

The Golden Trio

&

The Quest for Ladon

By: Mathew D. Miles

Written from the perspective of:

Archmage Guildmaster

&

Mariah the Champion of the Virtue of Honesty

Part 3

The last of the paladins mounted their armored-horses and Lord Dupre, the commander of the paladin order had instructed them to return home to the walled-city of Trinsic. The first-lieutenant, now in-charge, bowed his head and placed his closed-fist over his heart, in the direction of his captain. These men were to provide additional security for the city of Trinsic, so they were needed back home.

there had been reports of a fel-orc uprising, that had been growing in strength over the last few months, so Dupre promised the Mayor of Trinsic that he would only be gone for a day or two, as he helped Mariah on her expedition.

Dupre slammed his fist against his breast-plate and held it there, with his hand over his heart, then said, "safe travels brother".

As the Lord turned, he looked upon Valkyries again and stared at her for several moments. For during the ceremony to honor Wags the Destroyer, I had noticed he looked at her quite often and now Mariah had noticed this with me. When the Paladin commander realized we were watching him, he seemed to change his composure and walked towards the front door of the house, then asked, "shall we discuss the current matters Archmage?", as he marshalled past me.

I looked to Mariah who returned a look and added, "well, she is very pretty", as she walked past me to go inside of the PAWS Soulforge too.

"You over slept Archmage", Zara said, then elbowed me in my leg, as she followed Mariah into the house, with a huge smile on her face. I slightly nodded, with a half-frown, then turned and followed everyone inside of the house.

I was eager to discuss what Mariah had found, the nature of the green crystal with Kumara and having the champions of virtue speak to the memories inside, to see if they could uncover anything new. Kumara was near Valkyries, instructing her to do something for him and she was paying close attention to his every word. As I walked over, Kumara stopped talking with Valkyries and greeted me. We discussed the book, "*Rabbit & the Hound*", written from a very unique perspective of that of Saint

Valentine, but all that he would tell me was that it was required, when I asked about the green crystal he received in Covetous.

Mariah then interjected, to pull the attention away from my conversation with Kumara and she thought that this would be a good time to have all the champions of virtue speak to their respective memories, so they did. The first to go was Zara, who spoke the word, "Vilizs", which the memory on the balcony responded with the words, "Mur Kal Ort".

It sounded archaic in nature, as I looked to Mariah. Everyone in the room was watching Mariah at that point and she returned to us that "it means speak group compassion, or the group must speak compassion, or perhaps the group must cast compassion, but definitely a group. The words are to either speak or cast something that is of the nature of compassion".

"Well done", said Kumara. Right-right, that was a very difficult translation Mariah, I surely did not get all that from the words myself, I noted to her.

Lord Dupre nodded and said that he would go next. He spoke the words, "Infama" near the memory of the paladin and the memory returned to him the words, "Lion of Lemuria". "What does that mean?", the Lord asked the rest of us. We all looked around the room to each other, with no real understanding of what that could actually mean and then, we looked to Kumara. "Further work seems to be required here", Kumara spoke.

Mariah then traveled near the mage, the memory of honesty and spoke her word, that of "Fallax" and the memory returned to her the word "Atlantean". We all looked around to each other again and again, we had no real understanding of what that could actually mean. We then looked to Kumara, who said:

"Let's try Lolo, shall we?"

Lolo, nodded to the group and repeated the same word that Zara had just said to the memory of the bard. The memory returned to him the phrase, "Helmsmen Raise Your Anchor!". "That's it!", blurted out Mariah, "Empath Abbey", she said.

I looked to Mariah in a very confused manner, as she had all of our attention yet again. "When I was doing my research for you Archmage, I wrote to you that I remember seeing that phrase before, as those words, just spoken, are the title to episode 7 of *"ImaNewbie Does Britannia"*.

Ah yes, I remember reading that, I returned to her.

"Well, that is where I had seen the words before, in a small room inside of the Empath Abbey, above a mural on the wall. Lord Dupre told me as well, on our expedition to the dungeon of Wrong, that he was instructed to travel to the Abbey by Venus and when he said the words to me, I knew this was important somehow. It has only just come together for me right-now, as I hear these words again", she said with excitement.

"Well done again", said Kumara, "what of your discovery", he asked. "Yes of course, the Blanket of Darkness", replied Mariah and then she turned to the bar counter and picked up the blanket, that looked to resemble the nature of that of the portal to the Eternal Void, in the middle of the room. I walked over to take a look at that relic and then I got an idea.

Mariah, since your words to me in the *“Research Codex”* discussed that truth starts with honesty and that led you to find this blanket, what if you try holding the blanket in your hands and speak your words of power. Mariah looked down at the blanket, then asked of herself, “could it be that simple?”.

She closed her eyes and spoke her words of power, that of “Fallex”, while holding in both hands the Blanket of Darkness

Upon saying the words, the dark hold that was over this item vanished and a normalized color returned to the artifact. Mariah quickly unraveled the item, as that of a child on Christmas morning, patiently waiting for the moment they could start the unwrapping process and then given permission to proceed.

Mariah was to find a manuscript written in a language that no one, not even Kumara seemed to know. Of what this thing was, was unclear, but it was clear that she was to find that artifact and it somehow was part of the quest to find Kumara’s brother, Ladon.

“It seems that your destiny Mariah the champion of the Virtue of Honesty is bound with that of Lord Dupre the champion of the Virtue of Honor, for a journey to the Empath Abbey”, proclaimed Kumara. Perhaps they might have an idea about this manuscript I added to the conversation.

As Mariah and the paladin commander prepared to leave, I went through the section of the *“Research Codex”*, with Zara and Lolo. We went up-stairs and operated the globe of Sosaria, which is a magical artifact of great power that acts as an arcane version of a cartographer. As far as I knew that house had always had that item, but we have yet to use it until this point. We located the island in question and Zara’s father was insistent that he travel with his daughter on this portion of her quest too.

Mariah had suggested that the dungeon of Doom or the Dungeon of Destard in her *“Research Codex”* would be good places to inspect next, but since Zara’s house was near Destard, the rest of us decided to go there and uncover what we could first, as we would then return Zara’s mother back to her home, along the way.

So, Kumara, Zara’s mother, Wags the Destroyer and myself prepared to leave for the Dungeon of Destard. While Lolo the ranger-scout and Zara would travel for a small island north of the Wind mountains. Lord Dupre and Mariah would then depart for the Empath Abbey.

We had formed another fellowship, as I had thought back to the last time that had happened, as that assembly produced no useable results. As we set out on our journey for this quest to find Ladon, we had many more details and a much better focus at our disposal. Surely our fellowship would produce some exciting possibilities, as I had no doubt that they would.

Valkyries stayed behind to work on whatever task that Kumara had asked her to do, as well as operate the Dragon Soulforge. The paladin commander gazed upon her often and even when he left with Mariah, he turned to peer upon her, of which Valkyrie was surely aware of his interest by that point.

I would need to be address his intentions, I thought, for I would need to speak with the Lord commander himself, as Valkyries is not a human, but a kind of Angel. She is a servant of Kumara, not a girl to be swoon or advanced upon and her job is to protect the house, the portal to the Eternal Void and of course, operate the Dragon Soulforge. If she did not do those things, then Lemuria could not receive the souls of the newly departed, ushered to her, for safe keeping at her very own Dragon Soulforge.

Surely Lord Dupre did not know this.

-Archmage Guildmaster

The Dungeon of Doom was a rather easy task to locate and travel to, as it was nearby the Necromancer city of Umbra in the lands of Malas. This town was now part of the portal system of safe travel throughout our realm and it took almost no-time to arrive at this place. I thought about the priests who first ventured here in the book that Sister Anne the Keeper of the Flame had given to Lord Dupre and wondered how difficult it must have been for them to discover these whereabouts. In less time than an hour we were at the entrance of this dungeon, but as I think about those two brothers, it must have taken them weeks of travel and many hardships to make the same trip as Lord Dupre and myself had just made.

I was still unsure of what to think about everything that had transpired at the Empath Abbey, although I was very curious to learn what I could about Atlantis. In the back of my mind, during our trip, its location I thought about often. Somewhere, in some unknown part of the world, hidden from the view of others, was the Kingdom of Atlantis, waiting to be discovered.

I had dismissed the notion that the city had been reduced to nothing, for remains or clues of its ruin would have made themselves known to others, over the years. The fact that there was nothing, the fact that even these symbols of Atlantis were so hidden away, suggested it still exist, in some fashion. This would be of great importance to me, to uncover that place, once we had finished our quest.

As my mind raced with the possibilities and potential of what lay unknown, I thought about the mark on the bracelet that Sister Anne had shown me. For that must have been the bracelet that the Emperor of Atlantis, David had made for his child, so long ago. The artifact that the sister wore must have been how she was able to hear the conversation, between Brother Frun and I. Did the monk have a bracelet too? was there some mysterious illusion spell or arcane spell, that I was unfamiliar with, employed? For these questions also piqued my interest.

Two things were crystal clear to me upon leaving the Empath Abbey, the first being that our next leg of the quest, would be to the dungeon of Doom. The second being that the ancient manuscript I recovered, must be related to Atlantis somehow, for it was left for me to find and I too, seem to be tied to both the ancient text and this lost city.

I assume I was to be a descendent of those people, because of the memory at the PAWS Soulforge that spoke the words, "Atlantean" to me. Lord Dupre was now this White Lion of some ancient prophecy, that he must now be burdened with. That idea, would take some getting used to, for all that has been revealed thus far, seemed so foreign to me.

One thing about his new identity that I thought about, was that he too was a descendent of Atlantis and in that way, he has been made a brother to me. I wondered if he felt that way about me, but as usual,

Lord Dupre did not speak often and I felt, perhaps, that those thoughts would be better left unsaid, at least for a while.

As with my nature, I find myself very occupied with a thing, so much so, that it takes me away from all other things that may need my care and I would need to stay focused on the task at hand, as we entered the dungeon of Doom.

I have been to Doom several times and so has Lord Dupre and as such, we knew of Chyloth, the being referred to as the Helmsmen of the Deep, in the book, *"The Great War"*. We also both had a very clear idea of what the Skull of the Innate Will may actually be.

When our realm discovered Malas and the dungeon Doom many years ago, many new secrets were revealed and made known about that place. We were prepared to enact the ritual to summon the Bone Daemon, which was discovered within the first year that this dungeon was found, as a means to receive a golden skull, that must be returned to Chyloth for further exploration deeper into its bowels. As such, that skull would be our focus, but as we entered the dungeon, we found Chyloth waiting for us to our surprise.

This part man, part spirit, part something else was surely an enigma, for even the details about him seemed to change and hide themselves from even our own eyes, as we looked upon him. It was a strange thing to find him waiting for the two of us, as if it was something of fate being prescribed and my thoughts immediately raced around this idea. As they did, I thought of Lord Dupre.

He too, so-often and so casually seemed to wade through destiny as fate unfolded around him and I felt honored to be with him on this journey.

Chyloth spoke up, "what art thy intentions, Lord Dupre?". The lord looked to me, as I did so of him and Dupre returned, "The Skull of the Innate Will".

"For what purpose wouldst thou has't for such a thing", Chyloth asked. "I make claim of ownership for this artifact, as told to me by the promise of Lemuria", the lord quickly responded.

"The Lion of Lemuria, is this thy claimeth then?", Chyloth fired back. "Yes", said the lord.

I was amazed by that conversation, as if they had practiced it together somehow, and returned to each other their lines, in just the way it was supposed to be said. Lord Dupre showed little doubt or hesitation as he spoke and I patiently waited for the conclusion.

"We shalt seeth Lord Dupre", Chyloth spoke as he produced, from some unknown place, a golden skull in his hands.

He reached out and offered the artifact to Dupre and the paladin commander took this thing without delay. The lord paladin commander turned the skull around with both hands, for it was very heavy and he peered into its black soulless eyes, that looked as if nothing exited in them at all.

Something started to change with our environment around us, for light was unraveling the dark corners and dark spaces where we stood, as the entire chamber of this grand entrance, could be seen. Lord Dupre was coming under a type of possession, as some kind of power was coursing through him from this very skull.

Immediately from the walls, spiritual beings emerged and raced to our location, which caught me off guard. The first few hit Lord Dupre and each time they did, he began to glow, with a dull-white aura around himself. I quickly drew-up my arms and rotated my hands and body as with the mastery of my arcane arts, to call fire from the very air, so as to concentrate those flames to the palm of my hands. I would protect Lord Dupre, by sending destructive fires at the encroaching army of spirits, who laid siege upon the defenseless paladin commander.

I had built up a powerful area of attack spell and was ready to unleash this on the beset attackers, then Chyloth quickly drew a bright-blue shape in the air, with his left hand, that sparkled an intense blue color as he scribed it. When he was finished, the flames in my hands had been doused, before I could unleash the powerful destruction magik. "Doth not beest alarm'd Mariah, for this is behoveful"

What? I replied to the guardian.

"For this is necessary", he returned.

I lowered my hands and watched helplessly while the spiritual bodies collide with Lord Dupre. Each spirit that did, increased the intensity of the glow around my friend. When the ritual was over the bright-glow around him had transferred into the artifact he held and a blinding white light erupted out of the mouth and eyes of the skull.

Suddenly nothing, as instantly there was a return to darkness. The room had also found its original atmosphere, to how it was before, but the skull was still a golden-color. The eyes were still empty, soulless and lifeless as it previously was.

Had we failed in some way? I wondered.

I looked over to Dupre to find that his armor had changed color itself, to a bright-white and brilliant-golden detail about it, then I noticed his sword. Everything was as usual, except the two rubies on either end of the guard, held in the mouth of those dragons, glowed with an intense-red light. I did not dare say any words and waited for Dupre or Chyloth to speak first.

For Lord Dupre does not speak often and that notion remained a reliable one, as he reached out the skull to me, beckoning me to take it from him. I hesitantly took the item from his hands, then began to examine it closely, when I did.

Lord Dupre produced the sword from his side, so as to look at the rubies, that glowed brightly and that caught my attention too, as I glanced with him. Something was alive inside of those gemstones, moving around and I guessed that perhaps, the spirits had found their way there.

Chyloth spoke up and said, "I nay longether protecteth yond which needeth protection, for the White Lion hast claim'd his prize".

"Thank you", said the lord paladin, as he put the weapon back into the scabbard on his belt.

I began to peer upon the skull again, to figure out what, if anything, had changed with it, when Chyloth spoke again.

“A word of warning lord Dupre, for Durendal is the mightest with the sword in this world and thee shalt seeketh her out to avenge thy father. Taketh most wondrous careth and maketh perfect strikes, for only sooth shalt defeat her”.

Sooth? I asked.

“Truth, Mariah”, replied the guardian.

How would we find this Durendal I asked, but received no reply?

Lord Dupre spoke up and said, “we must travel to New Heaven next Mariah, for this is the location of the second Helmsmen, for I have just witnessed this”. Why New Heaven of all places I insisted, as I was not accustomed to playing catch up to the unraveling of understandings and I was finding myself being slightly pushed back by all of this.

The island of Oculus is in-fact the island of Ocllo but Helios is no longer in Feluccia but in Trammel.

“Well done young lion, as Helios is waiting for the sunrise to the east”, interjected the Helmsmen.

But the sun rises in the west in Trammel, I said, then stopped myself mid-sentence. Helios needs to see the skull presented to him during a sunrise, I spoke. For I remember his statue on that island, with its hand held out, facing eastward and the inscription on it read the same as with Chyloth just said.

“Valorous work Mariah, for thee has't discover'd its purpose”, said the Helmsmen of the Deep.

Lore Dupre looked to me and smiled, as I reclaimed some semblance of my abilities that I have developed a reputation for.

I have to admit, that when Chyloth so easily disarmed my advances, that powerless feeling I did not like, but now I have recovered from such as my state and no longer felt pushed back with the contribution I had just made.

We bowed to the guardian and turned to leave when Chyloth grabbed Dupre's arm.

“Thou art a sir of honor lord Dupre and thee shall knoweth at which hour to striketh, for I shall take thee, thee shalt heareth”, he said.

Lord Dupre thanked him and turned to leave the dungeon of Doom.

“Rememb'r Lion, I shall take thee”, insisted Chyloth the helmsmen of the Deep.

We exited the dungeon and I went to reveal our steeds, that I had hid away with my magiks. I walked over to Dupre's mount and placed the skull in a pack, on the side of the armored horse. I turned around to find the lord and tried to question him about the events that just transpired, but he was clearly pre-occupied in thought.

“Valkyries”, he said to me, as I turned to set myself upon my horse, “for I have been thinking of her”, he added. I slightly smiled to the lord and blushed a bit, then responded by saying, that she is very pretty. The Lord paused, then said, “She is Mariah, but that isn't it”. “She is the girl of my dreams”, he continued.

Have you thought about approaching her about your feelings? I asked.

“You still don’t understand Mariah, she is the women of my visions, of which I have had many of. She is the girl I have never met before, but have seen often, who suffered greatly, with some great sacrifice, who now I have finally met”, he responded.

I remembered the conversations about this matter on the way to the dungeon of Wrong and I started to get a tingling sensation throughout my body.

“I think she might be this forerunner, as she might be the women in the mural we had seen at the Abbey”, the lord entrusted me with.

Why would she keep this from us? I asked.

“I don’t think she even knows, but she is unmistakably the women in my dreams, that I see often”, the lord declared. This is truly a profound thing Lord Dupre, as with everything we have thus far encountered. It is nearly too much to consider, but let us make our passage for New Heaven and that time spent traveling should give me an opportunity to think on the matter more, I said to Sir Dupre.

The paladin commander nodded, got on his horse and proceeded to leave the alcove that harbored the crypts, that lead to the dungeon of Doom. Dupre pulled up on the reigns of his horse, turned the animal back to me, as I sat upon Lady, the name of my great companion.

He walked his horse near mine and said, “I also have been thinking Mariah, that we might be that of brother and sister with these new revelations that have come to us, as we share this connection to Atlantis now”.

I smiled greatly with his words, then reached over and put my arms around Lord Dupre and kissed the side of his cheek. I would be honored to be your sister, for I have always been honored to be in your company, I said to the lord.

Lord Dupre smiled back and said, “Helios awaits then sister” and I returned back, then lead the way brother.

-Mariah the Champion of the Virtue of Honesty

End of part 3

The Golden Trio and the Quest for Ladon

Sandals of Time

Author: *Mathew D. Miles*

The Golden Trio & the Quest for Ladon part 3: *Part of the 3rd series entitled: “The Golden Trio”*

About the books: Each book within each series acts as a character in a much larger play. They will tell their own story from their own perspective written by a specific avatar in a specific way. All the books of

each series will develop themes and concepts unique to each series, while the 5 series of books in total will tell a much larger story. In addition, a repeating theme is on display in every way possible within all works. They are the following:

*To remember, is to find your way.

*This is the story of your realm and everyone has a part to play.

Book series: Sandals of Time

Series 1: *The PAWS Soulforge and the Quest for Ladon*

Series 2: *The Star of Zara and the Quest for Ladon*

Series 3: *The Golden Trio and the Quest for Ladon*

Series 4: *Toccata and Feud and the Quest for Ladon*

Series Finale: *Succubus & Valkyries and the Quest for Ladon*

All Rights Reserved