

# The Barrowmaze

## Session 21 13-03-24 A Knight's Challenge

Next Session 21/03/24 19.00

Sunday the 17th day of Besemius, The Barrowmaze, room 80, The Mirror

### **Single Combat**

A dead, amber landscape dotted with withered trees. In this landscape stand two figures, Sir Leo the Knight Errant and a Zombie doppelganger of himself, similarly equipped and geared. As the others observe from the far side of the mirror, Sir Leo smiles grimly and steps forward, raising sword and shield to do single combat with his Zombie double!

The two gladiators circle each other warily as suddenly with superior speed Leo attacks, dealing a slashing strike to the creature, but he is fighting his double, also possessed of considerable fighting prowess and the return blow from the Zombie is almost as bad. Perhaps because of this, both miss their next attacks as they guard their strength.

With blood flowing, and taking the measure of his enemy Leo strikes with precision and power, dealing a mighty blow which knocks the Zombie back, ruining its counter attack and giving Leo the advantage, but again, as they weave and parry neither can make a follow up strike and for a moment perhaps the weirdness of the situation briefly gets to Sir Leo as the Zombie returns a fierce slashing blow to even the odds.

Shaking off the agonising wound Leo is ironically rather impressed with "himself" yet has no intention of letting it end like this. Mustering his full concentration and considerable strength and skill, he charges the Zombie, cleaving and slashing it fatally to the ground, standing tall over his defeated enemy and raising The Sword of Sir Chyde triumphantly, once more the victor in single combat!

Leo is transported back to the mirror room prompting a cascade of healing from his relieved comrades as Gerald Lays Hands and Bella casts a CLW to restore the wounded Knight back to a more suitable state for dungeon adventuring. Almost exactly as they wonder what to do about the mirror, it shatters in its frame, strangely keeping the same surface and appearance but apparently broken, at least for now.

### **Fiendish Accountancy**

Returning south and crouching to pass the spiked portcullis, which creaks a little alarmingly as they pass, the adventurers return to the east/west corridor taking a few steps west to follow the next northerly exit, entering an open area with a door to the west, two exits to the north and a bloodstained altar against the northern wall. Searching the area carefully reveals nothing so they turn their attention to the door and enter the room beyond.

It is another burial chamber with more than 100 alcoves to search but their attention is first caught by the blood-spattered walls and the bloody corpse of a Mongrelman on the floor. Apparently he died from many small puncture wounds made in a manner they cannot seem to guess but they have observed it at least once before. Searching the body yields a marvellous platinum neckchain and a bag containing 40 gp. Taking the time to search the alcoves, they uncover 666 gp and a gold figurine (100 gp). Gerald is not impressed with the fiendish accountancy so suggests firmly that they leave one of the coins behind which the others readily agree to do... even Arnd.

## Corridor of Doors

Returning to the altar they leave to the north finding a long east/west passage with many doors along the northern side. They notice a slime trail which emerges from beneath one of the doors and travels a little to the east before abruptly stopping so they decide to start with this door. With her remarkable intelligence, Fenella deduces there are a lot of utterly gross monsters around this place.

Opening the door reveals the expected 10 x 10 rather slimy room which they search with no result. Checking to the east they examine the last door at this end of the corridor and notice that it has a keyhole. Arnd has a go at the lock and is unable to spring it but noticing Gerald and Leo pulling out crowbars suggests that rather than noisily demolishing it, they might like to look around and see if they can find a key, perhaps? Or maybe leave the significant noise making until they are on their way out?

Moving west along the corridor to the next door, they open it with the usual precautions, discovering a modest altar with human bones arranged artfully on it, apparently in some sort of pattern although it seems of no significance to either Fenella or Bella. Fenella takes a longer look at the altar finding that there are small piles of dust arranged within the bone display. Apparently having seen all there is to see they move on to the next door, noticing graffiti on the southern wall... "They are coming". "Let them come", mutters Gerald derisively.

Opening the next door, they find a chalked message on the floor, an arrow pointing west, the text reading, "Don't go this way". Of course they do go this way moving on to the next door which opens with a fierce draught of air which blows out Bella's torch. Shadwell's lantern suffers the assault however and Fenella's light is inextinguishable so they only pause to allow Bella to light a fresh torch before examining the small room, finding the skeletal remains of two humans but nothing more.

With Leo and Reme at the front they open the next door, unleashing a vile stench from the decomposing corpse lying on the floor. Leo manages to control himself but Reme is overcome with revulsion and nausea vomiting violently and loudly for at least 10 minutes. Carefully searching the now thoroughly awful room they find a bag on the robed corpse, containing a book which Fenella identifies as a spellbook of the type used by arcane spellcasters such as Magicians or Mages. It's not pertinent to her skills or knowledge but she knows it should be valuable to the right buyer so Shadwell carefully packs it away.

Reaching the western end of the corridor they see a closed door to the south and to the north, the door slightly ajar, is the last of the cubicle rooms. Perhaps just for a change they turn their attention to the southern door, listening and taking care as they open it surveying the room beyond. There are two rusty steel doors in this room, west and south. On the west wall of this room is a metal box with a set of three mechanical levers all in the down position. Leo suggests they, "quickly" check the last remaining cubicle room before proceeding onto this intriguing proposition and the others readily agree.

Peering through the ajar door, Leo notes piles of rags and bones and a few large rat skeletons lying around but nothing else so he and Reme open the door. Leo is surprised by a Cobra which strikes from its hiding place in the rags, spitting poison at his eyes, which amazingly strikes the well-armoured Knight, instantly blinding him! A second snake attacks Reme but the nimble Ranger dodges as Bella shoulders past Leo to smash the snake flat with the newly named Hammer of St Ygg! Gerald also moves quickly to the front as Leo frustratedly leans against the wall in a defensive posture, aware that he could easily injure his companions so resorting to muttered oaths and curses instead.

Phineus catches a glimpse of a third snake and seizing the chance while he has line of sight fires a crossbow bolt which gashes the snake but sadly doesn't prove fatal. Reme and Gerald take on the two remaining snakes, finishing them in reasonably short order while avoiding the spitting venom.

Fenella quickly collects a sample of the venom and casts her Slow Poison spell on Leo, halting the effects of the poison as they form up around the stricken Knight and head for the surface, managing to reach the exit via Barrow 16 without incident. Searching around, Fenella and Reme find the herbs that could fully neutralise the effect but Fenella fails her chance to concoct the exact formula (40% chance at Fenella's level 4). So they head southwest to the edge of the moors, Bella hoping fervently that her boss, Othar, Priest of St Ygg in Helix has the Neutralise Poison spell as the gift of the god today.

Two and a half hours later they arrive in Helix, urgently seeking Othar.

15.30 Sunday the 17th day of Besemius, Helix.

### **Notes**

**Neutralise Poison**, Level 4 Clerical spell. Requires a Cleric of at least 6<sup>th</sup> level (Othar).

This spell has two uses:

**Characters: Neutralize the effects of poison on a character.** A character who has died from poisoning can be revived, if neutralize poison is cast within ten rounds. (Slow Poison can prolong this by multiple hours).

**Items:** Remove poison from an item.

**Slow Poison**, Level 2 Druidic spell. Requires a Druid of at least 3<sup>rd</sup> level (Fenella)

Poisons affecting the subject are dramatically slowed (1 hour per level of caster), giving the caster time to effect a full cure.

**Poison effects:** As long as the subject has more than 1 hit point, the slowed poison inflicts 1hp of damage per turn. If the subject is at 1hp, the poison inflicts no further damage.

**Characters killed by poison:** Can be revived by this spell. Death must have occurred within one turn per level of the caster.

**Natural poisons:** If the subject was poisoned by a natural plant or animal, **the caster has a 10% chance per level of knowing a herbal antidote that will fully neutralize the poison.** In the wilderness, gathering the herbs for the antidote takes one turn. In a settlement, the herbs may be available for purchase from a herbalist.

**When the duration ends:** The full effects of the poison occur. If the subject was revived from death by this spell, they die once more

### **Important Life Saving Information**

Fenella's Slow Poison spell is a potential lifesaver if a party member is fatally poisoned. She can revive even dead adventurers and keep them going for 4 hours, hopefully to reach Helix and a Neutralise Poison from Othar.