

# The Barrowmaze

## Session 67 22-05-25 Return to Ironguard Motte

Next Session 29-05-25 19.00

Wednesday the 1st day of Vadrius 21:00, The Baron of Mutton Inn, Milborne

After their recent discussion with Master Carman, they retire to The Baron of Mutton Inn where they are joined by Garyld, the village constable. He confirms that Semheis, the local Cleric is indeed missing after not appearing for the Sunday service. He summarises, "we now have two missing spellcasters, one of each sort and the attempt on another one, Felicity Short, which is of course how you originally got involved." He goes on to inform them that he has sent warning messages to Tauster to watch his back and via Kuiper to inform that wild girl in the woods, "and indeed you too Fenella, keep your eyes open." Fenella says she appreciates the message and returns to sipping her drink whilst plotting the downfall of her enemies whomsoever they may be.

Gerald informs the constable that they have business in Ironguard Motte for a few days after which they will return to Haranshire and continue their efforts to get to the bottom of the matter. Garyld mentions that he's sent to Ironguard Motte for some support for the search and normally he would expect perhaps half a dozen armed troops to assist him. After a short while, Garyld leaves, warning them to take care.

Thursday the 2nd day of Vadrius 08:00, The Baron of Mutton Inn, Milborne

They depart Milborne and make steady progress to the west, encountering various local folk about their business, some of whom greet and even hail them as they pass, it seems that word of their deeds is getting around. They travel until dark and make camp south of The Lyrchwood more or less where they camped on their way into Haranshire.

After they set a fire Fenella notices that she's not been feeling too well in the last one or two hours and it's getting quite dramatically worse. After some miserable reflection she shares it her condition with the others and as she explains, it dawns on her that the effects are typical of many poisons... perhaps she has been poisoned. Fortunately, Fenella is a Druid and as such usually carries at least one anti-poison spell so she is quickly able to cast her powerful Protection from Poison, which instantly removes the ill-effects leaving her completely healthy and confirming her suspicions that poison has been administered. With her knowledge of the limits of slower acting poisons, she realises it must have been administered at Milborne.

They wonder if the attempted murderer might be connected somehow to the missing spellcasters. They even wonder if Garyld the village constable could have visited their table just for the purpose of slipping poison in their Druid's drink although this does seem rather unlikely given his position and the lack of any obvious motive. Fenella had been wondering whether the missing spellcasters were being kidnapped to use their spellcasting abilities but this incident now makes her consider whether the culprit just wants to eliminate spellcasters for whatever nefarious reason. They also consider Jaspar, Carman's butler who also served them drinks but again a motive seems to be lacking. Leo winds up the speculation and they settle down for the night around a cheery, blazing fire.

Friday the 3rd day of Vadrius 08:00, the camp south of Lyrchwood

## **Ironguard Motte**

They set out as soon as they have the light, travelling without incident, arriving at 13:00 at the gates of Ironguard Motte with a trail of giggling small children running around after them pretending to be Knights and Witches.

With Sir Leo's brightly coloured heraldry on view, they are spotted and waved over by one of the guards and politely introduced to a new Ironguard Motte bureaucratic official who introduces himself to Sir Leo as, "Rowley of department B." It is clear they are now known to the city's administration and their arrival is no surprise. Rowley takes care of the signing in procedure and reminds them briefly of the laws regarding long weaponry and armour within the city. He says he expects that Secretary Dalen would want to be informed of their arrival to which Leo agrees, while Gerald twitches and whispers loudly not to forget that they need to see Lord Ironguard urgently. Sir Leo, clearly in his element, gives Gerald a brief lesson in feudal chain of command structures and the status of Lord Ironguard, the Duke of all of Aerik. The fidgety Paladin calms down a little as it is explained that Dalen will of course arrange a meeting with Lord Ironguard at the Lord's earliest convenience.

Rowley notes down that they will be staying at The Golden Lion Inn as they did previously. "So, Sir Leo, you and your entourage are free to enter the city and go about your business," he beams. In accordance with the law they dismount and lead their horses along the bustling Gates Road arriving at The Golden Lion Inn where their horses are taken to the stables and the charming Priscilla Trumm attends to their needs, stowing their field armour and weaponry in the Inn's secure lockup. She fusses particularly around Sir Leo, clearly enamoured of the handsome, charming Knight.

They are shown to the same comfortable rooms overlooking the Gates Crossroad where they almost immediately receive a visit from Secretary Dalen. The little man bustles into the room, grinning broadly and shuffling a pile of papers that he swiftly stows into one of several overflowing satchels about his body.

Dalen greets them all cheerily in turn, beginning of course with Sir Leo. He informs them that Lord Ironguard will want to speak to them and then asks, "is there anything urgent?" Gerald says there is, they need to find a good jeweller, which gives Dalen pause for a moment before he explains he meant urgent like a horde of ravening monsters heading in this direction... "no? Right, a jeweller then. What sort of jeweller are you looking for?" They check Carman's recommendations of The Golden Way and The Emerald Sea which he agrees are both good jewellers and he also reels off a few others. He says he will arrange an appointment with Lord Ironguard as soon as possible before quickly bustling out again. They decide to split up, with Fenella and Leo going to the nearest jeweller, the Emerald Sea in Trenchard Street while Gerald will visit The Temple of St Ygg in Griffin Street.

Leo wants to get his armour serviced but it seems that Priscilla is one step ahead of him having noticed that the armour could do with a going over. Smiling prettily at the handsome Knight she explains that the Inn could take care of the service since they have an agreement with local businesses. "It's all part of the (no doubt chargeable) service Sir Leo," she beams before leaving to take care of it. Since Leo is now free, he and Fenella will visit the jeweller and Gerald will attend The Temple of St Ygg. Arnd has his own business to attend to.

## **The Emerald Sea - Master Jeweller**

Leo and Fenella navigate the busy streets, finding Trenchard Street and the bright sign of The Emerald Sea. A grey-haired, elegant and rather snooty looking gentleman "floats" from a back room before pausing to realise that Sir Leo is someone "of quality", says, "good day to you Sir Knight, I am Brin, how may I be of service?" Leo explains that they need a replica of a ring and presents the Shaman's drawing. The jeweller studies it for a moment and asks what materials they would like to use. Sir Leo is momentarily nonplussed and suggests, "the same materials." Brin regards him quizzically for a moment before uttering, "it's a drawing sir." Oh yes, we only have a picture of it Leo recalls. He asks Fenella to cast her mind back to the meeting with the Goblins since he wasn't present but uncharacteristically she cannot recall the material; was it gold, platinum or something else? Brin informs them he can easily make the ring when he knows what materials to use but he will also want some guidance on sizing.

## **The Temple of St Ygg**

Gerald hurries along Griffen Street to The Temple seeking out Friar Fergus or Guard Captain Sind and fortunately encounters them both in discussion in the entrance chamber. As soon as they see Gerald they both welcome him. "The sun shines on us today," says Sind with a broad smile. Gerald explains he has some matters to report so they enter Friar Fergus's office. As Gerald mentions that this a confidential meeting, Sind checks outside and then closes the door.

He informs them that The Hammers have been working on a project for Lord Ironguard. Fergus and Sind exchange a glance and say they did suspect that might be the case. Fergus suggests that he fetch High Priest Malac and disappears to do this, leaving Gerald alone with the beautiful guard captain who gazes at him appraisingly, confirming her favourable opinion of the dashing Paladin. By the time that a slightly reddening Gerald has conjured up some engaging small talk, Fergus returns along with the magisterial figure of High Priest Malac. His face is naturally rather stern and not given to laughter but there is a kindness and a deep wisdom in his eyes.

Gerald explains their mission for Lord Ironguard and their experiences in Haranshire. He reports that magic users have been going missing and the Cleric of Milborne is also now missing. Gerald explains that it seems that spellcasters whether divine or arcane are being targeted and this has all been happening during the last two weeks. He explains that they will return to Haranshire in the next few days. Malac ensures that Gerald is aware that if anything concerns the church of St Ygg he should be informed as soon as possible and Gerald of course agrees. Malac says they will see if they can do anything to help. Gerald is blessed by Malac who leaves along with Friar Fergus leaving Gerald again alone with Captain Sind as they walk to the Temple entrance together.

In the presence of this lovely woman in her shining armour, the very epitome of Gerald's values, he can only suggest a little awkwardly that she join The Hammers in their mission. "Wouldn't it be wonderful Gerald, but sadly my duty lies here," she says, pausing to survey the street below before continuing, "I command the temple guard and sadly I can't go running off on adventures." Turning to look Gerald directly in the eye she says, "this is the given path of a Paladin and I am no Paladin such as you." Her gaze falls briefly as she explains that she does not possess the rare vision and resolve required of a Paladin. "I fulfil my role here Gerald, as I am capable of but you are a Paladin, a chosen holy warrior." She smiles engagingly and grasps his arm in a warrior's grip. "Go well with St Ygg, Gerald," she whispers and as the Paladin hurries down the steps enroute to meet his friends, she gazes after him, standing on the steps for some time after he has disappeared from view.

Back at the Jewellers Fenella and Leo struggle with the conundrum of the ring's materials on the rare occasion that Fenella's memory fails her. She can however recall the size of the ring quite accurately, it was a bit bigger than her ring of plant control and the stone was blue, so Brin supposes that it was probably a sapphire. After being shown a tray of sapphires, they agree that sapphire is indeed the right sort of stone. He says normally it would be ready in two months, apologising for the delay but after all, he is the finest jeweller in the Duchy. Leo asks about the price and Brin says it's difficult without knowing the materials. He asks to keep the drawing, assuring them it will be safe.

Fenella wonders if offering a larger than normal price would be a good way of expediting the crafting but Leo quickly reminds her that they are operating on Lord Ironguard's mandate and that will carry sufficient weight to expedite this situation as it becomes clear that Leo fully understands the way things work here. Leo and Fenella prepare to leave just as Gerald hurries in. They explain they can't recall the metallic content of the ring. Gerald casts his mind back and is sure that it was a silver ring and yes, it was a sapphire. Brin's assistant Smedley notes down the details. Brin is now able to offer a price of 500 gp.

Leo asks if a deposit would be required and Brin begins a spiel at how a Knight's word would normally be adequate to which Leo interrupts briskly, "very well then, we'll be on our way," as he sweeps out of the Jewellers with Fenella and Gerald in tow, leaving the slightly baffled Jeweller wondering how he managed to agree to this. Chuckling to himself Leo leads them back to the Inn where they receive a message from Dalen to be at the Keep at 18:00 for drinks and a discussion with Lord Ironguard.

### **A Meeting with Lord Ironguard**

Dalen shows them into a reception room with comfortable chairs around a roaring fire. After a moment they are joined by Chancellor Dorwellan, Lord Ironguard and Lady Winona Ironguard. Greeting them, his Lordship enquires, "How goes it with my Hammers?" After the formalities and well-wishing is over Gerald raises his concerns regarding security and asks for the servants to be dismissed. Lord Ironguard agrees and Dorwellan dismisses them so they are alone.

Leo then explains in detail the events of the last two weeks as Lord and Lady Ironguard and Dorwellan listen intently. Lord Ironguard congratulates them. "So, you can see why I wanted to send in a very capable group and why it helps to operate in secrecy," he smiles almost grimly before explaining that his most worrying concern is the presence of a Green Dragon making its home within the borders of Haranshire. A diplomatic mission will be urgently sent to address this.

Then the situation with the Goblins and the ring. "Well at least we can deal with one of these quickly," he declares. He will send Dalen to call upon the jeweller and they should have their duplicate ring within the week and the Ironguard coffers will foot the bill, "to be charged to Carman," he chuckles.

As regards the strange business of the missing spellcasters, he would like them to repeat their covert mission under the same terms and conditions since as far as he is concerned the original contract is fulfilled. They can sort out the exchange of the ring as their first task on returning and continue to search for leads on the disappearances.

Friday the 3rd day of Vadrius 20:00, The Castle Keep, Ironguard Motte