

# The Barrowmaze

## Session 7 16-11-23 Further Dungeon Delves

Next Session 23/11/23 19.00

In world time 15:30, The Barrowmaze, room 20 D1

Standing in a pile of de-animated and thoroughly hacked about Zombies they discuss their next move. Judging that it's about halfway through the afternoon Gerald suggests that they might want to return to Helix, banking what they have acquired and brushing up for another another foray, fresh and fortified the following morning. This idea gains popular approval so they exit the Zombie room via the door to the southwest emerging in a large end of corridor area that they think they recognise from earlier. Viewing it from this side they now notice the faded, red-painted graffiti on the western wall, "they are coming". Pausing for while, possibly to see if "they" want to turn up, Fenella muses on the nature of the Barrows and the Barrowmaze dungeon they are currently exploring. She wonders whether the Barrows connect up, perhaps leading to multiple entrances and exits because quite clearly this isn't just a few chambers below a single Barrow, this is a proper dungeon. Bella chimes in as she eyes the graffiti suspiciously, "That's an astute observation Fenella, it's usually called the Barrowmaze by those with the will and the means to explore it, so quite possibly you have something there".

Gerald has the scent of fresh air on his mind so with a spring in his step he carefully leads the party back to the room with the ceiling entrance where they notice Phineus peeking warily over the edge of the hole down at them. They quickly ascend and the henchmen report a quiet time on guard duty. Forming up into their travelling order they set out for the mires and bogs that Reme will skilfully guide them through on their return to Helix.

After an hour or so of careful travelling, they are surprised by a pair of wizened skeletal creatures looming out of the mist from the west. The creatures move swiftly to attack, radiating a dreadful aura of fear and horror as they swagger towards the adventurers, engaging the nearest, Fenella, who easily overcomes any such fear courtesy of the blessing of Silvanus but unfortunately for the guard, Morgaine, she is overcome with fear and flees screaming in terror to the north. Fenella steps nimbly beneath the creature's claw attack as Gerald runs around to tackle the one that attacked Morgaine. Swinging the dark shortsword in a practiced arc he cleaves into the grinning horror, smashing its structure to smithereens in a single holy blow as it drops to the ground in a shower of bones and tattered clothing. Phineus's arrow flies true for a solid hit on the creature attacking Fenella but it just cackles in glee as it seems only magical weapons can damage it. Fenella grumpily stabs it with her spear just for her own satisfaction as Leo rushes over and introduces the magical sword of Sir Chyde to the attacking Coffin Corpse. Slicing off a good deal of desiccated flesh and bone, the thing is badly wounded and strikes back in retaliation at Leo but the blow just glances off his armour protected by the Knight's noble sense of purpose and Fenella's adjacent magical ring of protection. Enough messing around thinks Gerald as he quickly engages and skewers the remaining creature, finishing it in a single blow as Reme comes jogging back into view with an embarrassed but unharmed Morgaine, having tracked her panic-stricken flight from the terror. Searching the creatures they find a goodly amount of portable treasure, 1000 gp of coins arranged in multiple pouches in the remains and a silver necklace worth 60 gp.

They resume their journey and arrive at Helix without any further trouble around 18:00.

They visit the tavern to unload their loot and have a refreshing drink, water in Gerald's case which slightly bemuses the barmaid but they are paying guests so they can be weird if they like as long as they're paying for the room and board. As the others take it easy in the pub, Gerald and Bella disappear off together to pray... at least that's what they said they were doing.

Fenella decides to consult with the eccentric wizard Mazzahs The Magnificent, so she and Leo pay the tower a visit. Mazzahs is as dotty as ever but is able to take a look at Fenella's runic tablet which he cautions her she was very wise to avoid perusing. Indeed he goes out of his way not to examine it directly himself, squinting at it sideways and at odd angles. Apparently if one reads the tablets they can have both beneficial or detrimental effects, seemingly at random. He offers to keep it stored safely for them and expresses interest in the tablets in general and indeed anything else that they can uncover, he is becoming increasingly concerned that something is going on over in the Barrows and he'd like more information. While she's there Fenella tries a tiny sip of the light violet potion and finds herself briefly seeing herself from Leo's perspective... "that's a potion of clairvoyance then", mutters Mazzahs, handing Fenella a receipt for her runic tablet and bidding them goodnight.

### **The Next Day – 8<sup>th</sup> September**

Up with the lark, they assemble the team and head back off to the Barrows, arriving around 09:00. The fine bright day gradually fades behind them as they make their way further into the mists and gloom surrounding the barrow downs. Approaching the entrance barrow, Gerald wonders whether it would be a good idea to check out the standing stone which looms ominously a few hundred metres away but they decide just to descend back into the dungeon, the stone's not going anywhere, after all. Far off to the east a piercing shriek of some some carrion creature rends the air, encouraging their pace a little as they make camp again in the barrow and leaving Morgaine and Phineus on guard they descend the rope into the dungeon below.

Heading south through the route they've already used they take a new corridor further south for a few metres until suddenly the floor drops away beneath Leo and Gerald as they fall 10 ft into a concealed pit! The floor swings back up again leaving them in total darkness while above, Fenella and Bella search around for a mechanism. Back below, Leo and Gerald rise painfully from the floor and light a torch to survey their dismal, yet fortunately empty prison. Reme manages to find a loose stone in the wall that can be pushed in, so as he does this Fenella and Bella press down the floor panel which now opens, revealing their comrades below. Shadwell throws down a rope and as they haul themselves out Bella quickly casts a CLW on Gerald... the poor thing.

With a 10 x 10 pit trap in front of them and no plank or other apparent method of crossing it they decide to leave it be and head back to the entrance corridor, this time heading north. They follow the northern corridor which meets an eastern corridor with two doors to the north and a metal gateway to the south leading off it. The second door to the north is slightly ajar. Checking the first northern room they find it empty but with a scratched message written in common, "beware the dark water". Gerald is not impressed by the somewhat general nature of the warning and says so.

Checking out the portcullis / gate to the south they open it easily, finding a 20 x 20 empty room with the usual dust and debris. They search but don't find anything. They decide to spike open the metal door as the clanging of their hammer echoes stridently throughout the corridors.

Entering the second northern room a huge spider that had been lurking on the ceiling drops onto Gerald. Armed with his dark iron shortsword he is able to angle the weapon to attack the creature but fumbles his attack as the vile, poisonous mandibles poise to pierce his neck, Leo impales it with the sword of Sir Chyde, killing it in a single thrust as Fenella's Faerie Fire spell dissipates into the ether. "Good shot sir", cries Shadwell as he ticks off another creature in his observer's book of monsters, "a crab spider if I'm not mistaken, well known for attacking from camouflage".

Looking down the corridor to east, they notice a third door to the north and just visible at edge of their flickering lamplight, the bricked up end of the corridor forming a dead end to the east.

In world time 10:30, The Barrowmaze, hallway 11 Q2

### **Notes**

Malcolm absent.