

The Barrowmaze

Session 97 22-07-26 Druid's surprise

Next Session 29-07-26

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

The Hammers take a well-earned overnight rest in Helix but the next day finds them still in a bit of a state even after they have dispensed their multitude of cures so they extend their break by another night to fully recover. Resting up on Friday 16th, Gerald remembers Shadwell's cup of drinking so he uses that to heal Leo back to full health. By Saturday 17th they are fully healed and ready for action.

The Barrow Moor

Leaving at 08:00 they travel to the Barrow Moor without incident. Heading in the direction of the most recently explored Barrows 10 and 19, they trek cautiously over the bleak landscape as the ever-present mist obscures their view. Leo suggests maybe exploring the nearby sealed Barrows 28, and 30 but sadly this goes mostly unnoticed since Gerald is volubly expounding on their recent explorations, eventually mentioning Barrows 28 and 30 as their most promising destinations and prompting a complaint from Leo that Gerald might occasionally like to consider listening instead of talking.

Deciding on Barrow 28 they turn northeast at Barrow 19 and soon arrive at the sealed entrance. Gerald and Leo spend half an hour hammering and prising the slab aside, revealing the usual dark corridor. Gerald quietly whispers, "Elenari" and the stairs leading downwards are illuminated by the light of his new magical sword.

Barrow 28 (32)

Leo and Gerald lead on with Luna and the others following and they descend the stairs into a chamber with passages to the north and west, and a statue in an alcove to the east. Examining the statue, they see a depiction of an Elven woman in robes regarding them with a slight knowing smirk. Her hand rests on the pommel of a weapon which is concealed within her robes.

Luna, noting the smirk and not much liking it, searches around and behind the statue, discovering a secret door in the wall to the east. Checking for traps she declares it all clear and withdraws as Leo squeezes himself behind the statue, triggering the secret door and revealing a corridor leading northeast. He and Gerald follow the short corridor to the end, finding a locked stone door to the east. They call for Luna and she attempts to pick the odd stone mechanism lock, deftly succeeding on her first attempt! Trying not to look too surprised Luna steps back as Leo and Gerald push the heavy door open.

Gerald the Lightbringer steps into a large circular room, empty except for a strange scene at the centre. A heavy wooden sarcophagus is surrounded by six grotesque statues constructed from various hardwoods into vaguely humanoid shapes. The hulking, brutal-looking monstrosities stand fully seven feet tall and face outwards as if in defence of the sarcophagus.

Gerald immediately suspects Golems, voicing his concerns and advising caution except for Leo who Gerald helpfully suggests should open the casket. Ignoring the suggestion Leo waits for the others to come up to examine the scene, searching around while he waits. He passes amongst the wooden figures to examine the sarcophagus from close up, finding it very well made but otherwise a very simple and plain casket.

Gerald indicates he will stand guard and that somebody else should open the sarcophagus, looking significantly at Leo before finally regaining his heroic nature and joining their Knight at the centre. As they lay hands on the casket the figures animate and turn to attack!

Mahogany Mayhem

They realise that since these guardians are Golem constructs, they will need magical weapons to hit them, further annoying and depressing Fenella since her beautiful magical spear was recently destroyed by a Caryatid Column.

Two of the Golems manage to act first and Gerald and Leo are attacked but both dodge the Golem's clumsy blows. Bella runs in to support Gerald and slams into a Golem, sending wood chips flying. Lacking a magical weapon, Fenella scowls from the sidelines trying to kill things with her mind.

Gerald and Leo pile in, severely damaging the attacking pair of Golems as Morgaine steps forward to protect Shadwell and throws her magical dagger, also taking some pieces out of the nearest Golem. Phineas misses with the Barrows Broadsword, cursing his recent run of bad luck.

In the brightly lit room Luna is at a disadvantage but nevertheless manages to conceal herself with her magical cloak and masterful skills, moving into position and backstabbing a Golem for some good damage.

Shadwell looks up at Morgaine who presses her dagger into his hand allowing him to throw a magical weapon at the nearest Golem which he does, damaging it. Across the room both Leo and Gerald catch sight of this in their peripheral vision as Gerald almost drops his sword in shock.

(GM note - this is my fix to the narrative to "explain" Shadwell's ability to do damage to a Golem)

Leo continues to chuckle beneath his breath as various Golem attacks either bounce off his armour or miss as he dodges whilst Gerald slices pieces off his Golem, wearing it down significantly. Phineas attacks and hits hard as Morgaine laughs, "hey everyone, Phini hit something!"

Luna creeps up on another Golem and bursting from concealment finishes it off with brutal efficiency. Morgaine recovers her dagger from Shadwell and flings it at the one attacking Phineas, missing as Phineas looks over laughing. Bella attacks with her mace and strikes, clobbering a Golem for massive damage.

Again, Shadwell collects Morgaine's dagger and has another try to hit a Golem, this time just missing despite his intense concentration, before quickly returning the dagger to Morgaine.

Phineas takes a hit but shrugs off the damage, "he's used to it," taunts Morgaine. Leo is attacked and finally takes some damage from the Golems' hammer blows; he glares back at them as he advances.

Phineas hits, almost finishing off a Golem. Morgaine gives the dagger to Shadwell and points urgently, berating him for previously missing. Frowning in concentration and shaking in excitement their faithful torchbearer and bookkeeper hurls the magical dagger and strikes the Golem, destroying it. The dagger returns to him and he quickly offloads it with some relief back to Morgaine who looks over at Fenella before Shadwell takes a few steps back to lean panting against the wall apparently now out of the fight. Across the chamber Gerald looks on anxiously, wondering what the hell's going on but is soon distracted by a mighty wooden fist coming at him. Gerald dodges the blow as Leo attacks and destroys the attacker.

Fenella receives the dagger courtesy of Morgaine's magical dagger hire, and throws it, striking a Golem and causing a shower of wood chippings. Luna slams a backstab into the second to last opponent, finishing it off as Gerald attacks the final Wood Golem, wounding it badly as he is joined by Bella who sadly misses. Leo quickly steps forward and taking a big swing disposes of it in a shower of dendrological destruction, huzzah!

Finally, Gerald Lays Hands on Leo for the usual much appreciated miraculous recovery.

Viridian Whisper

Sheathing their weapons, Gerald and Leo lift the sarcophagus lid, revealing the desiccated remains of the woman depicted by the statue, her arms crossed over her chest, her hand gasping the hilt of a weapon concealed within her dusty robes.

Luna comes over to examine the weapon. She touches it and the cloak falls away revealing a beautiful Elven Scimitar, a weapon favoured by Druids; almost as long as a Longsword and just as deadly. Fenella perks up in delight and rushes over to Luna who is now holding the Scimitar. Examining it carefully, they are both able to understand the Elvish runes engraved on the blade and they read the name of the weapon, "Viridian Whisper" along with what must be its magical control word, "fylorn". Now it has been touched, they both notice the scimitar emits a soft green glow and the pleasing scent of a pine forest after rain.

Luna finds the sword a little "slippery" in her hand and realising that this is possibly a Druidic weapon she hands it to Fenella. The scimitar fits perfectly into her grip, as if it had been made for her and Fenella is so delighted she almost smiles.

With the scimitar in the appropriate hands, they turn their attention to Shadwell who stands off to one side looking guilty and embarrassed. "So, Shadwell, what's it all about?" asks Fenella. Flushing red, their previously non-combatant porter mumbles out his explanation...

He says he couldn't help but notice that of late The Hammers have been taking on tougher and tougher opponents and he has been in a threatened position more than once in recent times. As far as he could tell it would only be a matter of time before even the overspill from an enemy attack would see him off so he decided he needed to find a fighting role to allow advancement (HP etc). Morgaine admits that she and Phineas had been coaching him and were ready to help out at an opportune moment such as today. He says he's sorry but he thought that if he told them they wouldn't let him do it so he just got on with it.

The net effect is that Shadwell is now a level 1 Fighter NPC, and as such is entitled to a half share in the party XP and profits. He gazes over at them, rather shamefaced but also proud to have succeeded in combat.

Luna is very impressed, she thinks it's an excellent idea and the others whilst somewhat bemused also agree that it does actually make at least some sense. Both Phineas and Morgaine sigh in relief as Gerald tries to get used to the new version of Shadwell.

The Hammers are so tough, even their Torchbearer is a Fighter!

Saturday the 17th day of Haenubrius, 12:20, Barrow 28 (32), The Wood Golem Chamber