

# The Barrowmaze

## Session 16 01-02-24 Lunchtime for The Ghouls

Next Session 08/02/24 19.00

11:30 Wednesday the 13th day of Besenius, The Barrowmaze corridor 42

Gerald listens carefully at the first door to the west and not hearing anything, opens it up, spotting a crouching Ghoul which quickly spins around and attacks on sight. Leo steps boldly into the doorway and hefting the mighty blade of Sir Chyde quickly cleaves the creature to its doom. Imbued with the siren spirit of curiosity, Gerald and Leo search the room for treasure, finding the face down body of a mutilated elf that the ghoul had been devouring. The corpse has a pair of finely made gauntlets tucked into its belt. While they are examining the gauntlets with their party half in the room and half in the corridor they are surprise attacked by a pack of 4 Ghouls as the door on the other side of the corridor flies open and they pour through.

### **Surprise!**

With the advantage of surprise and with Gerald and Leo now incommoded in the back row, the Ghouls successfully attack Morgaine, Bella, Phineus and Reme with their vicious Claw, Claw, Bite attacks, wounding and paralyzing each of them before they are able to act!

Realising they have been caught flat-footed, Gerald and Leo quickly act, shouldering their way through to the enemy. Leo swings his mighty sword making a critical miss as Gerald, attempting to emulate Bella's role as scourge of undead, tries to Turn the hideous creatures, tragically failing in his attempt as Fenella's sling bullet whistles past his ear to smack into the wall missing the Ghouls.

Suddenly it doesn't look at all good for The Adventurers. 4 of their party are paralysed, including their critical anti-undead weapon, Bella. Now Gerald, Leo, Fenella and Shadwell face 4 uninjured Ghouls, lustung for living flesh, snickering and keening as they close in for the kill.

Unfortunately for the Ghouls, they are somewhat jammed in the corridor so cannot bring all of their attacks to bear on the still active Adventurers so one of them continues to attack the paralysed Phineus, cruelly rending and tearing at the helpless Fighter! As the 3 other Ghouls join the fight at the doorway Leo is hit, both injured and paralysed as Gerald also suffers the same fate! Desperately gulping down a good dose of her potion of invisibility, Fenella disappears from sight and sprints forward barging Leo and Gerald aside and slamming the door in a single desperate action just before the Ghouls can enter. Shadwell hurls his weighty frame against the door, sitting firmly down against it and jamming a crowbar at an angle to bolster the barricade as the frustrated Ghouls furiously hammer and charge against the braced door attempting to break in.

After 10 minutes of frantic banging and thudding on the door, which fortunately holds, you hear a muttered conversation in the corridor then after another brief silence, then the sound of a more deliberate hammering as if the room is being barricaded from the outside... boarding you up for later in the Ghouls' newly improvised larder!

### **Trapped**

After 10 minutes of unnerving hammering during which Fenella re-appears much to Shadwell's relief, there follows an even more unnerving period of silence as finally after an hour or so, Leo, Gerald, Reme and Bella overcome the paralysis to rejoin their anxiously waiting Druid and retainer-cum-doorstop. Looking back and forth between Gerald and Leo's wounds Bella decides to cast her last CLW on Leo since he has the more serious wounds, Gerald gets a healing potion from Shadwell to complete their makeshift patching up.

Shadwell and a now furiously vengeful Bella try the door but it is held fast by the Ghoul constructed barricade. Enough pussy-footing think Gerald and Leo as they square up and hurl themselves at the door and with a mighty crash of splintering and breaking wood they burst through into the now deserted corridor.

They notice copious blood stains on the floor and a trail of blood to the south as if something had been dragged away. The door opposite where the Ghouls had ambushed them is now closed and Gerald very much wants to search it... "Why?", objects Fenella, "every minute could count, our friends could be dying right now!" Gerald agrees but doesn't want to be attacked from behind again so they throw the door open finding a single Ghoul. Leo quickly charges in and misses again as Reme and Fenella do the same with their bowshot and sling bullet respectively. Fortunately this time, Bella, scourge of undead is on her feet and she easily Turns the lone Ghoul causing it to press tightly against the wall in terror. Stepping up to the cowering target, Leo despatches it with a single blow so they quickly return to the corridor and move south.

### **What trap?**

As they pass the second door in the corridor, the blood trail continues past it. Gerald notices a string tied to this door which he ignores. Also to the south, is that the distant sound of snickering and ... a muffled scream!? As they pass the door the string goes taut and the door opens behind them revealing a room full of lurching Zombies which advance towards them. Quicker than their clumsy foes, the party pile in, Gerald brandishing his holy symbol again fails to Turn any undead as Leo charges past, quickly slicing a Zombie in half. Bella raises her holy symbol and turns two of the Zombies as Fenella flings her spear, which again clatters harmlessly to the ground. The Zombie next to Leo hits him with a rusty sword, inflicting a significant wound on the noble Knight as the Adventurers resume their attacks.

Reme duels a single Zombie and quickly finishes it off with his elegant swordsmanship as Bella's mace smacks into the wall, narrowly missing a Zombie. Fenella has it in for the undead after recent events and rushes in to retrieve her spear and take a stab but somehow the Zombie steps to the side at the critical moment, the bastard! As Leo divides another Zombie into its component parts, Reme softens another up with a vicious stab as Bella smashes its head in with her mace. Leo gulps down another healing potion as they leave the pile of expired Zombies, following the "blood and muffled screams trail" down to the next door, where with Bella safely ensconced in the middle of the party and Reme up front for fighting, Gerald and Leo shoulder the door aside revealing the 3 remaining Ghouls slicing and tearing strips of flesh from the trussed up blood-soaked bodies of Morgaine and Phineus whose muffled screams of agony issue from their gagged mouths.

### **To The Rescue!**

Charging in swinging, both Leo and Reme completely miss the nearest Ghoul but Gerald strikes true and the black iron shortsword tastes Ghoul flesh as Fenella's spear again clatters harmlessly to the ground. Back in the second row with her holy symbol raised fiercely in the air, Bella calls down the wrath of St Ygg and turns all 3 of the Ghouls!

Crippled and terrified of the cleric the Ghouls press against the walls trying to escape the incandescent power of St Ygg yet they can still strike and paralyse and even in their terror they do not fear the others, so it's not over yet! In a brutal swordfight the Adventurers charge into melee and as Gerald finishes a Ghoul with a cry of pent up Paladinic fury, Leo takes down another before Fenella, quickly retrieving her spear and with a strike fuelled by Druidic rage and oaths, impales the Ghoul with all her strength, pinning it to the wall and twisting to finish the loathsome creature for good!

Shadwell quickly pours a healing potion into Phineus's cracked and bleeding lips as they free their comrades, dressing their wounds as best they can, the healing potion bringing Phineus back from the edge of death to fighting wounded, about the same state as Morgaine. Both are battered and shocked but ok to move and fight if necessary, and so very pleased to see the rescue party! Somebody suggests searching but the notion is quickly and definitively squashed as, bereft of healing spells, several injured and the party almost out of potions, a rapid exit from The Barrowmaze becomes their urgent priority.

Gathering their bloodied gear they move back through the darkened passageways and chambers of The Barrowmaze, pausing cautiously at the major crossways and corners before moving on. Mercifully there are no other encounters and they arrive back at the entrance where led by Sir Leo they climb the rope to the surface, emerging onto the gloomy Barrow Moors, where a refreshing light rain is falling through the gloomy grey mists.

14:00 Wednesday the 13th day of Besemius, The Barrow Moor at Barrow 12