

## 46: Passing the Gates

We continued our advance to the mysterious dwarven tower through rugged and inhospitable surroundings. Fully aware of all the hiding places that surround the path I start scouting ahead of the party. Within a mile or so I spot an ambush ahead of us.

Four skeleton archers have set up an ambush ahead and Kendalan & I decide to sneak around them and crush them between our combined might. Grimwald nods in agreement and starts telling a lengthy story about a heroic battle and hammer & anvil tactics, the elf and I sneak off before he finishes. The fight is short and not really bloody, skeletons cannot bleed of course.

Again I was facing the problem that Blade's rapier is just not made out for bashing skeletal heads. Severing bow strings does work. Even better, I was able to send a bow flying out of the skeletons hand by a quick twist of my blade. I even tried to bash in a skeleton by using one of the femurs from a destroyed undead. But it simply not cut out for me. I don't really know what went wrong, but my blow went completely off target and somehow it ended right in Grimwald hands who took the bone and finished the sole surviving skeleton with one solid blow. Somehow he got the feeling that I gave him the bone on purpose and he was clearly impressed by the gesture. Well if he's happy, why should I come up with the truth?

Next encounter was with a pack of big ice breathing wolves we decided to by pass. Reed conjured a big mantis that scooped fish out of the water and they were clearly more hungry then ready to pick a fight with us. On our way back I must study the waterfall, I'm sure something valuable is hidden there.

We crossed a ridge and got our first glimpse of the famous tower. A big fortified squat tower surrounded by formidable battlements and ramparts. In its heyday when defended by hundreds of angry dwarfs, this must have been a fortress that could withstand a siege against a huge army. Fortunately for us, the front door should be open for us foolish adventurers. Anyway, we could spot a path leading to the entrance, circling around the tower, guarded by gatehouses and bridges.

The first gatehouse was placed just before a bridge. The structure looked a bit ramshackle and the thing gave me the creeps. When trying to cross it I set off an powerful electricity trap. Good thing I was warned, because I could evade the trap. Reed somehow evade the trap as well and her intricate knowledge of magic's learned us that a trap like that needed time to reset. This allowed the others to cross the gatehouse in the times between the jolts. No one was hurt until some skeletons started firing on us. Between the shots we could see the lumbering shape of an armoured skeleton approaching the bridge. An eerie green glow surrounded the undead while it raised it's sword in anticipation. Ready for a fight Zhae Felina and I charged the bridge. The fight ended for me, the bridge was rigged with grease and I lost my footing. I spend the complete fight trying to climb out of the crevasse below the bridge. To my shame I must admit that Kendalan rescued me from my unfortunate position allowing us to push forward to the next gatehouse.

That one was inhabited by strange shadowy tentacles trying to catch after we were slowed by the blast of extreme cold. We were all able to safely pass that obstacle and were well on our way to the final gatehouse this one part of the tower proper. While approaching the structure I spotted what looked like a spider shape appearing and fading away in a split second. The party decided we had to face a phase spider and took protective measures. We all rope each other together and in an protective cluster we approach the danger. We didn't have to wait long, the creature tried to grab Kendalan but failed, tasting cold steel instead. Next attack honed our blows and the beast was killed the next time it appeared.