

The Barrowmaze

Session 23 10-04-24 Noisy Exploration

Next Session 18/04/24 19.00

10:30 Monday the 18th day of Besemius room 81 (A)

With the Fossil Skeletons and Bloodthirsty Spiders defeated, the Adventurers make a thorough search of the area, finding nothing in the spider corridor but uncovering another 20 gp from the alcoves in the dead-end side corridor to the east. As they busy themselves searching, Bella casts her last CLW on Reme and with the area definitively cleared they return to the long corridor near the foot of the stairs and head west, eventually coming to a door at the western end of the corridor.

Opening the door they discover a quite large room covered in alcoves and something about the draught from the northwest corner encourages Leo to suspect a secret doorway might be concealed there. But first they search the alcoves, finding a pouch containing 64 pp and concealed at the back of the alcove in the northeast corner a mechanical lever. Leo tries the lever and finds it unresponsive, it's like it is not fully engaged with a mechanism, perhaps it's broken? Arnd double checks it for him and reaches the same conclusion as Gerald muses on the other levers they have recently discovered in a room to the north.

Single combat again?

Just as he suspected Leo discovers a secret door in the northwest corner of the room and opens it to reveal a short corridor to the north, stepping in and looking carefully up, he is surprised by a heavy portcullis crashing down between him and the rest of the party just as a secret door at the northern end of the corridor slides open, admitting a dark figure into the passageway.

As the figure advances towards Leo, Gerald yells to Arnd, "get the lever!". Bella knowing a Shadow when she sees one immediately Turns Undead, her holy power potently striking the shadowy figure through the heavy iron portcullis while Fenella begins to cast a Faerie Fire spell... she's been waiting ages for a worthy opponent. Arnd pulls the lever, feeling the mechanism engage solidly and with a grinding of gears and chains, the portcullis begins to rise. Fenella's spell completes and the previously shadowy Shadow lights up prettily as Leo advances, swinging and somehow missing the brightly illuminated and somewhat turned creature.

Gerald holds his position, the portcullis slowly rising past his knees as the Shadow takes a swipe at Leo, missing as the Knight steps swiftly to the side. With the portcullis half open, Gerald ducks and dashes in, unfortunately missing as Leo finds his target, slicing into the semi-corporeal thing before him. Bella advances into the corridor and since the Shadow can now properly perceive the Priest of St Ygg, it retreats into the corridor from whence it emerged, grabbing at Gerald as it goes. Gerald avoids the undead thing's touch but misses when he counter-attacks leaving Leo to finish the job as the Sword of Sir Chyde descends, cleaving the brightly glowing undead creature into oblivion. "I wonder what happens if it touches you", mumbles Gerald, watching as the Shadow gradually dissipates.

Shouting and Hammering

Gerald calls to Arnd to jam the lever mechanism and Dwarvern Thief immediately complies, noisily hammering in a spike to lock the lever. "Thas nae goin' anywhay boss!", he shouts across the room, taking the opportunity to make a bit of noise while he can as Gerald and Leo examine the passageway to the east where the Shadow emerged. Gerald comments that it's curious how the Shadow stopped only halfway down the corridor, which then continues to the east into the gloom, hmmm why would it do that he wonders, perhaps a ward or a trap? They send for Arnd and within a minute the Dwarf detects a pit trap immediately before them and this time instead of using brute force he finesses the mechanism, skillfully jamming it in the closed position. A few steps further and they can see into the dead (literally) end of the corridor where a desiccated, skeletal corpse, dressed in tattered robes lies possessively wrapped around a dull silver coffer.

Checking the coffer (20 gp) Arnd doesn't find any trace of a trap so Gerald picks it up, the lid falling open, dropping a large key to the floor... "hmmm is that a magical aura around the key?", wonders Fenella. Leo and Gerald are both keen to try the key in some of their favourite locked doors but suddenly there is the sound of shouting and weapons clashing from around the corner in the main room as a small group of Mongrelmen bandits burst into the room apparently unaware of the full force of the party. They rush into combat with Reme, Shadwell, Phineus and Morgaine, stabbing murderously with spears and shortswords.

Taken by surprise, Morgaine is stabbed in the back with a spear as a flurry of blows rain down on the Adventurers but the others dodge out of the way as Shadwell scarpers up the corridor to the north taking most of the light with him. Further up the corridor Fenella flattens against the wall to let the Gerald and Leo stampede through unhindered.

Back in the room Phineus takes bloody revenge on Morgaine's assailant, killing it with a single blow as Morgaine wounds another. Gerald barrels dramatically into the main chamber and immediately cuts down the Mongrelman assailing Reme as Leo crashes in slicing down another. The last one crazily decides to fight instead of run and is swiftly cut down by Leo's sword. With both Reme and Morgaine looking somewhat worse for wear they decide to plough on regardless, leaving the room and heading south then west near the door where they entered this area, proceeding to the end of the western corridor where they discover a large room with a pile of rubble in the northwest corner. As Leo enters the others cautiously remain on the threshold noting the occasional falls of dust from the ceiling and the rather bulging look to the ceiling. Above the sharp intake of Arnd's breath they hear a slight grinding sound as if a huge weight of stone is under pressure. Chaotic Sir Leo is casually prepared to search the room but is finally persuaded back by the wise council of the others. Bella also lingers around the threshold of the room, almost entering until an anxious Gerald calls her back.

Since they are already in the southern corridor they re-visit the heavy locked doors that they had previously investigated but sadly the key doesn't fit into either of the locks. Heading north to the corridor of small rooms, they remember that the first door had a keyhole but again the key doesn't unlock this door either. In their frustration Leo and Fenella want to force entry by smashing the door noisily open which Arnd again councils against, repeating his point that this sort of racket is best kicked up on the way out of a dangerous dungeon rather than on the way in. Gerald strongly agrees with him so in the end they decide to leave this door for later, instead moving down the corridor to the western end and the room with the three levers.

Leverage

Taking a more leisurely look around the lever room they notice another set of alcoves in addition to the rusted iron doors to the west and south. Searching the alcoves, they find 52 pp and a pair of gold earrings (80 gp), Shadwell noting that this excursion is proving quite profitable, 1,838 gp so far.

They turn their attention to the levers, all in the down position, which they designate 1, 2, 3 counting from the north. Leo takes the lead and starts experimenting with the levers, also considering suggestions from the others. The levers seem to be connected to a mechanism but when thrown they engage for a moment, then slowly descend back down again to the starting position.

Leo tries the following combinations...

1 alone

2 alone

all 3, lifted with his forearm.

Fenella suggests the outside two but says it quietly enough that nobody notices.

3 alone

3 and 2

2 alone, again

1 and 3... and with a dull metallic "thunk", the western door unlocks and slowly creaks open.

12:10 Monday the 18th day of Besemius, room 72, the western door open.