

# GDA18 - Into the Petrified Forest

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## Loshdain 23 of Thaumont, 1001AC

### More Bats!

**GM 140524** - The Grey Company has entered a strange and eerie section of the Dymrak Forest. All the trees, bushes, grass and even birds and animals have been petrified. Some moss and lichen grows near the ground and some long wispy vines trail down from the stone branches in places, but there is no other live vegetation anywhere. Very few birds and some insects are about the only live animals occasionally spotted.

After Goriidel left the group to return to his companions, the Company mounted an exploration of the petrified forest, leaving Akaios and Bahaznic back with the horses. About 30 minutes into the stone forest, the Company came across some other living things, a swarm of giant foul bats swooped down out of the shadowy twilight created by the solid stone canopy of leaves overhead. As the giant bats swoop in to attack, their nauseating smell fills everyone's nostrils.

**Griffin 140524** - Griffin quickly reacts to the danger of the descending bats. He brings up his shield as one charges him and hops back, foiling it's attack. He whips out his broadsword and makes a strong swing at the creature.

**GM 140525** - Griffin's strike is true, cutting into the giant bat and sending it to the ground. It flounders there for a moment and starts to crawl away toward the edge of the trail, leaving a smear of dark blood behind it.

**Draven 140524** - "Eugh!" Draven quickly raises his shield and takes a step back, blocking the incoming attack. "Even stink would say that stinks!" He tries to take a swing back at the bat with his club, hoping to dissuade it from attacking him again.

**GM 140525** - Remar and Marcel go on the defensive when the bats attack, easily fending them off, though Remar gets a strong whiff of the bats foul odor and begins coughing and hacking. He brings his short staff up to protect him. Meanwhile, Ree shouts a magical word of power as she dodges out of the way, easily staying out of the way of the bat's fangs but not so lucky when it comes to resisting the bat's smell. Like Remar, her eyes begin to water and she starts hacking and spitting, trying to rid herself of the malodorous stench.

The remaining bats each lurch forward, their large wings propelling them back into close quarters as they attack once more. The bat coming at Remar gets its wings tangled up and drops to the ground right in front of the coughing mage while the bat attacking Draven goes for his weapon arm. The bats attacking Marcel and Ree both make neck lunges.

**Marcel 140525** - Marcel decides to push back first by blocking the beast while holding his breath for long enough to dissipate the cloud of stench. He then identifies a large tree to use to cover his back and steps aside to assess the situation. He scans the area and identify all opponents as well as various spots for a number of them to defend best against the beasts. He summarily warns Griffin and other of incoming bats, communicating succinctly his plan and jumps right back into the fray with in mind to skewer them out of the sky.

**GM 140525** - The bat manages to flap up and out of the way of Marcel's incoming shield, but is not so lucky against the Traladaran's spear. The sharp point penetrates the bat, nearly running it through. It spasms and works its way off the tip of the weapon and falls to the ground motionless. Nearby, Ree dodges out of the bat's line of attack and steps back.

**Remar 140525** - Remar motions about himself, taking a step back from the danger, and magics a *Shield* about Marcel in order to protect the party from further harm. "These things stink! Marcel, I magicked your shield."

**Griffin 1405245** - Griffin, seeing his own foe dragging itself away, turns and rushes to Ree's aid. He slashes at the beast attacking her.

**GM 140526** - The bat attacking Ree turns and flies off into the shadowy canopy above after Griffin hits it with his sword. Draven again brings his shield up in a defensive position, easily blocking the bat as he steps back.

The two remaining bats are dealt with. One is killed after being skewered on Marcel's spear and the other is driven off after being struck by several blows. Everyone remains tense for several moments, waiting for the bats or some other foe to present itself, but nothing happens. The surrounding forest remains quiet. The already present shadows along the trail are beginning to

grow dark, signaling that the unseen sun has started its descent. The Company has already been in the petrified forest for well over a half an hour and they had told Akaaios and Bahaznic that they would only be gone about an hour. It appears that this petrified forest is a bit larger than originally anticipated and it may take a more time to locate the Goblins.

**Marcel 140526** - "It smells like stinking gobs here. I think that we're on the right track. You think that Akaaios and Bahaznookie will mind if we push onward?"

Marcel wonders whether the bat act as scouts for the goblins. If so, the priority would be to acquire ambushing positions before nightfall.

**Griffin 140526** - Griffin starts to speak, then hesitates. It's getting toward sundown, and no telling what Akaaios and Bahaznic will do if they don't return before dark. Attacking at night would be playing to the gobbo's strengths. He shakes his head, "No, we go back. This was a simple recon mission. We're not prepared for more right now. We go back, hide, and come back in the morning, when it's light."

"Does that sounds okay?"

**Marcel 140526** - "There are two devils sitting on my shoulders. One of them agrees with you, friend. I'm just not sure that the green forest is a better place for us to defend."

He swings his shield over his shoulder, poke the ground with the butt of his spear.

"Let's go where the food's at."

**Draven 140524** - "I concur. We need our full force and all of our gear before we press ahead."

## A Tactical Retreat

**GM 140527** - Wanting to be on the safe side, the Grey Company retreats out of the petrified forest and re-connects with Akaaios and Bahaznic. After giving their report to Akaaios, he tells them that while they were gone, they had heard some wolf howls in the distance. He is not precisely sure from which direction they came, but he is pretty sure that it was NOT from within the petrified section of the forest. "Could be out-riders or scouts, or it could just be wolves not with the Goblins, not sure," he offers.

The group agrees that their best course of action would be to set a camp for the night and then re-enter the petrified forest the following morning and attempt to find the Goblins then.

**Griffin 140528** - Griffin nods as they head back up the trail. He's looking for a place off the trail, where they can make a quiet camp out of the way. Playing to his strengths, he also keeps an eye out for well-concealed perches in the trees where he could hide with his crossbow.

“Okay, I think two-man watches, Akaios, why not you and Draven first, then Marcel and Remar. Ree and I will take the third shift. Bahaznic, you’re odd man out tonight. You can join one of us on our shifts, or we’ll swap you in tomorrow evening.”

**Draven 140529** - “Sounds like a plan, Griffin. We’ll keep our eyes open.” To Akaios he asks, “what do you think as far as position? Opposite sides of the camp, or together, back to back?” He hefts his shield and swings his club, psyching himself up for whatever might come their way.

**GM 140529** - A hasty camp is made and watches are set. Remar has a tough time getting comfortable while Ree and Akaios are just having a terrible time. The elements seem to be wearing on them fairly harshly. Everyone else settles in nicely to the temporary camp. A light meal is eaten and watches are set.

Draven and Akaios set up for the first watch. Draven notices that Griffin is restless and not able to go to sleep. With only 3 watches, its going to be a long night. Draven and Akaios take up spots on opposite sides of the camp, agreeing to change positions with each other every half hour or so, just to make sure no one falls asleep.

The night drags on for Draven and Akaios, who move around in the darkness. The tiny fire has died down to just embers by the time Marcel and Remar are set to take over. In the darkness, the companions manage to make just enough noise to wake Griffin up by accident. Fortunately the young adventurer is able to fall back to sleep with no trouble.

## **A Bump in the Night**

Near the end of Marcel and Remar’s watch, Marcel hears the sound of wolves nearby followed by something moving noisily through the woods.

**Marcel 140530** - Marcel rises to his feet as quietly as he can and tried to resolve the contact with his eyes and ears. He readies his shield and spear and quietly moves to interpose between the camp and wherever the noise came from. His steps are deliberate, delicate: he is ready to pounce into the mineral foliage in a twitch.

His action have prompted Remar to react even if the wizard may not have heard the noises in the first place.

**Remar 140530** - Remar groans. “Marcel, I’m trying to read right now.” He takes a piece of parchment and places it between the two pages he was at in his spellbook. He looks to Marcel and suddenly understands the cue. Putting his book down, he gets up and looks into the darkness alongside his friend, staff at the ready.

**Marcel 140530** - “Can you light it up over there?”, as he points to where he thought the noise came from.

**GM 140530** - Remar shrugs and then nods toward Marcel’s glowing shield. Marcel smiles sheepishly and continues.

**Marcel 140530** - Marcel leaps into the wood simultaneously in hope to surprise whatever may be there.

**GM 140530** - Holding his glowing shield out in front of him, Marcel looks for the source of the noise as he moves into the darkened depths of the Dymrak Forest. After a moment, he sees what he was looking for. As he steps from behind a large tree, two wolves go bolting past, a moment later, three bald headed, pig faced Orcs burst through the trees running after the wolves. One of them is carrying a few spears and the other two are armed with nets. Swords can be seen hanging at each of their sides. The two with the nets pay no mind to Marcel but the spear carrier notices him. The Orc takes a double take as he runs past then stops and barks at his companions in the guttural language of his kind. He turns and holds his spear up high, aiming it Marcel. “Drop your weapon, Human,” it commands in barely understandable Traladaran!

**Remar 140531** - Remar, having followed Marcel into the darkness, is startled to see the Orc as it stares them in the face. “Uh, these things don’t look too happy to see us, Marcel. Should we run for it, get the others?”

**GM 140530** - The Orc, who is about 7 yards in front of Marcel, crouches and pulls his spear arm back as if to throw his weapon. In the darkness, Marcel can barely make out the other 2 Orcs, about 13 yards off to the right, stop and turn.



**Marcel 140530** - "I'm not the one to take one two orcs with nets on my own. Remar, rouse the camp ASAP while I delay."

Remar takes to his feet.

"You go me here, Phil. May I call you Phil?", Marcel side-steps to make room between him and the underbrush to his left.

"We've got meat to sell. Still alive, still tasty. Are you a buyer?" He attempts to locate the net wielders without Phil noticing.

**GM 140530** - The Orc, Phil, lowers his spear a bit and does not throw the weapon. "Who you?" he calls out in broken Traladaran. He relaxes his stance a bit but keeps the weapon resting on his shoulder, ready to throw at any moment. "What you sell? We hunt Kloss-Lunk wolves." He turns and calls out to the other Orcs, though not in Traladaran and motions toward Marcel with a nod of his head. Looking over Marcel's shoulder, he asks, "Where he go?"

**Marcel 140601** - "Yes, we've got lots of Loss-kunk foxes for sale, which flavour?", Marcel stutter awkwardly in hope that the orc is slow enough to buy his pathetic bluff.

**GM 140601** - The Orc grunts and replies, "Yes, we take what you got!" He then steps up and throws his spear at Marcel! Marcel easily blocks the spear with his trusty shield and moves back as we watches the two net-wielding Orcs advance. The spear chucker readies another spear and steps forward while his companions step into range. Marcel lashes out with a spear strike at the nearest one but the Orc manages to dodge out of the way. He responds by swinging his net around and tossing it over Marcel's head. The Traladaran tries to dodge out of the way, but he missteps and the net envelops him. Marcel starts to worry. He has seen nets in action against previous foes. It is not pretty. The spear wielding Orc approaches with his spear ready while the other Orc keeps his net at the ready.

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**GM 140530** - Meanwhile, back at the camp, something rouses Griffin from his sleep. A quick glance around reveals that the fire is burning low, nearly out, most of his companions are sleeping still, but neither Marcel nor Remar is anywhere to be seen. As he sits up, he hears muffled voices and sounds to the north of camp, in the forest.

As Griffin thinks about what to do, he hears the approaching sound of someone running through the woods toward the camp.

**GM 140601** - After few short moments, Remar bursts back into the camp. "Eveyrone, wake up, get up!" He puts his hands on his knees and takes a heavy breath. "Orcs. In the woods. Marcel is, um, well, talking to them. I don't know if it's going to end well though! Come on!"



Remar explains that they had heard some wolves and then some other noises passing near the camp so they had checked it out. It looked like the Orcs were chasing the wolves but they saw Marcel and Remar as they ran past and one stopped. Marcel was going to try to distract him for a minute while Remar ran back for help. He says they are not far, maybe 20 yards back through the forest and that there had been at least 3 Orcs, two of them with nets!

**Griffin 140601** - Griffin swears and grabs his crossbow. Quickly loading a bolt, he grabs his sword as well and heads off into the woods as quietly as he can, heading off to the left of where Remar appeared. He catches Ree's eye and send her off to the right. He notices Akaios and Draven rising as well at Remar's words, and trusts them to take the more direct route.

**GM 140601** - As everyone makes their way as quickly as they can through the forest, they hear Marcel yell out for help and several loud Orcish grunts and growls.

Draven, Remar and Akaios break through the trees to see Marcel trapped under a heavy net with 3 Orcs standing around him, squinting in the light of his magically glowing shield. One has a spear and one has his hand on the hilt of his sheathed blade while the third holds onto another good sized net.



Off to the side of the action, Griffin finally arrives at the scene. Off to his right, he can see Marcel trapped in the net, the light from his glowing shield nicely lighting up a large Orc holding a spear pointed right at Marcel.

**Marcel 140601** - Marcel can hear his friends somewhere to his right, but the pointy end of a spear really gets his attention. There is a little bit of room for him to move his shield around, and he certainly plans to move into a block if it comes down to this. Meanwhile, he realizes that his feet are still in the clear and he tries to run back towards his advancing friends.

**Draven 140601** - Draven strides forward three yards to close the distance between himself at the orcs, stopping just short of the edge of the net covering Marcel. "Never suffer an orc to live!" he growls under his breath, as he prepares to draw forth the power of the Immortals.



**GM 140601** - With a loud shout, Akaios charges forward heroically, swinging his great axe at the nearest Orc. The Orc leaps back out of the way of his strike unscathed. Meanwhile, Remar steps up and flings a magical bolt at the Orc pointing his spear at Marcel, aiming at his skull. Though it was just a grazing shot, the Orc stumbles and falls to the ground, dropping his remaining spears.

The remaining Orcs look at each other then one draws his shortsword and takes another step away from Akaios while the 2nd one steps up and flings his net toward Draven and Remar and managed to put it directly between them, threatening to catch them both in its enveloping snare! Watching this, Griffin sees his chance to act!

**Draven 140602** - Snarling, Draven ably dodges the net and continues his preparations, Remar is not as lucky and gets tangled in the netting.

**Griffin 140601** - Griffin lets fly with a bolt and swears when he sees it go wide. He drops his crossbow and readies his sword as he moves towards the battle. "Come on lads, there's only two of them!" he shouts.

**GM 140601** - Akaios steps up, readying his axe for another strike. As Remar and Draven try to avoid the thrown net, the two Orcs turn and flee away from the Grey Company, leaving their spear toting companion laying unconscious on the forest floor. Akaios looks to Griffin then to the Orcs fleeing in the darkness. "We giving chase?"

**Griffin 140601** - Griffin shakes his head. "Not in the dark on their home turf. Let's grab our gear and see if we can find another spot not too far off. Oh, and snag those nets and whatever the unconscious one is carrying. We might be able to use the gear later."

**GM 140601** - Akaios puts his boot on the back of the Orc's head and asks, "what are we doing with this one?" Ree and Bahaznic quietly approach from the south, their slings ready. "We done here?" Ree asks with hint of disappointment in her voice.

**Griffin 140601** - He shrugs. "Like I said, grab his gear and leave him as far as I'm concerned. The wolves will take care of him soon, no doubt."

**GM 140602** - Akaios loots the fallen Orc, taking 4 cheap spears, a cheap shortsword, a cheap large knife, a wineskin filled with some foul smelling alcohol (Akaios hesitates for a moment then takes a long swig from it) and a pouch with about 20 coppers. "I'm not stripping him, he can keep his armor. It smells anyway and I don't know if he has anything on under it!"

**Draven 140602** - Lagging behind, still scanning for more Orcs, Draven waits for the rest of the company to make their way back towards the camp, at least far enough to get out of earshot. He approaches the unconscious Orc. With his booted foot, he turns the creature over on his

back and looks down at it. He presses his boot into the Orc's throat, cutting off its supply of air. "Never. Suffer. An Orc. To live." Once the deed is done, he returns to the camp with the others.

**GM 140602** - Once back to the camp, it takes a few hours to pack everything up and move to a new location. As they are setting the new camp up, Ree looks at Griffin and smirks, "You know, it probably won't be hard for them to track us from the old camp to the new camp if they really want to. Were leading too many horses. They leave, um, you know, traces."

**Griffin 140602** - Griffin shrugs. "Well, if they come back with a tracker, yea. If they come back with a war band, we're gonna want whatever edge we can get."

**GM 140602** - Ree shrugs and walks away. The watches are reset and the night continues.

## Soladain 24 of Thaumont, 1001AC

### Planning a Wolf Hunt

**GM 140602** - The Orcs do not return for the rest of the night, but the rain does. Though it is hard to see, the sky overhead is covered in thick, grey clouds and the rain comes down in a cold, constant drizzle. A cool wind blows between the trees as the Grey Company gets down to business over a soggy breakfast. Griffin seems a bit tired though everyone else is chipper and ready to go.

**Griffin 140602** - Griffin grumbles as he goes about packing up his satchel. "So, let's get this over with, huh guys? Akaaios, you okay with staying with the horses, or should we all bring them. I was kinda hoping that we could scout a little sneakily for this bit."

**GM 140602** - "Uh, yea, me and the kid can stay back and watch the horses. How long do you think you will be gone? I think taking those horses in there will easily alert the Goblins to our presence. They got wolves, right? They will smell the horses at a good distance, even in this rain, much less hear them," Akaaios muses. He looks around, "plus, maybe we can find some more Orcs to party with!"

Ree steps up and looks at Akaaios with a bit of disdain, "I think I should stay back with Akaaios and Bahaznic as well. I can help keep an eye out for Orcs, Goblins or whatever might come our way." Griffin shoots her a look and she merely raises an eyebrow and shrugs.

**Draven 140602** - Before making time for his prayers, Draven, muttering up at the gray skies, called upon a bit of divine power to protect himself from the drizzle. The gods are kind, and soon the drops that fall from the skies cease for him, striking an invisible wall of force. Sighing contentedly, he then seeks out a small, palm-sized stone and invests a bit of will into bringing for the light of creation upon it. He takes it over to Akaaios and Ree. "Just in case," he says, holding it out on the flat of his palm. "The better to see the orcs you slay."

That completed, he sets about his morning prayers, thanking the Immortals for their continued good luck in hearing the orcs coming, and for granting him the gift of sending one on to infinite punishment.

Finishing up, he makes sure his own light source is firmly in place on his chest. "What's the plan? Back into that cursed bowl of stone again? Look for tracks from the wolves last night? Maybe track the orcs back to their encampment?" He tries to keep too much stress off the last choice.

**Griffin 140602** - Griffin shrugs. "Sorry, but it's the stone bowl. With just the four of us hopefully we can move more quietly. I'll lead, slowly, so I can sneak up on whoever wanders around here. The rest of you in a small group about 20 yards back - should be enough for me to notice something before they notice you."

**Remar 140602** - Remar asks Griffin if him taking point was wise. "You sure look tired. I don't want you getting hurt or compromising our plan if you're not able to keep yourself together." Probably knowing the answer already, Remar accepts the inevitable and hopes his friend will not falter in his role.

**GM 140602** - Akaios, Ree and Bahaznic finish packing up the camp while the other four head out to return to the petrified forest in search of the Wolfskull, or Kloss-lunk, Goblins. The rain continues with a steady drizzle, quickly soaking everyone, except Draven, to the bone. Griffin has to keep his crossbow carefully hidden under his cloak to keep the string from getting wet and ruined. The ground is a muddy mess and Griffin spots no new tracks.

**Draven 140602** - Seeing Griffin hiding his crossbow from the wet gives Draven a twinge of guilt over enjoying the protection of his little cantrip but not offering it to anyone else. Not that he could comfortably cover everyone.

**GM 140602** - Once the group makes it to the edge of the petrified valley, the rain takes on a different form. Due to the stony canopy above, the rain is funneled into numerous mini-waterfalls falling at random places throughout the forest. While not being constantly being rained on, it is occasionally impossible to avoid the multiple streams of falling water, nor is it possible to avoid the near constant splash at ground level. In addition to the wet, the sound is tremendous, like the sound of a water mill going right next to your head. Draven finds that his magical protection from the rain does him no good against the thick streams of water coming down from above and considers dropping the spell, though there are enough moments of actual rain that Draven thinks it might be worth keeping up.

**Draven 140602** - Glancing heavenward, Draven sighs as he waffles on whether or not to keep the spell up at all. "Thank you for this lesson in humility," he whispers to the Immortals as he moves along.

**GM 140602** - The Company continues on, finding that several trails criss-cross the valley, but all seem to lead back to the original main trail, which seems to head down further into the valley. Here and there, small streams cross and follow the path where the rainwater is all flowing to the lowest part of the valley.

Up ahead, Griffin calls the Company to a stop when he comes across a much wider track winding away into the gloom between the lifeless and wet trees. Looking along it, he catches sight of a group of Goblins and wolves heading up the path. The Goblins are chattering noisily amongst themselves with their wolfskull hoods pulled low over their faces in an attempt to keep the rain out and do not appear to have spotted the Company yet.

**Griffin 140602** - Griffin waves his comrades to seek cover and ducks between the lifeless and wet trees. He hunkers down and peers out from under his cloak. He murmurs "C'mon you stupid gobbos."

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[End](#)