

The Barrowmaze

Session 41 22-08-24, 29-08-24 Mummy Rot Disease

Next Session 05/09/24 19.00

Friday the 29th day of Besemius, 11:30, The Barrowmaze Vault 44

Standing amidst the wreckage of the small army of skeletons that they have successfully dismembered, The Hammers examine their surroundings more carefully noting the burial passageways from which the skeletons emerged resemble the eastern chamber that they have previously explored. Before searching Fenella drinks her potion of healing and Shadwell hands Leo a similar potion which the Knight quaffs gratefully. Bella notices that Reme is also still quite badly wounded and casts a CLW on the Ranger. Now free to explore unhindered they search the six vault passages finding the following treasure...

2400 gp in various pouches, bags, and bowls

A clerical scroll: Cure Light Wounds(x2), Protection from Evil

A magic-user scroll

A nice, hooded cloak

Whilst exploring they discover that of the two westernmost passages, the southern one has a secret door and the northern passage features a crumbled wall leading into a natural cave passage. Still somewhat wounded and mostly out of healing spells and abilities they decide to return to Helix rather than investigating further.

As they move towards the Barrow 20 stairs exit, Gerald thinks he hears an approaching squelching sound from the east so he hurries the group along, attaining the surface and crossing the moors without incident. With Reme taking the lead they return to Helix in two hours arriving at 15:00.

After briefly refreshing themselves and dismissing the retainers they visit Mazzahs who casts a Detect Magic over the items they plundered, keeping the Magic User scroll for himself.

The cloak is a Cloak of Defence +1 which will improve AC by 1 provided it is used with no armour heavier than leather, so it is clearly the most suitable for Arnd. He also pins the Brooch of Elvenkind to the garment, now benefiting from the dual properties of the cloak which makes him a very happy, and almost impossible to detect in a dungeon, roguish Dwarf.

It is the broadsword however that really catches Mazzahs' attention. He disappears off to consult a selection of scrolls and ancient tomes returning to describe the properties of The Broadsword Frost Brand which Reme now proudly wields.

The Broadsword Frost Brand

A Magical +3 Broadsword imbued with the Frost Brand enchantment.

Grants special benefits against fire and protection from creatures with an affinity for fire.

Grants an attack and damage bonus: +3, +6 vs fire-using/dwelling creatures.

Can extinguish fire: 50% chance of extinguishing a 10' radius area when thrust into fire. This also affects magical fire (but not instantaneous effects, e.g. Fireball, Flamestrike).

Protects against fire. The wielder gains the following benefits:

Normal fire: Unharmed by non-magical fire.

Save bonus: Gain a +2 bonus to all saving throws versus fire-based magical or breath attacks.

Fire-based damage: Is reduced by 1 point per damage die rolled. (Each die inflicts a minimum of 1 hit point damage.)

In extreme cold, casts light: 30' radius.

Mazzahs adds that this is not just a broadsword frost brand, it is **The** Broadsword Frost Brand, forged in ancient times by the ice dwarves of the far north. Only one such weapon of any type exists and Reme is now the bearer of the Broadsword version of this legendary series of weapons.

With this cheering news the party head off to the Brazen Strumpet for a good meal and their comfortable beds.

Saturday the 30th day of Besemius - Reviewing the Situation

The next day Reme, Leo, Fenella, Phineas and Morgaine all gain levels from their recent experiences and adventures. The Hammers spend the day relaxing and patching up their remaining wounds.

Over a relaxed lunch at The Strumpet Arnd wonders what the plan for tomorrow might be, provoking a discussion regarding the nature of The Barrowmaze and the things they have discovered so far since first entering the labyrinth via the rope descent in Barrow 12.

From that first entrance they have made what seems to be a good exploration of the central west, although a portion of the southwest near the one-armed demon statue and the tattered yellow curtains remains unexplored.

Moving further north beyond the pit where they rescued Arnd, they have delved into a block of chambers containing the Solis pedestal, exploring extensively although there is a wide corridor to the northeast and a smaller one to the south with the glowing evidence of Fire Beetles which is currently unexplored.

To the "middle" south of the explored area is the large obelisk chamber and its two side vaults, the easternmost of which connects to the natural cave complex which eventually led them even further east into an area seemingly devoted to the elemental forces (statue of the chaos demon Zuul holding skulls with the elemental symbols: water, earth, fire and air) where they were somewhat fortunate to be the victors in two hard fought encounters with more powerful enemies than they had become used to.

They have also learned that hundreds of years ago there was a family schism in the sphere of the gods of death with The Greater God of Death, Nergal, being deposed and presumably destroyed by his ambitious sons Set and Orcus who to this day struggle for sole dominion over the dark realms of death, undeath and chaos.

Sunday the 1st day of Setherius, 07:00, Helix

Bright and early on the first day of Setherius, marking one entire month of operations by The Helix Hammers, Fenella and Bella commune with their respective higher powers to acquire their spells for the day ahead.

Bella takes 2 x CLW and 1 x Bless

Fenella takes 2 x Faerie Fire, 2 x Slow Poison, 2 x Protection from Poison, 1 x Cure Serious Wounds and 1 x Wall of Thorns

Arriving at the barrow moor they descend via Barrow 16 intending to explore either the northeast corridor or the southern one. Standing at the bottom of the stairs in the lantern light, Gerald wisely recalls the Solis pedestal where free blessings were available and "it's just down this corridor to the west." While they consider this bright idea Arnd notices the big steel door slightly to the south and recalls that since he has grown in experience since his last attempt, he can have another try at it which he does, expertly cracking the lock which previously defeated him. Temporarily shelving the sensible Solis idea they assemble before the door with Leo and Reme in front. Pushing the door open, they enter a chamber with an open stone sarcophagus and a stone gargoyle mounted on the wall opposite. Leo approaches, taking the usual precautions. As he nears the sarcophagus a tattered figure wrapped in bandages rises and moves to attack! "It's a Mummy, magical weapons only!" cries Gerald.

Mummy!

Battle ready, Leo reacts instantly slicing into the Mummy with the Sword of Sir Chyde as Reme and Bella rush in to join him, unfortunately Reme misses his attack with his magnificent new broadsword and Bella's holy powers prove insufficient to Turn the higher level undead thing. Gerald charges in stabbing with the Black Iron Shortsword, badly wounding the lurching horror as Phineas joins him, proudly attacking with his Broadsword +1 and dealing a severe wound to the the undead monster.

Flailing around in hideous malevolence the Mummy strikes Reme, tearing a cruel suppurating gash as the Ranger feels the effects of disease spread through his body. Groaning hideously in sadistic satisfaction as it takes the initiative, the thing slashes at Leo tearing a similar diseased wound. Fenella hurries in to support but misses with her spear. Fortunately Bella is on hand to deliver the retribution of St Ygg via her mighty hammer, crushing the creature's skull and dropping it on the spot.

A quick search of the sarcophagus finds a Gold Headband 600 gp and an ornate Gold Sceptre embedded with Black Opals 1600 gp which Shadwell safely secures in the Bag of Holding.

Examining the wounded warriors, Bella and Fenella concur that they both have contracted the much-feared Mummy Rot disease and will need a Cure Disease spell to be cast upon them. Fortunately the head priest, Othar, back at Helix will be able to perform this service. Until they can receive this cure both Reme and Leo will not be curable by normal magical means (CLW, CSW etc) and will only recover naturally at a considerably slower rate than normal (x10). The disease can only be cured by the magic of a holy Cure Disease. "Now we've got even more reason to receive the blessing of Solis," says Gerald, indicating the direction. For a change everyone agrees with him so they head westwards to the Solis shrine and all receive the (1 hour) blessing of Solis before returning to the passage outside the defeated Mummy's chamber.

The Northeastern Corridor

They decide to explore the wide northeastern corridor but as they move carefully around the corner Gerald is alarmed to hear the muffled sound of weapons clashing and muted shouting and oaths from the darkness ahead... oh, and a faint glowing light followed by a flash of some bright magical spell. Crouching down he whispers warnings to the others and is joined at the front by Leo and Arnd, as the main light bearers Fenella, Shadwell and Bella remain concealed around the corner.

Thus remaining stealthy they quietly discuss their options. Leo wouldn't mind getting all of the lights out and marching up the corridor to take control of the situation, after all he is a Knight, if they don't obey him he can always introduce them to the concept of feudalism via his magical sword but Gerald favours a more cautious approach and after the last few impulsive rushes into battle Leo concedes that he probably owes Gerald a choice of tactics. Gerald asks Arnd to reconnoitre so the Dwarven Thief pulls up the hood on his Cloak of Elvenkind and promptly vanishes from sight as he moves silently up the corridor.

Returning a few minutes later he describes what he saw using his infravision and the lighting employed in the battle at the other end of the corridor. He describes two groups of humans fighting each other, with the aid of animated skeletons and zombies on each side. The fighting is vicious and brutal and he heard cries such as, "Die Settite dog", "For Set, the master" and "Orcus take your soul". He saw one of the humans apparently killed, only to be touched by a staff or rod and raised to fight alongside his killer!

Gerald decides, "now is the time to strike," and summoning the others with lights held high and a broad grin on Sir Leo's face they move up the northeasterly corridor however before they can reach the conflict there is a loud bang, a scream and a flash of light and the sound of doors slamming shut. "Quickly, while they're still weak," urges Gerald as they move decisively to the end of the corridor, finding an open area with doors to the east and west and a clearly visible pit at the south end which they carefully avoid. There is the body of a man in studded leather armour who has been stabbed from behind and littered around are the inanimate bodies of skeletons and zombies. There is blood spilt all over the floor but a swipe of blood leads to the eastern door.

After a quick search of the body, finding nothing more than an unholy symbol and a handful of gold coins they move on to the eastern exit, quickly opening the door, revealing a corridor leading to the east and a door in the south wall about 20 ft further down. They notice a few splashes of blood leading down the corridor and decide to take the southern door which they open, finding a corridor to the south which Leo insists on searching. There is no sign of blood or any movement ahead as the Solis blessing quietly expires.

Sunday the 1st day of Setherius, 10:30, northern corridor 109