

GDA14 - Going Down

Grand Duchy of Adventure

continued from GDA13 - Pixie Party

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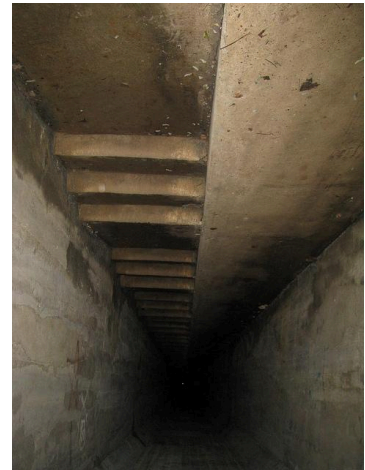
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Tserdain 20th of Thaumont, 1001AC

Where Does This Ladder Go?

GM 140425 - Inside the [small building](#) on the island in the Lake of Lost Dreams, there is a stone shaft leading down into the darkness. A crude ladder of stone ledges is carved into one of the walls. Eager to see what mysteries lie at the bottom, Griffin clambers into the narrow shaft and begins climbing down, followed quickly by Marcel, Draven, Remar and Ree. Draven's glowing holy symbol sheds just enough light to be able to see. Behind him, Draven hears Ree muttering something under her breath. As he turns to look at her, she curses under her breath and shoves him in the shoulder and sneers, "Come on, get going!"



Draven 140425 - "As her ladyship commands!" he says, voice pitched only for her to hear, and proceeds down the ladder with rather more surety of grip than he'd expected. The light from his symbol provides a good view of the rungs, and gives him ample opportunity to not only avoid the dangerous footings, but to provide commentary to Ree and Remar behind him of where those are as they proceed with their climb.

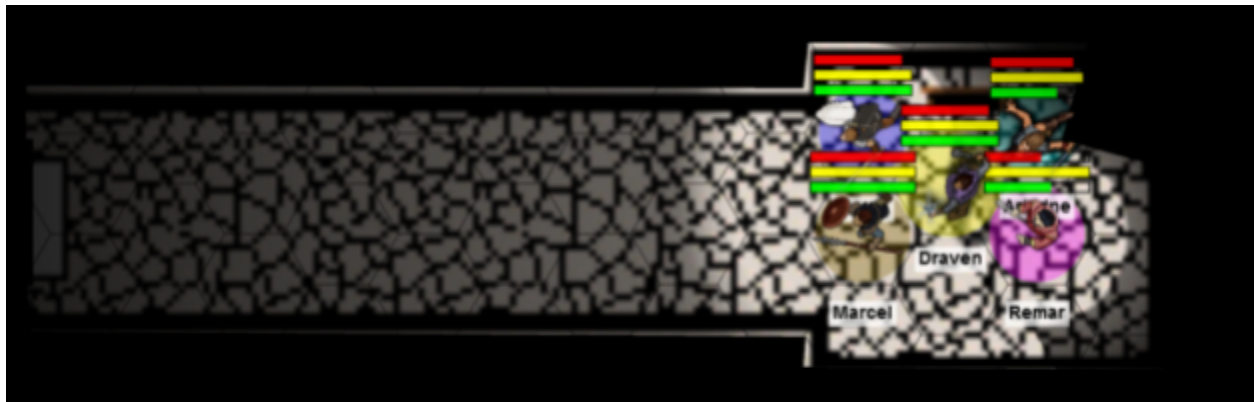
GM 140426 - Draven tries to call out some instructions to his companions coming after him, but he realizes that his instructions are not very helpful as his companions are not very sure about which spots he is talking about. Fortunately it seems that they are able to maneuver the stone 'ladder' well enough. Draven does notice that his climbing skills seem to a bit more intuitive than he remembered from the last climb he made.

Remar 140426 - Remar shakes his head sadly at Ree, sad to see such behavior from a woman. But then realizes she *is* a woman and possibly recounts his own opinion. Taking a look at the hole, and then at Ree, and then back at the hole, the mage decided to not take any chances

with his rather poor ability to climb. Muttering a rather short incantation, with himself as a target, the mage attempts to cast *Climbing*. With an added confidence in his grip, the mage descends slowly behind Draven.

Griffin 140426 - Griffin steps to one side as he clears the bottom of the ladder. His eyes adjust quickly to the gloom and he checks the room for any signs of danger. *Dad always said that it's never too soon to look for traps. Or snakes.*

GM 140426 - Griffin searches around the landing at the bottom of the ladder as the others climb down but he does not find anything obviously dangerous. The landing is a small square chamber about 10 feet across with an arched tunnel leading out of one side. The floor is covered with several inches of old, rotting leaves, moist and spongy. The passage leading out is about 6 feet wide and no more than 8 feet high in the center. About 30 feet down the dark corridor it ends in a wide stone door.



Marcel 140426 - Marcel notice Remar floating down the shaft. "Pace yourself, Remar. We don't know how deep and how dangerous this place is going to get." He runs the tip of his spear on the tiles ahead of him and look for signs on the ground. The ruckus of the climbing troop gets in the way, and he steps 2 yards ahead into the gloom and tries to listen.

Draven 140425 - "Whatever profane gods this temple was established to serve seem to have abandoned their flock. It seems it's been some time since anyone set foot down here." Seeing Marcel moving ahead, Draven turns and takes a half step towards him, giving him the benefit of his light.

Griffin 140426 - Griffin is torn between being all professional and giggling with glee. His first dungeon! Dad would be proud. "Okay, guys, let's take it slow while we can, and hope things don't get too exciting. I'll be looking for traps and tripwires, Draven, you're our light, so stay central." Before heading down the hallway he checks the room the ladder is in for any secrets.

GM 140426 - Marcel does not hear anything except for the slight whistle of the wind blowing through the building 30 feet up at the top of the shaft.

Remar 140426 - Remar suggests one of them should check to see what is past the door, and if it is locked. "This place does not really appear to have been occupied for a great deal of time, as the pixies had said. I feel a little worried about what this entails about its contents."

Draven 140427 - Making sure his shield and club are at the ready, Draven lets his holy symbol hang loose at his chest, illuminating the passageway. "If we find ourselves in a spot, I can call upon the Immortals for guidance as to the presence of other living things around us, but I dare

not do it often lest I anger them with my constant demands."



GM 140427 - The Grey Company carefully moves down the passageway, illuminated only by Draven's glowing holy symbol. The thick layer of rotting leaves gives way to rough stone floor as the shaft is left behind. While the walls and arched ceiling of the tunnel appear to be dry, the floor has numerous puddles of dark, stagnant

water, probably from rainwater coming down through the shaft. The solid looking stone door at the end of the tunnel is flanked by columns, similar to the ones holding up the roof above. Some lines and etchings can be seen on the surface of the door, though they are faint and covered with a thick layer of cobwebs and dust.

Knock-Knock

Griffin steps forward and examines the door and immediate area for any type of traps that may be present. Draven moves to the front of the line to give his companion some light to see by. After about 10 minutes he finally comes to the conclusion that the door is safe. There is no knob or handle visible and it looks as if the door opens into the next chamber. Griffin looks to his companions then back toward the door.

Before he can begin pushing on the heavy looking door, Ree shoves her way to the front of the line. "Hold on! I'm as eager to see what's on the other side of that door as you are, Griff, but let's be careful about this. There could be anything there. Let me try something." The young Half-Elf girl steps up to the door and begins moving her hands and feet in a complex ritual. She then speaks some unintelligible words in a strong, firm voice. Magic. As she finishes her spell,

Draven's light seems to intensify for a moment, making Ree's shadow grow on the stone door ahead. The young girl seems to radiate power for a brief moment then it all goes away. Her shoulders slump and her head leans forward. "Dammit!" she yells and hits the door with both of her hands. The young girl then turns and starts pushing her way back through the gathered crowd. "Back off, you were crowding me! You ruined the spell!" When she gets through to the end of the line, she stomps off back down the tunnel to the base of the shaft where she slumps against the wall, occasionally striking the stone walls or kicking at piles of rotting leaves on the ground.

Draven 140427 - A chagrined look on his face, Draven - making a point to hold his holy symbol high, lest he leave everyone else in the darkness, walks back to where Ree is leaning. He puts a hand on her shoulder and trots out his very bad grasp of Elvish. "You be... gooder than this. Not... you be mean, be angry to you." Dropping back into his native tongue he continues, "you were onto something there. Maybe you could try again?"

GM 140427 - Ree pulls away from Draven's touch then she yells at him, her words echoing through the narrow corridor. "Leave me alone! Don't touch me!" She buries her head into the corner. Draven can hear her sobbing. He pauses for a moment then she turns and looks at him, her eyes wet and narrow. Draven sees her hand gripping the hilt of the knife at her waist. "I said leave me alone," she hisses at him through clenched teeth.

Draven 140427 - Taking a deep breath, Draven centers himself, remembering his training - when ministering to those in need, one's ego is the last thing that needs to enter into the picture. Keeping his voice low and soothing, like speaking to an enraged mother bear, he whispers "You'd never stab me. And if you did, it wouldn't be me you were trying to hurt at all, would it?" He deliberately turns back to the others. "Might as well open that door, Griffin. If there's anything evil on the other side, we've got our own wild woman ready to tear it to ribbons." He heads back towards the door, the better to light the way.

Griffin 140427 - Griffin swears, "Aw, hell." He stalks back down the hall. "Hey, Ree, what's the hold up?" He sees the knife, and stops, close but not too close. His voice lowered, he continues. "Hey look, I need you up there. I need you to have my back. You're the only mage who I trust to know what to look for. Remar's a soldier who shoots first. Draven? Not his bailiwick, I'm thinking. Magic is your thing, and I get that's it's tricky. We crowded you - it's not like we're used to working with an entourage, right? There's a learning curve."

"So next time, we give you more room, okay? But right now, I'm waiting on you, and they're waiting on me. Is there anything you want to try before we open the door? Or like the priest said, should we just open it and turn you loose on whatever's on the other side?"

Remar 140427 - Remar feels a little socially incapable to recover the situation with Ree and decides to go up to the door and, saying that he feels pretty confident that whatever is behind the door is already alerted to their presence, he goes to open it. Making sure someone is with

him and giving him cover, he will continue with his action and slowly open the door. "Whatever you were planning to do, do it fast, Griffin."

GM 140427 - The young mage puts both hands on the door and starts to push. He can feel it waver a bit, but the stone slab is too heavy for him to push on his own.

Marcel 140427 - Marcel ignores the drama, gears for a clash and offer to Remar to be in front of him when the door opens. He will, however, wait for Griffin to come back at the ready before doing anything.

GM 140427 - Ree, her head down merely shrugs her shoulders at Griffin. She relaxes a bit but keeps her head down and refuses to make eye contact with anyone as they rejoin the group. When prompted if she wants to 'try anything else' up at the door, she grunts and shrugs her shoulders again, declining. Griffin makes his way back to the front of the line where Remar and Marcel are contemplating the best way to open the heavy stone door.

Griffin 140427 - Griffin gives the door one last look over, then glances over his shoulder. "Well, c'mon folks. I think this will need several shoulders worth of effort." He demonstrates as he starts to push against the large stone slab.

Draven 140427 - Not the beefiest of fellows, but Draven puts his shoulder into the push alongside Griffin, hoping that he'll be enough to swing the door open, but keeping in mind the necessary prayers for a quick spell if there's anything awaiting on the other side of the door.

GM 140427 - Together, several sets of hands and shoulders push against the stone door. A slight grating sound can be heard but the door does not open.

Griffin 140427 - Griffin steps back and takes another pass at the area. First he tries to discern more about the lines and etchings on the door's surface, first brushing it off and then blowing the dust away. If that proves fruitless, he will turn his attention to the columns next to the door, searching in their vicinity for any indications of how the door used to open (hidden buttons or switches, wear marks on the columns or floor or ceiling, or on the door itself.)

Marcel 140429 - Marel likewise begins to look for mechanism on either side of the door by running his fingers over the masonry.

Skeletons in the Closet!

GM 140429 - No visible catches or latches are found anywhere on the smooth, stone slab nor on the fluted columns to either side. All together, in a coordinated effort, the four companions shove on the door. A slight stone on stone grating sound is heard, then, unexpectedly, the door shifts and swings open. The light from Draven's holy symbol floods into the chamber beyond, revealing a 15' by 15' space. There are two passages leading out to the right and left and a narrow alcove in the far wall. Griffin, who had been pushing extra hard, stumbles into the room

as the door opens and quickly looks around. Immediately he spots the danger as several skeletons lurch forward from the near corners of the room toward him. He spots two more standing in the far corners as well. Before he can even call out a warning to his friends, he sees many more skeletons in each of the side passages, ready to stream out into the room!



Griffin 140429 - Griffin stumbles back into the doorway. “Skeletons! Form up!” he yells, as he readies his shield and sword. He takes up position to Marcel’s left.

“Draven! Can you and your gods dispel these foul creatures?”

Draven 140429 - “Others of my order have such gifts, but mine are in other areas. Ranged attackers, get behind me!” Draven begins to concentrate on a prayer to bring up a holy shield to protect him, so that he might be a bulwark against which the wave of skeletons break.

Griffin 140429 - Griffin grips his sword and Waits for a skeleton to step into range.

Remar 140429 - Remar moves to Draven’s rear, shooting a bolt of energy at the nearest skeleton to his left. “I am certainly not surprised there are skeletons here. Draven, hurry up with that shield!”

GM 140429 - Remar steps back behind the Acolyte and sends a magical bolt soaring over his head at the nearest Skeleton (to the left). The eldritch bolt slams into the undead abomination, shattering most of what is left of its ribcage, sending it reeling back several feet.

Draven 140429 - "Lords of holiness protect me!" cries Draven, his holy symbol flashing against his chest. A shimmering shield forms up in front of him and he prepares to fight the next skeleton to close the distance.

Marcel 140429 - Marcel opens with his signature dual attack on the skeleton adjacent to him, then takes a step forward to open the way. "There are many of them, keep the defensive position of the hallway to avoid being cut-off."

GM 140430 - The Skeleton nearest Marcel manages to dodge Marcel's shield bash as it lumbers forward.

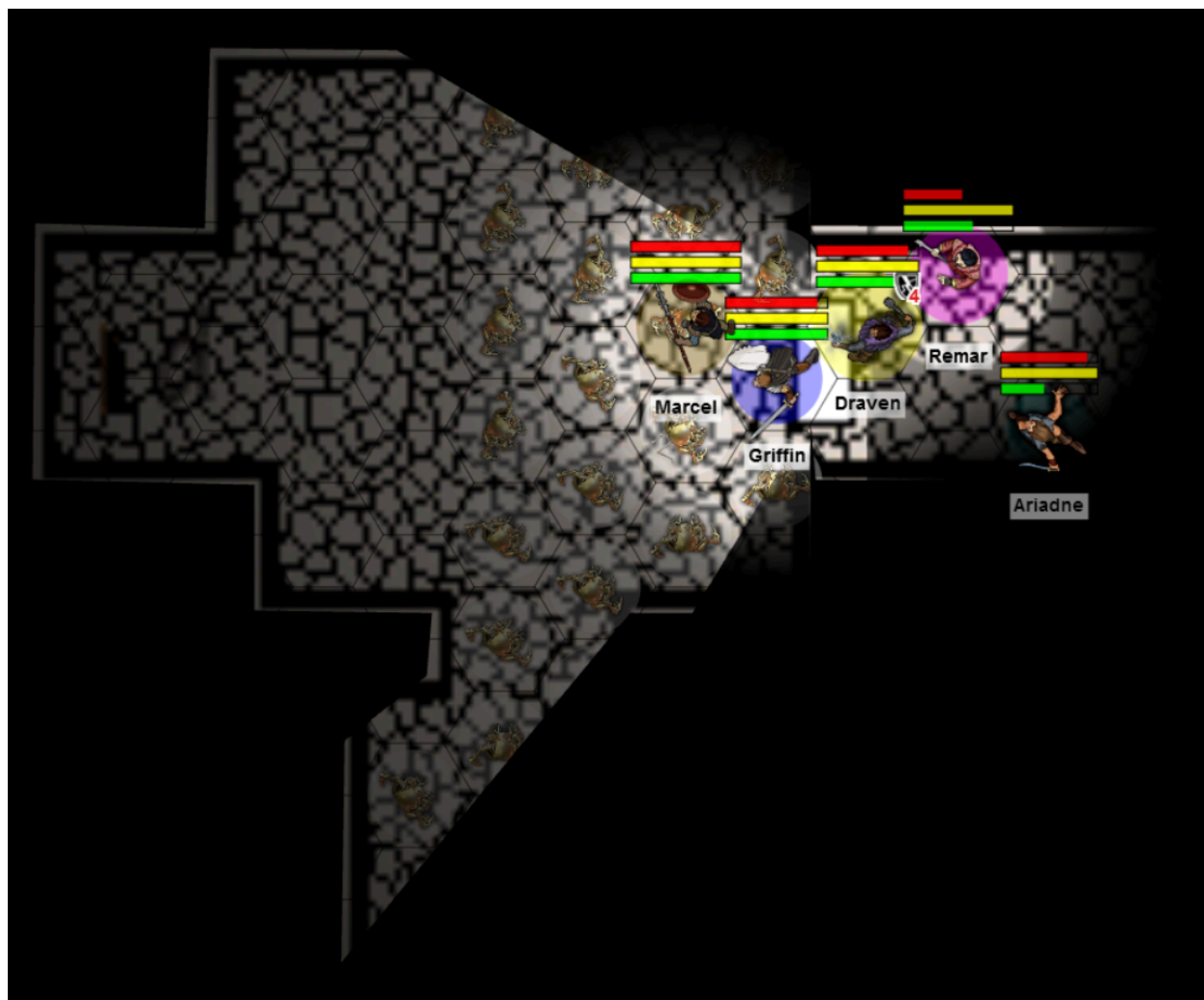
The skeletons surge forward, filling the room. One steps inside Marcel's shield and claws at him with his bony hands while the others move in to attack. Griffin, quickly strikes at the Skeleton that has stepped up into his range.

Griffin 140430 - Thinking quickly, Griffin swings at the skeleton with the flat of his blade, hoping to shatter the brittle old bones!

GM 140430 - The approaching Skeleton, the same one that had been hit by Remar's bolt, crumbles under the strength of Griffin's blow.

Griffin 140430 - Flush with an early victory, Griffin swings at another skeleton, again with the flat of his blade.

GM 140430 - Griffin's blade connects with another skeleton solidly but it stays standing.



Marcel 140429 - Marcel attempts a knee strike on the skeleton in close but misses and takes a step back to encumber the skeleton sandwich between him and Draven.

"Everyone back down two steps!" as Marcel feels a little crowded by skeleton at this time.

Draven 140501 - Taking advantage of the close quarters, Draven lashes out at the skeleton between himself and Marcel, hoping to open a way for Marcel to step back into a defensive position.

Remar 140501 - Remar is incredibly surprised at the sheer number of them at this point. He feels as those some stronger magic would be nice, but his training has still not given him access to the sort of magic that would be most useful to deal with multiple enemies. Before taking a step back, as Marcel has suggested, Remar uses his magic to fling the skeleton directly in front of Griffin back into the ones behind.

GM 140501 - Draven strikes the nearest skeleton as Marcel backs up near him and Remar forces the skeleton in front of Griffin to move back, bumping into another skeleton behind it. Taking a cue from Remar, Ariadne steps forward and speaks the magical words of power, weaving her hands in a mystical pattern, but once again, nothing happens. “Noooo!” the young Half-Elven girl cries in desperation.

Meanwhile, the skeletons push forward again, their bony fingers reaching out, grasping at both Marcel and Griffin!

Griffin 140501 - “Gah!” says Griffin, flailing as he jumps back into the doorway. He lashes out with his broadsword to try and shatter the foul creature, but swings before he has regained his balance. His sword goes wide!

“Marcel! Pull back! Quick!” he yells.

Remar 140502 - Taking another step back, the mage throws out another bolt of eldritch energy at the skeleton directly in front of Griffin, yelling out, “What are we doing? Fighting or running? It’s not that I don’t enjoy a fight, but there’s a fair number of them. You alright up there?” Remar sends the skeleton his magic has hold over back one further yard into more of his brethren.

Marcel 140503 - Marcel maintains a rear-guard in All-out defense and steps back if possible. The party is now in an advantageous tactical position, but he is still unsure whether they can take care of so many opponents.

“Everyone, run!”

GM 140503 - The press of animated bones pushes the entire Company back some, eventually back through the doorway. As Griffin and Marcel slide back past the threshold, it seems that the skeletal attackers stop their pursuit. Then suddenly, the sound of stone grating on stone can be heard and the door swings shut with a low thud. The narrow stone corridor is quiet except for heavy breathing, the air is damp with sweat and fear. Soft sobbing can be heard from the back of the line as Ree has slid to the floor, her hands in her face, crying quietly.

After a moment, Griffin says, “Did you see it?” Everyone looks at him questioningly. “You didn’t see it? Across the room, there was another ladder, leading further down. I could see the top of a metal ladder coming up out of a hole in the floor, straight across the room. There is something more down there! Those skeletons were *GUARDING* something!”

Remar 140503 - Remar sighs. “What I would do for a giant fire right about now....”

Draven 140501 - “If we’re going back in there, it must be **now** or the protection I currently carry will be for naught! I will gladly take a front-rank position, if Marcel will stand at my side, but that means the rest of you must be ready with your missiles or arcane tricks.”

Marcel 140505 - Marcel looks around and realize that no one got hurt in this incident.

“Did the skeletons really attack us after all? Was this some kind of trick played on us.”, he turns to Ree and Remar, “Were there skeleton real or just a trick played on our senses?”.

Griffin 140504 - “Yea, none of us got hurt! I think with a little better tactics, we can keep them at bay while the rest of us break them into little pieces.”

“Marcel, I think you and I should switch sides. I’m left-handed, so that would put our shields towards the outside for better defense!”

“What do you say, guys? Let’s get this door back open and give it another go!”
