

# The Barrowmaze

## Session 71 10-07-25 Broken Spire Keep

Next Session 17-07-25 19.00

Monday the 20th day of Vadrius 14:00, The Ruined Watchtower, Broken Spire Keep

The Hammers crouch in cover by a high watchtower, looking down on a deserted village and a partially ruined keep with a broken spire. Keeping the area under close watch affords no sign of movement or activity from the village or the keep.

Fenella wants to use her Commune with Nature spell to delve into the landscape before them but she will need to rest overnight to regain this spell. Leo wants to start a fire but Gerald advises that it would be a bad idea because, even with a pit fire, the smoke would rise and give away their position. Phineas agrees that it's a bad idea, it is after all the first thing anyone looks for so they decide to remain tough, foregoing a fire and contenting themselves with water and cold iron rations.

Fenella and Gerald descend the northern side of the ridge behind the tower, unfortunately not discovering any covered ledge or cave to use as a more comfortable base. As they move around the ridge they can make out more of the road on the keep side and they notice the centre way through the village leading to the boats is less overgrown which leads them to suspect some recent usage.

Setting watches in twos with Fenella on the first watch so she gets a good night's sleep to recover spells, they spend a peaceful albeit cold night under the stars.

Tuesday the 21st day of Vadrius 08:00, The Ruined Watchtower, Broken Spire Keep

### **Communing with Nature**

As a decorous mist rises above the promontory Fenella casts her powerful spell and falling into a trance, projects her consciousness into the land. For ten minutes she remains motionless until she surfaces from the trance and relates her findings to the others...

There is a void beneath the castle consisting of cavern spaces containing some natural vegetation and some grouped animal (not monster) life. There are maybe six of these animal reflections in two groups. She detects approximately thirty intelligent creatures in the void space below, a smaller number are moving around and a larger number are relatively static. In the keep area above she detects approximately six static images of intelligent beings stationed around the keep walls and two in the abandoned village.

Leo and Gerald are sure the two in the village and the six in the keep must be guards or lookouts so, much as Leo dislikes the idea of a stealthy approach, this seems to be the only sensible avenue, especially considering the numbers involved. Fenella wonders if it's a prison since the majority seem to be static. With the benefit of observing from different angles they can make out a manor house within the keep with a partially collapsed roof.

### **How to Approach?**

As they discuss different approach routes, they realise that Leo, dressed in full plate armour clanks even when trying to move carefully, so Sir Leo reluctantly disavails himself of his metal second skin and settles for a chainmail shirt instead, stowing his plate armour safely in the Bag of Holding.

Gerald proposes using Leo as a diversion while the others sneak into the keep. Leo is not very keen on splitting the group in principle and even less as a diversion all by himself. Undeterred, Gerald suggests that Leo could walk up to the gate and declare that Lord Ironguard orders them to leave. With a long stare, Leo explains to Gerald that he probably wouldn't get to kill even one of the enemy before being shot to pieces by arrow fire even if fired by weasels and rats as Gerald describes the keep's likely defenders.

They continue to discuss different approaches whilst keeping a close watch on the keep and surrounding area and noticing that the keep doors are broken, with one partially off its hinges, leaving a narrow ajar entrance. This surprises Leo a little until he considers that it is probably booby trapped and therefore not as silly as it first appears.

Fenella, agreeing with Leo, dismisses Gerald's diversion plan since it would split the party making their job harder not easier. Fenella reminds them she is happier with two heavy fighters guarding her and by implication her highly useful spells too. Since Fenella has used her most powerful level of spell, they decide to wait another night so she can regain her deadly area effect spell, Wall of Thorns.

They spend a peaceful night, waking to similar conditions as the mist slowly rises from the river.

Wednesday the 22nd day of Vadrius 08:00

### **Oh, the Dishonour**

Fenella's Wall of Thorns is regained and with Sir Leo leading, as the most likely to kill in a single blow and bearing the Gauntlets of Swimming and Climbing and the Brooch of Elvenkind, they descend cautiously from the tower taking care not to disturb the foliage they are using as cover. Moving along the western side of the promontory they traverse across to the rock face directly below the southernmost tower.

Using the Gauntlets to climb effortlessly and the Brooch of Elvenkind for almost perfect camouflage Leo ascends the tower, trailing the rope behind him. He drops silently to the floor, tethering the rope as he spots a figure armed with a sword and bow standing concealed behind a north facing battlement. Temporarily shelving his honour, given the seriously uneven odds and necessity of the situation he pads silently up behind the figure and with a single fluid draw and stroke with the mighty sword of Sir Chyde, instantly strikes down the lookout and in the style he has observed of rogues, such as Arnd Cobblestone, lowers the body softly to the ground. Sighing sadly at this dishonourable murder, Leo checks around himself and seeing the coast is clear tugs the rope as the signal to ascend. He is joined by the others as he swings over the battlement and lowers himself to the crossway to the southeastern tower.

Completely invisible, Leo ascends the second tower, spotting a figure leaning over the battlements, apparently having a crafty smoke instead of paying attention. Creeping silently up to the lookout Leo draws his sword but catches it against a chain hanging from the wall, making a loud scraping noise and blocking his strike. The woman spins around and draws her sword, shouting with alarm, swinging and missing as Leo's massive counterstrike stifles her voice forever.

Crouching down Leo flashes a look at the other tower but Gerald has ordered everyone down so no aid is forthcoming as a trapdoor opens and a thuggish looking man ascends complaining angrily, "look Anilla, I've told you, not another false al..." his voice cutting off into a bloody gurgle as Leo clamps his hand over the man's mouth and slices the razor sharp blade deep into his neck, almost beheading him in a single move. Again, rueing his actions, Leo lowers the man silently to the floor.

Throwing back his cloak Leo waves the others over but it seems Gerald's careful planning omitted any rope so Leo moves invisibly back to the first tower and tosses the rope up. The others descend as quickly as they can while Leo keeps watch. Miraculously it seems the woman's cry wasn't heard beyond the tower so concealing themselves as well as they can behind the battlements the rest of the party follow Leo's lead up to the second tower where his silent victims lie.

Wednesday the 22nd day of Vadrius 11:00, The Southwest Tower of Broken Spire Keep