

The Barrowmaze

Session 30 30-05-24 Filth and Disease

Next Session 05/06/24 19.00

Saturday, the 23rd day of Besemius 06:00 in Helix

After Fenella settles their outstanding expenses of 50 gp, the party set out for the moors arriving without incident some two hours later. Following Gerald's lead they cross the Barrow Mounds area to Barrow 20, their current favourite entrance to the labyrinth below. They note that they left the secret sarcophagus entrance open when they last departed but they were in a hurry to save Leo so it's not surprising really. Descending the narrow stairway they emerge once more into The Barrowmaze, standing in the north/south corridor where the remains of the Giant Centipedes testify to their recent activity.

Leo wonders about heading north but Gerald points out that they haven't finished exploring the southern area yet, having been rudely interrupted by the Giant Centipede attack, also there's the alcove from where the centipedes emerged so they begin by group searching the corridor itself not finding anything of interest. Reme enters the alcove area by himself, also finding nothing so they prepare to move further south before Fenella and Arnd decide to also give the alcove a lookover, unfortunately also not discovering any hidden doors or chambers so they continue along the corridor to the south quickly emerging into a large triangular room lined with ancient statuary. The large statues are still impressive despite their apparent age and seem reminiscent of emperors or gods of some forgotten age, Bella certainly doesn't recognise any of them.

At the southern end of the room stands a broken altar. As Leo approaches to examine it, he drops into a concealed pit trap, crashing noisily to a hard landing 10 ft below. Restraining himself from uttering un-Knightly language he calls for the climbing gauntlets which Gerald throws down to him allowing an easy exit from the pit. Careful searching of the room reveals nothing further and Bella is unable to find any significance in the type of altar so they leave, somewhat disappointed, to the north.

Passing the stairwell corridor on the left and the alcove space on the right they continue north, reaching a crossroads. The passage continues to the north while a few feet further to the east is an open space. The western passage seems somewhat familiar, especially to Gerald who recalls previously entering this corridor from the western end, although they are now further east than their previous explorations revealed. Checking the space to the east reveals a hexagonal chamber, the walls lined with square alcoves and bizarrely, a collection of yellowed human teeth arranged on the floor in an arrow pointing west. Searching the alcoves turns up some crumbling, mummified remains and more interestingly 41 pp (410 gp). With the alcoves looted they follow the indicated direction and continue west to where the corridor connects with two doors to the south and an open area to the north with another broken altar amidst a pile of rubble and detritus. Entering into this space they encounter a pack of 5 Giant Robber Flies which use their leaping attack from the filth to surprise them!

Robber Flies and The Healing Hands of Gerald

Two of the creatures target Bella, the first missing but the second tears cruelly into her body with its lashing chitinous rasp. The others attack Leo and Reme who both dodge. With the benefit of surprise the Giant Robber Flies attack again, Reme and Leo avoiding their attacks but Bella is hit once more, her flesh torn and lacerated, spilling blood she sags against the wall, the silver Hammer of St Ygg falling to the ground as the ghastly giant insect prepares to finish her.

With a cry of, "Nooooo!", Gerald sprints from his rearguard position, heedlessly shoulder charging the Robber Fly aside as he reaches out and Lays Hands upon Bella, saving her life with his holy power just in the nick of time. Focussing on the nearest Fly, Reme raises his magical broadsword and strikes, cleaving the creature in twain with a single blow. Fenella stabs with her spear but misses as Arnd's magical dagger tumbles through the air striking one of the Flies, wounding and crippling it as Leo fumbles with his sword which seems to have become entangled with his gear.

The Flies attack again but their vile rasps are rebuffed as Bella once more lifts The Hammer of St Ygg. Distracted by his intervention Gerald misses his attack as Reme runs around the back and easily skewers another Fly from behind, killing it instantly. Fenella stabs again with The Spear of The Druid, this time striking true and finishing the Robber Fly in a single attack. Untangling himself, Leo swings at the nearest Fly with the Sword of Sir Chyde almost killing it. As the remaining Flies attack again, Phineas is slightly wounded but immediately takes revenge by impaling the creature on his shortsword. Gerald strikes and almost finishes the last Fly but Reme is on hand to again render it dead at a single stroke.

With the Robber Flies destroyed Bella casts a CLW on herself, smiling at Gerald and whispering, "still here" as she gestures with The Hammer of St Ygg. Morgaine patches up Phineas' slight wound and Leo carefully pokes through the Flies' filthy lair in the broken statue rubble, finding 38 gp for his trouble.

Huecuva

Resuming their exploration, Leo listens at the first of the two southern doors. Hearing nothing he opens it, revealing an empty 10 ft x 10 ft chamber lined with circular alcoves. Searching the alcoves they find 51 gp in the dusty, desiccated remains. Turning their attention to the next door, Gerald listens, again nothing is heard so they push the door open to see a group of skeletal figures dressed in tattered robes speedily issuing from the burial alcoves and rushing to engage, three of them surging into the corridor past Gerald as they attack. Morgaine takes a wound as does Leo but both shrug off any effects from these disease carrying undead as the others dodge the Huecuva attacks.

In the corridor, Fenella strikes with her magical spear and finishes a Huecuva in a single stroke as Reme destroys his with a brutal slash of his broadsword. Bella raises the holy symbol of St Ygg high and Turns 4 of the undead which coincidentally is their number after Reme and Fenella's rapid put downs. Either dodging or in Leo's case protected by plate armour the party shrug off the Huecuva attacks. Fenella has a bad angle through the doorway so she hurls her spear but misses. Sir Leo strikes but again it's not quite enough to finish his opponent, Reme injures another as Phineas runs around the back, also striking a wounding blow.

A slugging match ensues with the fast agile undead evading most of the Hammers' blows as Bella tries to move into the best position to make them aware of her in order to force them back. Somehow Phineas is wounded during the frantic dance and has the Huecuva's disease inflicted upon him. After a fair few swings and misses the Huecuva are finally destroyed as Morgaine and a slightly flushed Phineas dispatch the last two with brutal efficiency.

Bella examines Phineas and declares, "he has the Huecuva's disease and he'll soon need the attention of a Healer, we should return to Helix". Impressed by the retainers' courage and prowess in battle Leo personally awards Phineas and Morgaine a bonus of 30 gp each.

Saturday, the 23rd day of Besemius 10:20, The Barrowmaze Room 53

Notes

A reminder of our house rule on death since Bella got quite close this time. OSE as written has instant death at 0 hp which I think is a little too brutal. I use this simple house rule as a small buffer. As an example, Bella was on 1 hp. A single good strike 6 hp would have killed her, -5 hp. A less serious hit 4 hp to make -3 hp overall would have rendered her unconscious, requiring healing at a safe haven.

At 0 hp or up to and including -4 hp, the character collapses, badly wounded and unconscious. **If the damage exceeds the -4 hp the PC is instantly dead.** A character in the 0 to minus 4 range requires expert healing attention within 12 hours or they will die.

Any damage received after unconsciousness is instant death.