



## AAC Publications

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### **Long Leader Fall**

New Hampshire, North Conway, Cathedral Ledge

**On July 31, Stephanie Angione was leading the second pitch of Still in Saigon, a popular 5.8 at Cathedral Ledge, when she fell at the crux, sailed past her gear, and broke her foot upon impacting the rock.** The crux is protected by a good horizontal cam placement and, a body length higher, a bolt. Her belayer lowered her all the way to the ground, and two climbers who were nearby carried Angione back to the road.

### **ANALYSIS**

Lower-angle climbs often have worse injury potential than steeper, more difficult ones; an abundance of ledges contributes to this hazard. That said, the crux of Still in Saigon is reasonably well protected, and a fall normally should not result in injury. The length of this fall suggests the climber either had pulled up a lot of slack to clip the bolt or the belayer had too much slack in the system. (The rescuers who responded believed the latter was the case.) Either way, this is an opportunity to remind readers that the practice of belaying with some slack in the rope in hopes of offering a “soft catch,” usually learned in sport climbing settings, is inappropriate on many lower-angle climbs, where protecting against a fall onto ledges or other features is the top priority. (Source Michael Wejchert, Mountain Rescue Service.)

## Images

## Article Details

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