

# The Barrowmaze

## Session 95 27-05-26 Victory at Last

Next Session 03-06-26

Saturday the 10th day of Haenubrius, 14:50, The Barrowmaze, rooms 207 and 208

With Fenella's Wall of Thorns dealing a doom of instant murder on every single Skeleton trapped in the briar thorn eruption, The Hammers find themselves with only 3 Skeletons up and still fighting, odds which they find far more to their liking.

The usual round of misses ensue again, both from The Hammers and their bony assailants. As she fends off a Skeleton attack, Morgaine notices one of the fallen Juju Zombies is a far fresher corpse than the others and is also attired differently, wearing quite well-cut robes so she takes note to search it once they have dealt with the remaining enemies.

Back in the western room (207) a woman in robes emerges from the corridor to the north, where Luna had earlier, briefly spotted a Zombie, and beckons a group of Zombies, ordering them to "attack and kill the intruders". Two Zombies lurch past her and move towards Shadwell and Fenella.

Leo takes a few steps over to the nearest upright Skeleton and swiftly dispatches it with a single mighty blow from the Sword of Sir Chyde. Bella must still be getting used to her splendid new anti-undead mace because she misses, muttering oaths of determined self-improvement under her breath.

Fenella yells for some fighting support in the back room where she and Shadwell could use a hand? Luna, standing at the doorway, moves up to support Shadwell to cover his retreat and shouts, "hurry up!" to the fighters in the other room as Shadwell bustles past and into the main room behind Phineas.

Two more Zombies emerge from the northern corridor to make a group of four Zombies and two, possibly Magic Users? Luna calls out, "there are now six enemies back here!" Phineas moves into the back room to take on the Zombies, firing his crossbow and hitting the nearest one.

Gerald is stabbed by a Skeleton and noticing this, Bella ploughs into the undead with extra vengeance, brutally destroying it with a colossal smash from the Mace of Undead Disruption. In the other room, Luna takes a bowshot, striking one of the Zombies.

The woman in robes casts a Magic Missile spell, hitting Fenella in a shower of sparks and knocking the Druid back a step with its force, much to her irritated disgust. Gerald races into the back room brandishing his holy symbol and attempts to Turn Undead but unfortunately doesn't manage it this time.

Fenella flings her very ordinary spear at the nearest Zombie but it just moves out of the way at the last minute. Leo explodes into the Zombie room, takes a quick look around then slices into the nearest Zombie, dropping it instantly.

The second figure in robes casts a spell and another Magic Missile streaks over, smashing into the newly arrived Knight. "Who did that!?" bellows Leo, glaring at the two robed Mages to the north, both of whom are unable to meet his fierce gaze.

Gerald Lays Hands on Leo restoring a goodly amount of the battered Knight's health as Luna stabs the nearest Zombie, carving it up a treat.

With all of the immediate threats in the other room cleared, Morgaine searches the Juju Zombie, finding a scrap of heavy paper with a short phrase written in some unknown language. She stuffs it into a pouch for perusal later.

Having witnessed the onslaught as the rest of Hammers burst into the room, cutting down their Zombie slaves, the robed woman reconsiders her most recent life decision and turns and runs off. The man looks around, does a double take, looks at Leo, looks at his companion disappearing along the corridor and also scarpers at the double.

Bella charges in and Turns Undead, instantly destroying the 3 remaining Zombies and finally... finally... the battle is over.

Fenella quips, "that was fun, let's go and open another door." Leo chuckles grimly at her sarcasm and suggests, let's just get the hell out of here!"

As they group up in room 207 Luna disappears into the darkness ahead to scout the way. Correcting a wrong turn to the north she spots the stairs leading out to the southwest and fortunately, no sign of any opposition so she returns to the party. With the way ahead secure, the rather battered Hammers ascend to the surface and the familiar gloom of the Barrow moor.

They cross without incident and head north through the Westland swamp, ably guided by Fenella until they emerge onto the road and eventually back to Helix to a very well-deserved dinner at the Brazen Strumpet.

### **Safe and Sound in Helix**

Gerald asks about the cure situation and Bella informs him that she has a CLW and Fenella has another so Bella cures Morgaine to the full extent of the spell. Fenella decides to cure herself rather than "wasting" it on anyone else then teases Bella about "natural" healing with Gerald, causing the cleric to blush prettily.

Over dinner they examine the note that Morgaine discovered.

Bella is able to identify it as being written in The Black Tongue, a language beloved of evil creatures and cults. She reminds them of the "know thine enemy course" she took at the seminary so she can read some of the message. She gives a short lecture on the technicalities before telling them that the first word is the name of the evil god "Set" and the last word is "obey" or "do it" or something similar.

Gerald wants to take it to Mazzahs but Bella advises that Othar the Priest might be the best bet. With this decided they turn in for a well-earned night's rest.

### **Sunday the 11th day of Haenubrius, 08:00, The Brazen Strumpet, Helix**

All recover somewhat following a comfortable night's rest and Gerald Lays Hands on Bella, fully healing her. Fenella and Bella conduct their morning rituals for spells.

Fenella casts CSW on Gerald without any warning, inflicting a big cure on the wounded Paladin. He feels almost fully recovered so he politely thanks Fenella, receiving only the curt reply "whatever" for his trouble.

Various CLWs are cast plus some sarcasm about Fenella's self-priorities for cures which she completely ignores as Bella casts some more CLWs.

Leo's armour needs some maintenance so he drops it at the dwarven smithy and they catch Othar at the Church who is his usual cheerful, slightly detached self.

Gerald asks him about the note, giving him the circumstances and background information. After looking through a few reference works, Othar is able to read it to them in Common... "Set commands and I obey," he translates.

Othar imagines it is some sort of password and he guesses one should speak the words out loud. He says it is probably not going to be much fun practicing the pronunciation. As Gerald struggles with the notion of saying words in The Black Speech, Luna perks up, pointing out that she is skilled in languages and she already has an idea of how one might say this phrase in the quite complex language of evil, however she doesn't have the ability to do it right away. Othar offers to tutor her for the approximately three days it will take to get the pronunciation perfect and Luna agrees.

During their meeting with Othar, Fenella perceives a few disapproving looks from the Senior Priest of St Ygg presumably due to her capacity as the local pagan leader. The Druid leaves satisfied that she's obviously doing something right.

The Hammers decide they will all remain in town for the additional three days. Leo can get the full service on his armour and the party can routinely top up their adventuring supplies and apart from Luna, take a well-earned rest.

### **Three Days Later (the night before)**

Luna reports back saying she can now easily utter the phrase to Othar's satisfaction and Gerald immediately suggests a return to the same location, keen to go back and battle against the odds. Leo would like to look into the room the undead emerged from so he supports the idea.

They discuss the purpose of the place, perhaps an outpost of some evil faction? It dawns on Leo that it must be the base of Set's faction and Orcus' group must no doubt also be lurking somewhere in the complex, also seeking The Tablet of Chaos.

Unfortunately, the Set expedition's base must now be alerted to their presence and actively looking out for intruders. Leo raises the idea of going to another Barrows location, at least to give the heat a while to subside. Somewhere perhaps a little less risky and possibly loaded with useful or profitable plunder.

They consider some of the other barrows, even thinking about bringing along a team of workers to dig out the covered ones but for now Leo prefers the more immediate access to the sealed ones so they shelve the more elaborate operation.

They settle on Barrows 10 and 19 as suitable sealed locations and Luna is delighted that her suggestion from several days ago, to go somewhere else is finally being enacted. Luna does however point out that if they open a barrow and leave it unattended, they risk another adventuring party plundering it. Leo agrees, and with a wicked smile explains, they know that other parties are searching the barrows since they have discovered their bodies and looted the remains.

Thursday the 15th day of Haenubrius, 08:00, Helix, The Brazen Strumpet