

The Barrowmaze

Session 79 02-10-25 Aftermath

Next Session 09-10-25 19.00

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

Leo's unconscious mind, startled by the sudden disappearance of the object of his love, experiences enough shock to attempt to throw off the effects of Jelenneth's Charm spell but sadly he doesn't succeed and remains under its power as he stands miserably in the aftermath of their victory.

Hakhan calls out that they have badly wounded in his group as the bandits begin to treat and bandage their wounds. Gerald supervises the trussing up of the three captured Cultists.

Luna searches Ranchefus discovering his evil skull talisman and 108 gp. She also finds two potions of healing and assumes the talisman must be Ranchefus' holy symbol.

Fenella waits to the north with Phineas, who is stoically bearing a large number of wounds as Morgaine teases him while bandaging him up. In reply Phineas explains how it's not so bad because Morgaine will have to fetch and carry for him now that he's wounded.

Meanwhile Gerald begins his torture of the prisoners as, from memory of course, he commences a recitation of The Trials of St Ygg, Vol 1, Part 1... with footnotes. The captive audience looks back at him miserably.

Leo wanders back to join Luna who is being a bit cautious about letting the bandits see she has some gold whilst also being nervous about the ghastly talisman. She also notices that Della and another one of the armoured bandits are moving south towards the treasure where they stop and stand guard as again Hakhan calls out, "look, we have some badly wounded here, can you do anything about them? They fought bravely," he adds hopefully.

Much to Luna's relief, Leo takes the obviously evil talisman and the two healing potions as he tells her to keep the gold. He wanders up to the main group in the north of the cavern, avoiding the leftover patches of bonfire, still burning as a testament to the power of Jelenneth's Fireball spell. Leo sighs and picks his way through the charred ground, avoiding the fires, with the evil talisman and healing potions held safely in his arms and his mind clearly on other things.

Arriving at the bandit's improvised field hospital he sees that the wounded are being bandaged and cared for with two of the bandits having serious wounds. Leo hands over the potions to Fenella who administers the potions to the badly wounded, patching up one of them up quite nicely and miraculously returning the second to a gratefully walking wounded state. Hakhan nods in impressed approval at this generosity, smiling charmingly and thanking Fenella as she rises.

As Leo, concealing Ranchefus' talisman, joins the group, Gerald senses a strong presence of evil behind him and interrupts his recitation to seek it out. Gerald spots Leo attempting to conceal the item and demands, "drop it right now!" Leo asks what they should they do with it and Gerald growls, "I will smite it and destroy it! Now drop it!" With Gerald's attention distracted, Fenella casts her Cure Serious Wounds (CSW) on him curing him significantly as he babbles uselessly, "Phineas, cast it on Phineas, not me."

Gerald resumes haranguing Leo to drop the talisman which he finally does. Gerald attempts to stamp on it and smash the thing, but it seems to slither and slide away from his blows in some sort of ophidian evasion. "Hmmm, how could we possibly destroy it mutters Leo," as he dusts off some embers from the many remaining fires adorning the centre of the cavern. "Ohhh fire," murmurs Gerald at last, "burn it, burn the evil thing!" he bellows as he scoops it up and quickly transporting it to the nearest fire he tosses it into the flames. It crackles in the the fierce heat, burning violently, spitting hot grease and oil as it is consumed and rendered into a harmless pool of stinking black ooze, eliminating the source of evil much to the Paladin's satisfaction.

Gerald remains obsessed with finding Jelenneth and the missing magical items and questions the others about it. Jelenneth's disappearance was very quick but in Luna's opinion she doubts Jelenneth used any Thieflly skills to disappear. Luna remembers that she was casting a spell before she vanished, but without a wizard to consult they have no idea of what type of spell could do such a thing.

Gerald finds some traces of stealthy movement in the dust, approaching the altar but beyond this it seems as if she just disappeared. Hakhan tells them he has no idea either, "you lot know her better than I do." Leo is still baffled, and struggles to understand... why did she take the stuff? It could only be to keep it safe he supposes. Hakhan chimes in that he has no idea of where he would begin to investigate.

Luna wonders about making a deal with the outlaws as Gerald tries to think of a way to wriggle out of the Lawful agreement that they made with the bandits that he lawfully endorsed since he didn't object while Hakhan and Sir Leo shook hands on the clearly explained and understood terms. His mind struggles with the calculus of Law and Chaos, attempting to find a loophole but it always solves down to a Lawfully made agreement and he must abide by Law.

Hakhan shows them the secret exit down to the abandoned village and the boats which are all still in place much to Gerald's disappointment as his hopes of a river pursuit of Jelenneth and the stolen magic items evaporate. Della and a second bandit set a campfire and stand guard next to the treasure.

Luna says her goodbyes to some of the more agreeable bandits that she was friendlier with, including some of the more thuggish ones who have surprised her with their heroics in the front line of the battle with the undead.

They join the bandits up on the ground floor of the ruined keep which provides more comfortable accommodations. They find that Semheis has been well-tended by the bandit who cared for him, but the Priest is still somewhat dazed and very tired. Fenella judges him as just needing rest and recuperation and confirms he has been properly cared for. Leo makes a point of thanking the man who mumbles a name in response to Leo's enquiry but says he'd prefer it if Sir Leo didn't remember him too well, "if Mr Garyld gets word I am here he will be down here with a squad to arrest me." he explains.

Since the accommodations are comfortable, actual beds for the wounded, they bunk down and all spend a peaceful night of much needed rest.

Friday the 24th day of Vadrius 08:00, The Bandit quarters in Broken Spire Keep

Gerald Lays Hands on Phineas curing him with the holy power of St Ygg to just short of full health. The delighted Fighter jumps around, flexing his muscles and stretching, thanking Gerald and St Ygg for his rapid recovery as Morgaine beams at the thought of not having to fetch and carry for a wounded comrade.

The bandits busy themselves in transporting their fortune in gold down to the boats while Leo and Hakhan wish each other well, Hakhan says it was a good fight and he is proud of his people. Leo advises him to ensure he doesn't cross Gerald's path again.

Leo finally escapes the influence of Jelenneth's Charm Person spell, exclaiming loudly "Hey! She did steal our stuff!" "Have you finally woken up you moron," observes Fenella in her very own version of compassionate sympathy while Luna is surprised to perceive that Leo might actually be somewhat intelligent after all.

Leo realises he has been used but still he remembers, there was something, there was definitely something between them and he is sure that wherever the devious Mage has escaped to, she will still remember him, as he will remember her. Shaking his head sadly he tries to put the experience behind him as The Hammers prepare to depart.

They exit via the main doors to the north leaving via the path above the abandoned village where they can see the bandits below, loading their boats.

With Fenella's irascible guidance they set out for Krynen's farm with the most direct route the Druid can navigate. Bearing in mind they have left their horses and Shadwell at Krynen's farm it seems to be the best place to go.

As Fenella enjoys the refreshing embrace of the forest in late Vadrius (November), with her Spidersilk cloak of cold resistance draped comfortably over her, it occurs to the highly intelligent Druid to remind everyone of the scribbled P.S. to "check the old man's tea" on Jelenneth's note, seemingly intended as a last-minute afterthought. After all, the message, "So long suckers!" is scripted in the Mage's elegant hand with some care and attention, plus the description of Leo as a "Hunk" is underlined three times and the handwriting seems to slow and become a little tremulous, so some care and reflection must have been applied, however the P.S. is quickly scrawled with a charcoal pencil on the reverse side, so perhaps it was even dashed off while she was skulking around during their battle.

Both Leo and Gerald think the "old man" must refer to Tauster at Thurmaster, who they know drinks herbal teas so perhaps they might need to visit their friend, the aging Wizard and tutor of Jelenneth, though for now at least it's onward to Krynen's Farm. They camp overnight in the forest in a comfortable site selected by Fenella and they spend a restful and pleasant night despite the coldness of the season.

Saturday the 25th day of Vadrius 08:00, The Thornwood Forest, enroute to Krynen's Farm.

Gerald notes his Laying on of Hands has been refreshed at sunrise by the good grace and power of St Ygg but as usual he refuses to apply it to himself despite still being quite seriously wounded declaring, "it's just in case somebody else needs it," thereby depriving the party of a full health fighter should they encounter a serious threat. To cheer himself up he kicks the Cultist prisoners awake and makes sure their bonds are suitably secure.

After most of a day's travel they arrive at Krynen's farm and are joyfully greeted by members of Krynen's extended family and of course their faithful retainer Shadwell, who had been on the brink of organising a rescue mission. Gerald breaks the bad news that he has lost the bag of holding causing Shadwell to subside onto the ground in disbelief, "oh my gods," he groans as he tugs out a ledger and pencil from his satchel to cross out the lost items... "how did you lose it?" Gerald brings Shadwell up to date as the faithful retainer sadly notes down their losses, the most miserable of all being the wonderful bag of holding that made the task of carrying a load so much easier.

They renew their acquaintance with Maxim, their werebear friend who informs them that word has been sent to Kuiper's farm and then Milborne that they are alright and will soon be returning. They spend the night in one of Krynen's barns and leaving the dazed Priest Semheis with the Krynens, set out for Thurmaster at first light the next day.

Sunday the 26th day of Vadrius 08:00, Krynen's Farm.

Shadwell has already purchased a riding horse for Luna from the group's funds so as soon as they have the light they ride for Thurmaster, following the Churnett river route through the Redwood to arrive at Thurmaster by late afternoon.

Magistrate Marlen comes out to examine the Cultists and asks Gerald, "what they have actually done, then?" After Gerald gets a few sentences into his description of the prisoners' crimes, Marlen makes his summary declaration of justice, "string 'em up I will!" Glaring at the sullen Cultists he bellows, "anything to say?... doesn't matter, throw 'em in jail!" Which seems to suit Gerald just fine as he looks forward to the execution at dawn tomorrow. With evil conquered for the day, Marlen stamps off into his residence, slamming the door behind him.

In the meantime they visit Tauster, hammering on the door and waking the wizard from a deep snoring sleep. At first he seems quite vague and has trouble remembering who they are but after a few minutes he goes and sits in his chair and whispers, "I know you don't I," although he still seems muddled and vague.

Fenella goes to the kitchen and checks the herbal teas and discovers several of them to be quite serious herbal narcotics, primarily used to suppress will. Tauster has been drugged to the level of extreme danger for an elderly man. Fenella examines the Mage and reckons that this counts as poisoning, so she casts Protection from Poison on him. Tauster instantly perks up, "Ahhhhh.... ohh what are you doing here?" he asks. "Saving your life," growls Gerald. "Oh," says Tauster, "would you like some tea?" "No!" exclaims Fenella. "Don't drink the tea, the tea is poisonous!"

Leo is dismayed at both Gerald and Fenella's lack of compassion, quickly shooing Fenella into the kitchen to make some coffee and burn the tea whilst simultaneously glaring at Gerald.

Tauster now seems much more like himself. On reflection they recall he had become more dithering each time they visited. Apparently, he now recalls Jelenneth visiting him too even after he had told The Hammers that he hadn't seen her. Clearly shaken, he suddenly calls out, "the Tower! We must check the tower!"

They all rush outside and check the tower door, it seems normal to Tauster, so he unlocks it and they enter. It doesn't take long for them to realise the place has been very carefully and tidily ransacked. Valuable books have been removed and other books stacked to disguise the missing space, entire drawers of items have been carefully emptied and as Luna admires the professionally systematic job she finds herself wondering about the lock. Examining it closely she can see the tell-tale marks where a lockpick has been used.

Tauster sits on the lowest stair with his head in his hands, "ohhh no, Jelenneth did all this!" he groans in stunned despair. Gerald takes the moment to make a jibe at Leo regarding his earlier affections for the devious Mage which gets him an exasperated glare from the Knight.

They spend a little while commiserating with the old Wizard before leaving for The Hound and Tails where Shadwell has arranged their rooms and stabling. Marlen's scrivener, Charleston, passes by to take their account of the battle of Broken Spire Keep and the events leading up to it, The Hammers carefully omitting any mention of one of the bandits joining their party.

Charleston informs them that Segrath's delegation has passed back through Thurmaster about a week ago on their way to Milborne and they seemed rather pleased with themselves. Marlen has the details if they want to ask him tomorrow.

They turn in for the night with Gerald enjoying pleasant dreams of executions.

Monday the 27th day of Vadrius 08:00, Thurmaster.

First thing in the morning the three Cultists of Nergal are hanged with Marlen officiating.

Afterwards he agrees that The Hammers should hear about the results of Segrath's negotiations, which are strictly confidential of course. The town of Thurmaster shall provide monthly, a pleasing variety of tethered livestock as an offering for Queen Inzeldrin to take as her due as the most excellent and exalted Queen of the Dragon Queendom of Shrieken Mire, an allied state of The Grand Duchy of Aerik and a bulwark of defence to the south of eastern Haranshire. A small price to pay for a treaty with a dragon and a secure southern border in Marlen's opinion.

With Luna now entered into Shadwell's records and officially a member of The Hammers, the adventurers and their retainers gather their gear and prepare to travel to Milborne and then on to Ironguard Motte in the cold wet weather of late Vadrius.

Notes

Leo (5 to 6) and Fenella (6 to 7) gain a level. Luna and Gerald are now close to their next levels.

Leo's AB rises from 3 to 4 HP roll with CON bonus $1d8+1=8$ Leo now has 38 hp	Fenella's AB rises from 2 to 3 HP roll $1d6=5$ Fenella now has 28 HP
---	--