

The Barrowmaze

Session 59 13-03-25 The Wild Dogs of The Redwood

Next Session 27-03-25 19.00

Saturday the 21st day of Setherius, 09:00, Parlfrey's Keep, after Leo and Lyntern's sparring match.

The Hammers leave for Thurmaster (11 miles, half a day's travel). Lyntern points out that the cross-country direct route to Redwood would be quicker but Gerald wants to go to Thurmaster first to see if they have any replies to their letters. Half musing, Gerald does posit directly heading out from Thurmaster, arriving at The Redwood in evening and making camp overnight which rather appeals to Sir Leo's sense of adventure and excitement but Fenella suggests raising the Wild Dog situation with the Thurmaster residents and seeing what they think of the situation. Is it a normal thing that happens or is it unusual? With a bit of thought they realise that events do seem to follow them around and they conclude that the Wild Dog situation is probably unusual. To conclude, Fenella makes it clear that she's not particularly enthusiastic about camping overnight near a pack of potentially rabid wild dogs so they decide to overnight in Thurmaster.

Enroute to Thurmaster they encounter a heavy wagon escorted by a few guards and led by a well-armed and armoured woman. Leo notes that the guards and the wagon are without any visible livery or mark of trade but all are in very good order. Both sides approach each other cautiously and the wagon leader introduces herself to Sir Leo as Darla Fandros. The shipment is for delivery to Parlfrey's Keep so would they kindly stand aside and let her and her team continue. The Hammers see no reason to interfere so they ride past the wagon which continues on its way and at 12:30 they arrive at Thurmaster.

Thurmaster

Leo slaps his hands together and declares, "Excellent! Lunchtime!" as he leads his horse towards The Hound and Tails. It becomes clear that Lyntern is recognised by some in the village which he bears with an appropriate air of polite modesty. It is of course completely normal for the giant slaying heroes of Thurmaster to be in such company and all are hailed and regarded as such. Gerald makes his customary search for injured people as Leo complains, "can't we just have lunch first?" but there is a woodsman with a severe forearm wound and Gerald makes a visit and with the power of St Ygg, Lays on Hands, completely curing the grateful fellow. Unbelievably, their reputation in Thurmaster is enhanced even more.

Finally, they get to their lunch at The Hound and Tails where Weismar greets them sleepily, recently awakened after one of his frequent naps. As Weismar takes their orders and arranges the rooms, Leo introduces Lyntern causing the Innkeeper to chuckle at the notion of yet another "Sir Knight" beneath his humble roof. It bothers Gerald somewhat that Leo has introduced Lyntern using his real name but realises that the Parlfrey scion is walking around wearing his house insignia so they are definitely not travelling incognito.

They deal with a few things; attempting to meet Marlen who is deep into his work, refusing to be disturbed so they move onto Tauster's house, finding the elderly mage snoring in an armchair. They check for messages and news but there is nothing new from either party so they depart, informing Tauster that they intend to deal with The Redwood's recent Wild Dog problem. Tauster advises them to target any obvious alpha dogs first as killing them may well encourage the rest of the pack to flee.

Dining at the Hound and Tails, they discuss Fenella's spells wondering what might be the best to use against particularly savage Wild Dogs before turning in for the night.

Sunday the 22nd day of Setherius, 08:00, Thurmaster

Dogfight at The Redwood

They wonder about the horses since they are planning a forest expedition which is not ideal for horses. Do they take the horses and have Shadwell mind them by himself outside of the forest or leave them in Thurmaster? After some deliberation they decide to walk the five or so miles to The Redwood and explore on foot.

As they approach the forest, Sir Leo instructs Lyntern to stay with him and not run off by himself and he agrees to these orders. Leo says if for some reason Leo is incapacitated, he should go to Gerald. Leo keeps his eye on Lyntern with attitude of a military commander, so far so good he thinks as he repeats the instructions again for good measure.

At 10:00 they arrive in The Redwood and begin searching, finding a good number of pathways through this regularly trafficked woodland with its apparently normal wildlife. They explore further to the south for another hour or so before a pack of slaving, savage Wild Dogs burst into the clearing from the east and immediately attack. Fenella starts to cast a spell as three of the Dogs attack Gerald who yet again has wandered out in front away from the party. Fenella's spell goes off on the group of Dogs, paralysing two of them as Gerald waves his sword around in empty air.

Another Dog attacks Leo, breaking one of its teeth on the Knight's armour as Arnd disappears from sight and immediately backstab attacks a Dog, killing it instantly. Leo kicks the dead dog into the undergrowth as he goes by and turns to attack the one menacing Gerald, striking with the sword of Sir Chyde and wounding it badly. Sticking with Sir Leo, Lyntern attacks the nearest Dog, just missing his attack as another group of Dogs burst into view from the east, racing towards the exposed Shadwell as Fenella turns to prepare a spell to protect Shadwell and their western flank.

Lyntern, strikes again, instantly killing a Dog, and with a cheer and a heroic flourish continues boldly into the fray. Leo is bitten, taking a wound from the snarling Dog's razor-sharp teeth so he strikes back with a perfect stroke but just doesn't manage to damage it enough to finish it off. Leo is impressed at how tough the Wild Dogs are although he has certainly bested far more formidable foes than these savage beasts.

The eastern group run in to attack and a seriously nervous Shadwell fends off the first one, nimbly dodging out of the way as Gerald easily fends off his own snarling mutt. Arnd steps in and backstabs the Dog attacking Gerald, but not realising Shadwell is under threat he continues to attack the targets he can see before him in the melee. He hits hard, wounding the animal badly.

Fenella casts her mighty Wall of Thorns spell instantly converting a 55 x 25 ft area of forest clearing into a horrendously sharp and dense slab of thorns, right on top of the pack of five Dogs to the west. As the forest erupts right next to Shadwell he jumps back in alarm while the twisting mass of razor-sharp briar thorns manifests, rending and impaling the animals as terrible howls and screams echo around the clearing. Several of the Dogs die instantly and the rest will soon perish as Fenella's terrible spell again does its gruesome work.

Gerald completely misses his attack again but at least he's useful as a target, drawing attention from the rest of the group. Shadwell scurries over to get closer to the protection of The Hammers.

Fenella quickly reviews her spells as another group of dogs burst into the clearing!

Sunday the 22nd day of Setherius, 11:00, The Redwood, battling packs of Wild Dogs.