The Barrowmaze

Session 110 11-11-26 The Pool of Power

Next Session 18-11-26

Friday the first day of Toterius, 13:20, Barrow 52, Room 2

…Leo asks Luna, "do you want to take a look at the chest?" There is a pause before Luna replies, "…er, yes?"

She creeps over to the cobweb and dust encrusted western wall, feeling rather exposed with all of the Continual Light brightly illuminating her. She examines the chest, not finding any trap, however the chest is locked. She reaches for her lockpicks just as two undead monstrosities burst through the cobwebbed wall, but fortunately for Luna she is highly alert and half-expecting something like this.

Fenella and Leo both miss their attacks as does the Wight closest to Luna. Bella raises her Holy Symbol and calling down the power of St Ygg, Turns the southernmost Wight as Luna attacks the other with a brutal strike, stabbing deeply with her trusty Stoutblade Dagger. Phineas charges in brandishing his Broadsword and hits well, staggering the Wight attacking Luna.

Leo swings mightily and misses yet again, it seems these enemies just don't have the decency to stand still! Meanwhile, cautious Fenella steps into better cover.

Gerald gets his eye in and forces the Turned Wight back to the wall hitting hard as Luna continues her melee with the other, once more stabbing effectively into the Wight's reeking flesh. The creature counterattacks and luckily for Luna only drains her life force a little (CON from 12 to 11). Meanwhile Bella is in her element, lifting her mace and smashing it into the Turned Wight with brutal violence, causing it to back off, terrified and gibbering into its concealed alcove.

Morgaine throws her dagger somewhat approximately into the alcove where she thinks the wight will be and strikes a powerful magical stab, the dagger trailing cobwebs as it flies back to her.

Shadwell charges blindly into the alcove with a mighty bellow, bringing down his magical broadsword to destroy the Wight.

Luna misses with her dagger but Bella, finding her way to the other Wight blocked, barges past Luna and Gerald, leaping onto the chest, regardless of her own safety, yelling her battle cry of St Ygg and slamming down the mace from above, smashes the Wight's head to pulp.

Luna looks up and politely suggests that the ferociously triumphant Cleric get off the chest so she can see what's inside. Embarrassed, Bella jumps down. Picking the lock, Luna discovers 700 gp within.

After a pause to regain their breath, Luna and Gerald check the northern door. Luna doesn't hear anything and Gerald doesn't detect any evil intent to the north. The door lock is jammed so Leo and Gerald address it with crowbars and the door is quickly off its hinges.

Gerald reminds Fenella about her spear and as she retrieves it, she replies, "I was actually just doing that," picking it up and patting the white shafted harpoon/spear fondly.

Luna slips into the room mentioning the "floodlights" behind her which they screen a bit as she investigates. She sees a chamber with a pool of water set into a simple flagstone floor. The room is clean, unlike the previous cobwebbed mess. Resting on the edge of the pool she sees a metal cup and across the pool, against the northern wall sits a beautiful gold-filigreed silver box.

As the rest join Luna, Fenella uses her Druid ability to check the water and states that it is pure. Examining the pool, they can see the bottom, no ocean this time, just a pool of pure water and a cup.

Gerald fills the cup and takes a drink finding himself suddenly more intelligent. It seems the pool has the power to enhance natural abilities so they all take a drink

Gerald +1 INT
Leo +1 STR
Luna +1 STR
Fenella +1 WIS
Phineas +1 WIS
Bella +1 STR
Shadwell +1 INT
Morgaine +1 WIS

Shadwell is delighted at his new insight and looks forward to “doing the crossword,” whatever that is. He also wonders if those Elvish lessons he once tried might now “stick” a little better now.

They go to look at the gold filigreed silver casket. Luna is very impressed by the piece and estimates a value of 1000 gp for the box itself. Leo opens it, finding a bundle of carefully arranged funerary bones and skull of a human. There is also a small leather bag. Opening the bag, he finds 14 fossilised fang-like teeth. They discuss what their function might be but can't think of anything in particular to do with them so Leo just keeps them in the bag.

Luna is very pleased with the box, clearly a masterwork and she forfeits her credit of gold to keep the elegant box for herself. Leo requests a secret door search and Luna helps him search as the others look on. Not discovering anything hidden Leo wonders, "if we drink more from the pool would we get more benefit? It just occurred to me." Phineas is enthusiastic to give it a try and takes another drink. He immediately feels a drain in his ability to resist damage (-1d4 permanent to HP). "Now we know," concludes Luna.

Gerald recalls the idea of burying a tooth to make an undead warrior rise. The others wonder if Gerald is thinking about summoning extra undead warriors? Bella gives Gerald “a look” and says she doesn't remember anything like that (and neither should he).

Luna wonders if the person killed a great beast and was interred with its teeth as a trophy, which prompts Fenella into a short lecture on the origin of fossils. Fenella does however remember the calcified and fossilised skeletons they have fought previously in the Barrowmaze, perhaps there is some connection there?

It’s 14:15 and they decide to head for home, crossing the moor and the marshes without any problem.

The Watchtower

As they come to the junction in the main east / west road to Helix, they find some construction going on with guards and workers, building what appears to be a guard tower. They recognise them as people from Helix, an easy one hour walk from here on their regular route.

Leo greets the people and the guards salute the noble Knight. Chatting with the team they discover that after everything they have done for Helix, the town wants to support them better in the field against the menace of The Barrowmaze and they will station some guards and usually a Cleric too to provide healing. They confirm, “we're on your side and we want to help,” puffing out their chests in pride at directly helping and supporting the famous Helix Hammers.

Bella confirms grumpily to Gerald that the Cleric will probably be her sister, Cella. Gerald wonders if Cella would like to join their party, prompting a “that look” from Bella. “My sister always copies me but she's just too bookish and too timid to be an adventuring Cleric," she lectures, clearly not at all pleased at having her sister around and clearly not wanting her in The Hammers for some reason or other.

On their return to Helix Gerald checks Mazzahs' tower but it's still the same. Joining up with the others in The Brazen Strumpet he ruefully opines, "he may have been as mad as a box of frogs but he was our friend." Following Leo's example, Gerald buys a round for the entire bar as he gradually comes round to Leo's way of thinking, at least insofar as buying rounds of drinks for potential hirelings are concerned.

Saturday the 2nd day of Toterius - Expedition Planning

They discuss and organise personnel for excavating the covered barrow with Leo taking the lead in working out their needs.

1 Dwarf Engineer - mainly to find the entrance and then ensure the excavation is safely done.
4 Mercenary Guards
6 Labourers
1 Wagon with equipment, drawn by two mules
Tamson the Ranger

The Dwarves and the Silver Standard & Mercenary Guild confirm their plan is feasible and the staffing levels make sense. The wagon will be able to cross the treacherous marshland, albeit slower but with Fenella of the Fields with them nothing can bar their way.

The team confirm they are only venturing into this terribly dangerous area since they are guarded by The Helix Hammers. The “bail out” escort of just the guards are hopefully enough to fend off any unpleasant attacks if they need to return alone.

An Inconvenient Ally in Helix

Chatting with Tamson in the market square, Leo shows him the fossilised teeth but the young Ranger hasn’t seen anything like them before. Putting the teeth back in the bag Leo fumbles and drops a tooth, which on falling to the ground erupts into a Fossilised Skeleton which stands obediently looking at Leo. Standing nearby with Gerald, Bella’s jaw drops and Gerald mumbles, "I hate this.” And, “are we being tested?" he wonders.

Standing with an undead ally right in the middle of Helix, Leo thinks quickly, barking, "follow me" as the square empties of citizens, fleeing in horror at the sight. Leo quickly leads the skeleton outside the town along the western road and waits around for an hour to see if it disappears like the Draugr… it doesn’t. He notes that it seems to understand at least basic common since it followed him when ordered but he’s a bit nonplussed at the whole situation and can’t think of what to do with his inconvenient ally.

Eventually Fenella joins him to try and work out what to do with their new friend. They try some potential solutions but all are too complex for the Skeleton to understand and finally it is Leo who recalls how the Draugr are ordered and with some guidance from Fenella he has the Skeleton follow him off the road and behind a tree where he orders it to stay. With considerable relief Leo and Fenella return to Helix.

After brief visits from both Osen and Othar demanding assurances that they won’t be performing necromancy again within the bounds of Helix, The Hammers sleep the sleep of the brave and only very slightly corrupted, rising to meet with the excavation team assembling at 08:00 the next day.

Sunday the 3rd day of Toterius 08:00 Helix - The Excavation Team stands ready.