageway as it turns briefly to the north Gerald emerges into a larger cavern with exits to the west, south and east. His beetle light shows most of the cavern but the ceiling is not discernible in the gloom above. Looking warily around the cave his sharp eyes notice a filament hanging down from above in the northwest corner of the cave, dangling just in front of the exit to the west. He calls for Fenella to join him with her more powerful light. They can see a rocky ledge about 30 ft up over which the filament hangs. They discuss what to do for a few minutes, fire arrows and other ranged attacks are mentioned but eventually they decide to leave well alone and instead creep carefully around the southern edge of the cave departing via the southern exit.

Chamber of The Sarcophagus

The passageway continues south and turns quickly east before emerging into a larger chamber, clearly chiselled out of the bedrock, containing a sarcophagus and three statues of warriors surrounding it. The sarcophagus is covered with painted runes which Bella is able to identify as clerical warding to prevent passage, possibly to contain something within the sarcophagus. As they move into the room to investigate, two of the statues animate, turning towards them and raising their stone swords to attack!

The statues attack Gerald but they both miss. Gerald and Bella try to strike back but also fail to hurt the hulking stone figures as Fenella spears one of them causing some damage. Leo and Reme rush into battle and also fail to damage the eerily animated statues. Reme and Gerald swing again, and yet again they fail to injure the guardians of the tomb as Bella smashes The Hammer of St Ygg into the nearest statue sending chips of stone flying. Fenella misses her spear thrust as Sir Leo finally gets his eye in and strikes his statue so forcefully that it disintegrates on the spot. The remaining guardian swipes at Gerald but misses as in a shower of stone chippings, Bella smashes her hammer again into the thing, alarmingly finding her hammer fixed firmly to the statue as it is dragged out of her grip. Leo squares up to the hammer-stealing guardian and again deals his Knightly justice, obliterating it into rocks and stones amidst which lies Bella's freed hammer which she gratefully retrieves.

Warily eyeing up the third statue which appears to be just a statue, they turn their attention to the sarcophagus. Examining it more closely, Bella thinks the runes have been written with blood and Gerald posits the theory that these runes could have been made by evil creatures attempting to contain something good... something that called to him in his dream. Gerald and Leo heave off the sarcophagus lid and they see a dull pearl coloured orb resting in the centre. Gerald reaches in, taking the orb which begins to glow with a bright light, warmly illuminating their dismal surroundings.

Experimenting with passing the orb around they notice that if Fenella, Reme or Leo take it, it returns to its dull state. If Bella takes it, the orb glows a little but when Gerald bears the item it glows fully. They conclude that they have discovered an artifact of Lawful Good which is now freed from its evil containment. The orb glows brightly, cheering them all, as it is borne by Gerald, Paladin and holy warrior of Law and Good.

Even Arnd is impressed.

Wednesday the 27th day of Besemius, 10:40 in The Barrowmaze 47/3, Chamber D