

The Barrowmaze

Session 25 24-04-24 The Helix Hammers

Next Session 01/05/24 17.00

14:20 Monday the 18th day of Besemius, Barrowmaze 73 Q2

With the Crab Spiders defeated and Sir Leo returned to the land of the living they take a few minutes to search the room and the mouldering corpses constituting the spiders' larder. On one of the bodies, a halfling, they find a very nice dagger in a sheath which Shadwell dutifully stores and catalogues. You find yourself wondering how you ever managed without this helpful and resourceful retainer.

Assessing their condition the adventurers agree that with Gerald, Morgaine and Reme all bearing significant wounds that it's time to get this loot back to Helix and indulge in some comfort, rest and recovery so they cautiously make their way back to the stairs, ascending to barrow 16 and from there on to the mist enshrouded moorland. Looming from the mist they spy two spectral figures advancing on them so they quickly enact their agreed wilderness encounter protocol with Gerald restraining Leo from charging the enemies single-handed while Morgaine and Phineus spread out, preparing their crossbows as the rest ready their weapons to receive the attack. Identifying them as Coffin Corpses, Bella attempts to Turn but fails. Fenella hurls the Spear of The Druid at the nearest enemy impaling it for a serious wound. The crossbows go wide of their targets as the rest of the party defend, the Coffin Corpses sweeping down upon them clawing malevolently yet incompetently as they both miss their targets.

Angered at her failed Turn, Bella smacks the nearest undead brutally with the Hammer of St Ygg as Arnd creeps around behind but fails to land a backstab attempt. Leo strikes with the Sword of Sir Chyde, destroying his opponent in a single mighty blow as Gerald's practised sword manoeuvres continue to elude the target. The crossbow shots go wide again as indeed does Fenella's sling bullet but Reme strikes hard with his magical Broadsword, leaving the remaining attacker in a very bad state as Phineus follows up with a good shortsword thrust, killing the creature... which promptly stands up again and begins to attack! Seeing this bizarre occurrence Bella rushes over and smashes it to destruction with her hammer as they conclude that it will be magical weapons only for this particular enemy in future. A search of the fallen foes disappointingly fails to uncover any treasure.

Guided back through the treacherous marshes by Ranger Reme they pick up the road and are back in Helix in about 2 hours. With her own spells exhausted, Bella runs off to fetch her twin sister Cella to assist in healing. The Helix Cleric casts CLW on both Reme and Morgaine patching them up well enough for a restful night so after meals and hot baths at The Brazen Strumpet they retire to their rooms for a peaceful night's sleep.

Tuesday the 19th day of Besemius in Helix

Gerald uses his miraculous healing ability, Laying Hands to heal himself back to only slightly battered and wounded. Cella passes by to cast another 2 CLWs as indeed do Bella and Fenella as the team is gradually restored to fighting strength. Inspired by Bella's prowess with The Hammer of St Ygg Gerald suggests that they name their now successful and locally respected adventuring group "The Helix Hammers", which meets with approval from the rest of the group and embarrassed but proud blushes from Bella.

The newly named Hammers visit Mazzahs, who casts Detect Magic on the dagger and the key. The eccentric wizard discovers that the dagger is indeed a magical weapon, with some additional advantages for a Halfling or Gnome but still a very good general magical weapon which Arnd has his eyes on as a potentially excellent backstabber. The key has a magical aura but no particular powers. Mazzahs presumes the magic is to prevent the key being easily destroyed or something along those lines.

They relax around town, resupplying and making their donations and business transactions as normal. Words are said in the church of St Ygg honouring The Hammers in general but particularly Reme the good, for his generous charity and Steadfast Gerald the honourable steeple climbing (95%) Paladin.

Wednesday the 20th day of Besemius

The Helix Hammers rise at dawn and head off once more to the Barrowmaze, arriving without incident. Entering via barrow 16 they return cautiously to the levers room, noting that the western door is again closed and the levers are in the down position. Manipulating the levers as before opens the western door and again splitting the group, just in case of door mechanism shenanigans they turn their attention to the remaining unexplored stuck door opposite the spider room. Gerald listens carefully and hearing nothing unleashes Leo on the door which bursts open easily when forced by the Knight. They find a 20 x 20 ft room with walls covered in a large yellow panoramic fresco depicting the lawful and chaotic gods on opposite sides of the room. On a low stone altar are a copper plate with two Silver Rings (50gp each), a wooden funerary figurine, three small Emeralds (35gp each), 10pp, a cracked clay bowl, and a carved wooden deer. They take the items of obvious value and return to the lever room.

Returning the levers to the starting down position causes the western door to close as expected. Gerald explains that since 1 and 3 opened the western door he would expect 1 and 2 to do the same for the southern door. Putting his hypothesis to the test he is delighted to discover he is indeed correct as the southern door creaks and scrapes open. Locking the levers in the same manner as before they peer through the door into a large room.

09:20 Wednesday the 20th day of Besemius, 72 The Levers Room

Notes

I've awarded an additional 200 XP discretionary bonus per character and 100 XP for each retainer for good evolving tactics and roleplay of late. Also I've been a bit stingy with awarded XP in the earlier levels.

Arnd levelled to Thief 3 – He can now retry any of the locks he failed at level 2!

The Helix Hammers, The Hammers of Helix, you own it, basically anything with Helix and Hammers will be recognised as your group.

The Stoutblade Dagger might be good for Arnd's Thieflily backstab attack. +4 to hit and double damage, potentially a total of +6 to hit and up to 12 damage when striking unnoticed from behind.

Anticipating Alex's Lever Room question, "Why didn't the southern door open when I first tried 1 and 2? The southern door sequence only works after the western door sequence has cycled. Each door resets after 10 minutes and the whole system resets back to starting state after 12 hours.

Mazzahs has had long enough to figure out the full set of properties of these magical gloves...

Gauntlets of Swimming and Climbing

A pair of these gloves appear as normal lightweight handwear, but they are most useful magic items, and radiate their dweomer if a detection is attempted. The wearer can have hands of large (human) or small (halfling) size.

He or she will be enabled to swim as fast as a triton (15") under water, and as fast as a merman (18") on the surface. Of course, these gauntlets do not empower the wearer to breathe water.

These gloves also give the wearer a very strong and able gripping and holding ability with respect to climbing, so as to enable him or her to climb vertical or nearly vertical surfaces, upwards or downwards, with a 95% probability of not slipping and falling — and if the wearer is a thief the gauntlets increase success probability to 99.5%.