

# The Barrowmaze

## Session 78 25-09-25 The Battle of Broken Spire Keep - Part 2

Next Session 02-10-25 19.00

Thursday the 23rd day of Vadrius 20:10, The Caverns beneath Broken Spire Keep

In the caverns beneath Broken Spire Keep the battle continues to rage, The Hammers and their Bandit allies are almost outflanked, both on the left where Gerald is holding the line alongside Luna, and the right where their archers have been overrun and forced into melee. Undead are pushing through the breach in the centre and there is a clear danger of both flanks being surrounded.

Fenella considers a spell but decides to wait for a while as her bodyguards Morgaine and Phineas team up on a Zombie and quickly dispose of it. On the left side, The Bandits go toe-to-toe with the undead, quickly killing two Skeletons.

The Cultist Acolyte challenges Leo to a duel, "Hey Knight! One on one... a duel, you coward," she taunts. The blocking Skeleton moves aside at her command and she engages Leo directly with her heavy mace as the Chaotic Knight raises his sword and laughs in her face.

A crazed Cultist gets through to Luna on the left flank and swings his mace but the agile Half-Elf yet again evades an attack. Gerald calls out to Luna in the midst of his furious melee with multiple undead, "break combat, get to Ranchefus!"

Luna makes a fighting withdrawal to the centre from the left flank where she was in danger of being surrounded, moving instead into relative safety, not too far from Phineas and Morgaine.

Gerald wounds a Zombie Cultist whilst lecturing the fanatic on the futility of a life dedicated to an evil deity.

Leo, duelling the Acolyte, wounds her quite severely as perhaps some of her confidence drains away now she is in close combat with the powerful Knight and feeling the sheer force of his attacks. It's one thing to cast a disabling spell from concealment and entirely another to face Sir Leo directly in melee.

Several Bandits in the centre inflict wounds on the Skeletons they are fighting whilst Gerald is attacked multiple times, fending off the rain of blows with a song of St Ygg in his heart.

A group of Skeletons moving up from the southern end of the cavern continue to move to attack the right flank even though the centre is more vulnerable, one of the downsides of using mindless slaves instead of real soldiers.

Two Skeletons attack the badly wounded Bandit archer on the right but she manages to avoid the attacks, making a fighting withdrawal from melee towards the centre, dropping her sword and shooting with her bow, unfortunately missing. The other archer also retreats to defend her friend and to get some distance to allow use of the bow.

A Cultist on the left tries to outflank Gerald but gets tangled in the tree roots, slowing him down.

Hakhan attacks a skeleton, decapitating it instantly with an elegant twitch of his rapier.

In the "one-on-one honourable duel" between Sir Leo and the wounded Acolyte, she dishonourably calls in a skeleton to gang up on Leo. Since Leo only wants to appear polite, he also calls in Della, the Bandit sergeant, to maintain the fairness of the "honourable" combat.

Fenella has plans to cast an Entangle spell but for now she decides just to fling a sling bullet at a Zombie in the centre, hitting and damaging it.

Ranchefus, taking in the battlefield with a practiced eye, gestures to encourage his Skeletons and Zombies to move on to attack the left flank, coincidentally passing close to a cluster of roots just as Fenella had hoped. He turns to enjoy mocking Gerald, up to his neck in melee with undead.

Morgaine steps forward to engage the next Skeleton enemy, cursing that "they are made mostly of air," as she frustratingly misses again.

Hakhan leaps flamboyantly into the centre flourishing his rapier and shouting, "have at thee!" but sadly, misses his target.

Seizing the opportunity, Fenella casts her Entangle spell on the Skeletons and Zombies approaching the left flank using the undergrowth just to their south. The roots explode from ground into a seething mass of foliage, dragging the undead into the entanglement. They fail to resist the magic and are pinned helplessly for the ten-minute duration of the spell.

Gerald attacks the newly risen Zombie Cultist landing a goodly blow that finishes it off for the second and hopefully last time.

The two archers and the thuggish Bandits defend their flank taking down another couple of Skeletons all the while swearing most colourfully.

A boxed in Bandit in the centre kills another Skeleton as he is joined by Hakhan in their attempt to fill the centre's breach.

The battle becomes increasingly bloody with some of the Bandits taking a serious number of wounds, yet somehow their morale is still holding; it seems revenge is a powerful motivator.

Luna retreats to the shadows and hides. Moving stealthily and unnoticed along the cave wall she approaches the risky gap between a Cultist and Skeleton but they are looking for her where she was a few seconds ago and she slips past them and begins to creep south towards Ranchefus.

The Hammers continue in their unlikely alliance with Bandits, Thieves and Vagabonds as Skeletons fall and blood gouts. Phineas takes another wound and the Bandits hold their positions with a series of oath accompanied sword stabs.

Leo continues to taunt the Acolyte as she tries every dirty fighting trick to hit the armoured knight.

Ranchefus scowls at Fenella across the cavern, "you think it is funny Druid, your tangled plants? You see this, Druid" and Ranchefus manipulates the purple altar light pushing it out even further causing piles of bones all over the cavern to begin to rattle and animate as he grins in triumph.

Fenella and Luna are both watching Ranchefus closely, Luna with the intent to attack but Fenella's attention is more on the area around the altar so she notices a figure dressed in black clothing with a hooded mask, is fiddling about with the front of the altar, as if they are trying open a lock or manipulate something.

Luna creeps stealthily towards Ranchefus wondering why the whole thing seems to depend on her... after all she has only just let these people out of their cells, "why isn't that enough for them?" she wonders in exasperation.

Phineas has some quite serious wounds so he withdraws from melee whilst noticing that he can outpace the Skeletons like this so it's actually not a bad tactic. Gerald yells out at Phineas from the middle of a mob of assailants, to use his crossbow.

A random Skeleton comes too close to Fenella's enchanted entanglement and is dragged into it much to her satisfaction as Gerald shrugs off yet another minor wound.

Leo notices he has a clear route through to Ranchefus if he can just dispose of the troublesome Acolyte blocking his way. Cleaving mightily with The Sword of Sir Chyde he finally cuts down the evil Priest as the newly reanimated Barzl, lusting for gizzard, and accompanied by her slaving Zombie dog and the other victims of the Wall of Thorns emerge into the cavern from the north, completing the encirclement of the allies as Ranchefus laughs exultantly from across the cavern.

Fenella casts CLW on Phineas, patching him up nicely but she is now desperately worried by the appearance of the reanimated Barzl and the other undead behind her. "What do we do if they just keep coming back again," she frantically wonders.

Suddenly there is a flash of white light from the altar and a feminine cry of triumph as the black dressed figure rises from the stone, clutching something close to its body before concealing it. The cavern shudders as the dark purple light begins to diminish, almost sagging as it draws back from its former extent.

The figure takes a step away as Leo jumps over his fallen enemy while a Skeleton swipes at him hitting only empty air as the Knight charges towards Ranchefus, brandishing the mighty Sword of Sir Chyde.

Ranchefus double takes between the black figure, the altar and the rapidly approaching knight seemingly undecided which to prioritise.

As Leo barrels towards the evil High Priest, Fenella notices the effect of the purple light now contracting and witnesses the demise of the new Zombies now outside of the baleful light's unnatural influence as with terrible screams; Barzl, Fido and the other Zombies to the north relive their end, dying horribly once more in the space of mere minutes. The Druid allows herself a grim smile of satisfaction as nature brutally reverses its corruption.

Several Bandits move in to support Gerald, wounding the Skeletons as Gerald himself is wounded by a crazed Cultist's pummeling mace attack.

Luna creeps closer to Ranchefus as Leo hurtles towards his target while Ranchefus stops dithering and begins to cast a spell at the charging Knight.

Gerald almost forgets but just in time remembers to raise his holy symbol high. A bright shining light seems to emanate from him as his voice echoes around the chamber calling down the power of St Ygg. The Paladin Turns the entire group of Skeletons fighting him causing them to immediately retreat in terror from the shining wrath of St Ygg. Gerald stretches out, enjoying his newfound space with the left flank now held by the Bandits as Phineas rejoins the fray with his crossbow, supporting Morgaine as she sword fights with a Zombie.

Suddenly the black figure reappears near the altar, making the final gestures of casting a spell, as a bolt of fire streaks to the southern end of the entangled area. Those nearby feel the "whump" of the hot blast as all Skeletons and Zombies in the entanglement are destroyed by the Fireball and Ranchefus suffers burning wounds despite his resistance against the spell.

Ranchefus writhes in pain and fury as his Light spell is interrupted. Arriving in position, Luna makes her backstab attempt but at the last minute the evil Priest moves, attempting to evade Leo so her attack misses, however with Ranchefus' attention firmly fixed on Leo she manages to keep her concealment. With a glorious battle-cry, Leo careers into Ranchefus at full speed, his mighty magical sword cleaving through the Priest's armour. Amazingly, Ranchefus survives the assault and even springs back to his feet in a practiced agile roll which unfortunately brings him right up against Luna as she makes her second backstab attack, plunging the Stoutblade Dagger between the Priest's shoulder blades and slamming her flattened hand onto the hilt to drive the blade deeper. With a look of utter disbelief Ranchefus is driven lifeless to the ground.

## **Jelenneth**

The dark purple light is immediately extinguished and the remaining undead collapse, inanimate as the surviving Cultists, somehow deflated and meeker, drop to their knees in surrender.

The black suited figure pulls off the hood and tosses her lovely dark hair, theatrically checking her nails before looking up and clapping slowly, "well done, I thought you would come through in the end but really, it took a little while didn't it," draws Jelenneth as she surveys them warily, keeping a very close eye on Luna.

"Leo darling good try, well done... Luna, I suppose you're one of them now, I see an exciting time in your future I think," she smiles condescendingly as she gestures to the side, "if you want your things, you could have a look in that bag over there and see what you find," she says as she indicates a nondescript bag lying on the ground about 30 feet away.

"Meanwhile, I'm off, I don't think we'll meet again," she concludes as she begins to cast a spell.

Gerald shouts, "you need to answer for your crimes!" and as she fades from view they hear, "yes, yes... bye bye Gerald, I'll be sure to turn myself in," followed by a disturbingly crazed hysterical giggle which continues as it fades away.

Quickly examining the bag reveals it is full of pebbles and a note. Fenella is very pleased to find one of the pebbles is her Continual Light stone which she retrieves as Gerald looks on aghast, his mind slowly ticking off all of the fabulous magical items they had collected over the course of their adventures.

Opening the note which is addressed to, The Hammers, it reads... "So long suckers, xxxxxx Leo, you hunk!" Looking up from the note, Fenella notices that the gem talisman has been removed from the black stone altar.

Leo stands sadly at the place where Jelenneth disappeared, staring disconsolately at the ground.

Thursday the 23rd day of Vadrius 20:20, The Caverns beneath Broken Spire Keep