

Session 47: Vengeance for Tark's Woe

Date: Apr 12th, 2026

Summary

The party regrouped in Emberwood Village, where they received a modest reward for the death of a minor noble named von Graf, whose body they had previously sent off with their contact Armin. More pressing matters were brought to their attention by River and Eldrick Runeweaver of the Amethyst Academy, who had been piecing together a troubling and fascinating picture of a disgraced former mage named Friedrich von Lichten. Once a celebrated expert in transmutation and the effects of magic on the physical form, von Lichten had been expelled from the Academy after being discovered with a lab full of caged dregs and having transformed fellow Academy members into monstrous experiments. He had since vanished into the ruins of Drakenheim, and both the Academy and the Silver Order had standing bounties on his head. What made him suddenly invaluable, however, was the growing evidence that he had somehow mastered the ability to cure not only delirium contamination, but the mutations it caused — something no one else in the known world had managed to do. An Academy member named Osiric, previously rescued from the Black Ivory Inn, had tracked down a woman named Lydia Blackwell in Emberwood Village who claimed to have been personally cured by von Lichten, now whispered about in fearful folktales as the Pale Man. Osiric had sent word that he was close to finding him — and then gone silent. With the Queen's survival potentially hanging on von Lichten's knowledge, the Academy quietly shifted their orders from kill on sight to bring him in alive if at all possible.

While the political situation in Drakenheim continued to simmer — the Silver Order tightening their grip on the Cathedral of Saint Vitruvio, the Hooded Lanterns fracturing between those who despised the Silver Order's ruthless tactics and those defecting to join them — it was Tark who set the party's immediate course. He had a name burned into his memory: Buck Furius, the leader of the mercenary band that had slaughtered his tribe. The trail led to a place called the Spokesmithy, also known as Smithy on the Scar, an industrial site near the massive crater at the heart of Drakenheim. The Scar itself was a breathtaking and terrible sight — a three-hundred-foot ravine of black glass and glittering obsidian carved by a delirium-laced boulder hurled from the initial impact, now one of the richest delirium veins outside the city center. The Spokesmithy had been claimed and heavily fortified by the Iron Helm dwarves, its perimeter bristling with spike poles, barricades, and three enormous dwarven cannons, surrounded by a field of slain ratlings and

mutated dregs.

The party's approach was met with a booming warning from the fortifications, but Yazzy was undeterred. Donning her magical mask and calling upon her gift for languages, she launched into a thunderous dwarven song — a rousing, Metallica-flavored ballad praising the bravery, strength, and handsomeness of dwarves, with a verse or two about slaughtering elves for good measure. The effect was immediate. A female dwarf's voice bellowed back from behind the walls that her panties were thoroughly moistened and demanded to know what they wanted. This was Gertrude Ironhelm, a stern and formidable warrior with dark brown hair in three braided ponytails, long sideburns, and a pair of golden axes at her hips. Alongside her was Reginald Ironhelm, a monocle-wearing dwarf merchant in a gold-buttoned trench coat stuffed with mechanical bits, who made clear he only spoke the language of gold. After Yazzy hinted at information about the Silver Order and the party jingled their coin purses convincingly, the gate was opened and they were allowed inside.

Within the compound, the party met the rest of the Ironhelm leadership: Mordecai, a skulky figure in a black cloak bristling with daggers and sporting a black goatee that trailed all the way to his belt buckle; and Eloise, a kind-faced dwarven priestess in gray robes and a breastplate adorned with mechanical trinkets and a belt full of hammers. Reginald proudly displayed crates upon crates of delirium, happy to sell at a steep discount compared to town prices. It was then that Tark caught it — a faint but unmistakable scent of bugbear fur drifting on the air. His eyes tracked upward to the crenellated rooftop of the building, where a massive, non-dwarf figure loomed over the compound. When Tark asked Reginald who that was, the answer came simply: Buck Furius, their last remaining hired muscle. Tark told the dwarves he would repay them for any damages, and then he was airborne, flying straight up to the roof with murder in his eyes.

What followed was a chaotic rooftop brawl that threatened to drag the entire Iron Helm clan into the fray. Tark tore into Buck Furius with righteous fury, naming each fallen member of his tribe with every swing of his blade. Syndle leaped to the roof using the power of his mentor's axe and entered a wild magic rage, causing an eruption of magical vines and flowers to bloom across the entire rooftop, tangling the footing of anyone who stood against them. Gertrude herself made a flying leap from a wagon below and joined the fight, delivering a punishing shield bash that sent Syndle sprawling, though a burst of wild lightning from his chest left her temporarily blinded. Oiroa moved quickly to bolster Tark with a blessing of heroism and then unleashed a powerful slowing enchantment on the dwarves below, leaving nearly all of them sluggish and unable to react — all except Gertrude, who shook it off. Buck Furius raged in kind, landing a devastating blow on Tark with his greataxe, but Xakarium answered by hastening Tark with supernatural speed. Meanwhile, Yazzy performed an improvised song in Dwarvish about Tark's tragic past — the slaughter of his tribe, the years of grief, the long road to this moment — and the effect on the Iron Helms was profound. Dwarves who had been readying weapons were pulling sleeves across their eyes. Gertrude and Mordecai both stopped cold on the rooftop. Eloise spread her arms wide, urging everyone to hold. Syndle, rising from the ground, turned to Gertrude and told her that his mentor, Bondor Brood Grind — the Flying Axe — had always spoken very highly of her. Gertrude stared at the axe in Syndle's hand, recognition crossing her face, and she stepped back. Tark lit his sword Ignatius with radiant energy and drove it deep into Buck Furius, letting the blade burn through him until the man was dead. The bugbear pelt cloak Buck Furius had worn — a trophy from the very

people he had helped destroy — was reclaimed by Tark for a proper burial.

In the aftermath, the Iron Helms offered the party a feast, much ale, and a campfire around which Yazzy's song of Tark's woe was sung again, with tears shed freely. Gertrude acknowledged that Buck Furius had it coming and that she had always suspected he was a bastard. The party then turned to business, and what Eloise revealed changed everything. The Iron Helms had been surviving in the haze by using special protective potions — delivered every few days by a mysterious figure who arrived in a slick lacquered black coach pulled by haze husks. They called him the Pale Man. He was due to make his next delivery in just two days, and he was paid in delirium. The party quickly formed a plan: purchase as much delirium from the Iron Helms as they could afford, resell it to the Amethyst Academy for a handsome profit, and bring River back to the Spokesmithy before the Pale Man's next visit — to finally come face to face with Friedrich von Lichten. In the meantime, they agreed to stay the night and help defend the compound from the creatures that crept in after dark, drawn by the glittering delirium veins of the Scar.

Memorable Moments

"Well, now that you've gotten my panties moist, what do you want?"
— Gertrude Ironhelm

Gertrude's booming response after Yazzy performed a magnificent dwarven song outside the Spokesmithy gates to gain entry

"Tark spots Buck Furius on the roof, announces he will repay the dwarves for any damages, and immediately flies up to begin his long-awaited vengeance for his slaughtered tribe."
—

The moment Tark's personal quest finally came to a head, mid-negotiation, catching everyone off guard

"Yazzy performs an improvised song in Dwarvish about Tark's tragic past, moving the Iron Helm dwarves to tears and causing them to stand down from the fight entirely."
—

A bard turning a chaotic mid-combat brawl into a moment of genuine emotional connection with the enemy faction

"Gertrude, I remember that axe and that grumpy old dwarf. You guys, little kobold prodigy."
— Gertrude Ironhelm

Gertrude recognizing Bondor Brood Grind's axe and Syndle mid-combat, pausing her assault in surprise and nostalgia

Scenes

A Briefing in Emberwood Village

The party regroups in Emberwood Village to discuss recent events and receive new directives from the Amethyst Academy.

- The party receives a letter regarding the death of a minor noble named von Graf, whose body they had previously sent to Armin, along with some modest rewards.
- River and Eldrick Runeweaver previously briefed Ned and Xakarium on Friedrich von Lichten, a brilliant but disgraced former academy mage expelled for conducting monstrous experiments on other academy members.
- The party learns that von Lichten, now believed to be the mysterious 'Pale Man', may possess the ability to cure both delirium contamination and mutations — something no one else has been able to do.
- The Amethyst Academy shifts their objective from killing von Lichten to potentially making a deal with him to cure the Queen, since his research may be the key to reversing her severe mutations.
- Osiric, an academy member previously rescued from the Black Ivory Inn, had been tracking von Lichten and found a woman named Lydia Blackwell who claimed to have been cured by the Pale Man, but Osiric has since gone missing.
- The party discusses the current political climate, noting the Silver Order's firm control of the Cathedral and the resulting tension with the Hooded Lanterns, some of whom are defecting to the Silver Order.
- Tark expresses a strong desire to hunt down Buck Furius, the leader of the mercenary band responsible for the destruction of his tribe, and the party decides to head to the Spokesmithy.

Arrival at the Spokesmithy

The party approaches the heavily fortified Spokesmithy, an industrial site near the Drakkenheim crater now occupied by the Iron Helm dwarves.

- The party travels through the Spokes toward the Spokesmithy, noting the massive 'Scar' ravine — a 300-foot long, 20-to-30-foot wide, 10-foot deep trench of black glass and obsidian filled with rich delirium veins.
- They observe the Spokesmithy's defenses, including recently constructed barricades, spike poles, and three massive dwarven cannons around the perimeter.
- A field of monstrous corpses, including rattlings and mutated dregs, surrounds the perimeter of the compound.
- A booming voice from the fortifications warns the party to stand down, threatening to shoot any monster on sight.
- Yazzy dons her magical mask and casts Tongues to sing a booming dwarven song in the style of Metallica, praising the bravery and strength of dwarves.
- Gertrude Ironhelm, a stern female dwarf with dark brown braided ponytails and golden axes, responds from atop a wagon, amused and intrigued.
- Reginald Ironhelm, a monocle-wearing dwarf merchant in a gold-buttoned trench coat, emerges and presses the party to get to the point of their business.
- The party is allowed into the camp after demonstrating they have gold to spend and hinting they have information about the Silver Order.

Inside the Iron Helm Camp

The party enters the Spokesmithy compound and meets the Iron Helm leadership, while Tark catches the scent of his quarry.

- Inside the camp, the party meets Mordecai Ironhelm, a skulky dwarf in a black cloak with several daggers and a long black goatee trailing to his belt buckle.
- They also meet Eloise Ironhelm, a dwarven priestess in gray robes and a breastplate adorned with mechanical trinkets and a belt of hammers and tools.
- Reginald shows the party crates of delirium and discusses selling it at roughly half the market rate in town.
- Tark catches the scent of bugbear fur on the air and spots a large, non-dwarf figure standing atop the building's crenellated roof.
- Reginald identifies the man on the roof as Buck Furius, described as the sole remaining hired muscle for the Iron Helms.
- Syndle recognizes the name Gertrude Ironhelm as a former gladiator his mentor Bondor Brood Grind had spoken highly of.

- Tark, recognizing Buck Furius as the man responsible for his family's death, immediately announces he will repay the dwarves for any damages and flies up to the roof to confront him.

The Rooftop Confrontation

Tark initiates a vengeful assault against Buck Furius on the roof of the Spokesmithy, leading to a chaotic skirmish involving the Iron Helm dwarves.

- Tark flies to the roof and attacks Buck Furius, declaring vengeance for his slain family, naming each fallen clan member with every swing.
- Oiroa casts Heroism on Tark to bolster his resolve and provide him with temporary vitality during the duel.
- Syndle leaps onto the roof using the power of his magical axe and enters a wild magic rage, causing magical vines and flowers to sprout across the entire top of the tower, creating difficult terrain for enemies.
- Ned readies himself to animate the nearby cannons should the situation with the dwarves escalate further.
- Mordecai Ironhelm climbs a ladder to join the fray on the roof, attacking Syndle with his daggers.
- Gertrude Ironhelm leaps from a wagon and delivers a flying double axe swing at Syndle, then successfully knocks him prone with a powerful shield bash.
- Syndle's wild magic triggers a bolt of lightning from his chest, striking Gertrude and blinding her.
- Buck Furius enters a rage and retaliates with a devastating critical hit against Tark with his greataxe.
- Oiroa casts Slow on the surrounding Iron Helm dwarves — including Gertrude, Mordecai, and several thugs and veterans — all of whom fail their saving throws except Gertrude.
- Reginald Ironhelm turns invisible and disappears from the battlefield.
- Tark lights up his sword Ignatius with radiant energy and delivers a series of powerful strikes against Buck Furius, bloodying him.
- Ned casts Silence on Ignatius.
- Yazzy performs a moving improvised song in Dwarvish about Tark's tragic past and quest for vengeance, causing several dwarves to weep and stand down.
- Syndle recovers from being prone, tells Gertrude that his mentor Bondor Brood Grind always spoke highly of her, then uses a draconic battle cry to give allies advantage before striking Buck Furius with his axe.
- Gertrude, moved by the mention of Bondor, pauses and acknowledges she knew the old dwarf.
- Xakarium casts Haste on Tark, granting him supernatural speed and additional attacks.

- Tark delivers the final killing blow to Buck Furius, sinking his blade deep into the roof and letting Ignatius burn with radiant energy.
- Tark reclaims the bugbear pelt cloak worn by Buck Furius for a proper burial ceremony.

Negotiations and Revelations

Following the battle, the Iron Helms celebrate with the party and reveal a crucial connection to the Pale Man, leading to a new plan.

- The Iron Helms invite the party to a feast and much ale, with several dwarves asking to hear Yazzy's song about Tark's woe again around the campfire.
- Gertrude and Mordecai acknowledge that Buck Furius had it coming and that he was quite the bastard.
- The party discusses a trade deal, offering to help escort a wagon of delirium out of the province to buyers above or adjacent to the Silver Order's reach.
- Eloise Ironhelm reveals that the dwarves stay protected from the haze using special potions that provide eight hours of protection from contamination.
- She reveals the potions are delivered by a mysterious figure known as the Pale Man, who arrives in a slick lacquered black coach pulled by haze husks and is paid in delirium.
- The party learns the Pale Man is due to make his next delivery in two days.
- The party forms a plan: buy as much delirium as possible from the Iron Helms at a discount, resell it to the Amethyst Academy for a profit, and bring River to the next meeting with the Pale Man to facilitate a deal or capture.
- The party agrees to stay the night and help defend the Spokesmithy from the monsters that attack after dark.

NPCs

River

A tiefling mage of the Amethyst Academy who has been hunting Friedrich von Lichten and has connected him to the mysterious Pale Man. She has a resident in Emberwood Village named Lydia Blackwell who claims to have been cured by him, and she is now convinced his research is key to curing the Queen.

Eldrick Runeweaver

A director of the Amethyst Academy who briefed Ned and Xakarium on Friedrich von Lichten. He believes von Lichten's research on contamination and mutation is the key to curing the Queen, and provided the party with a magic item to help find him.

Friedrich von Lichten

Also known as the Pale Man, he is a brilliant former academy mage who was expelled after being found with a lab full of caged dregs and having turned other academy members into monstrous experiments. He fled into the city and has bounties from both the Academy and the Silver Order. He is now rumored to be able to cure both delirium contamination and mutations, and delivers protective potions to the Iron Helm dwarves in a black coach pulled by haze husks.

Osiric

An academy member previously rescued from the Black Ivory Inn who was assigned to hunt down von Lichten. He found a woman named Lydia Blackwell who claimed to have been cured by the Pale Man, sent a message saying he was close to finding him, and then went missing.

Lydia Blackwell

A resident of Emberwood Village who claims to have been cured of contamination by the Pale Man. Her account helped Osiric and River connect von Lichten to the Pale Man legend.

Gertrude Ironhelm

A stern dwarven warrior and former gladiator with dark brown hair in three braided ponytails, long sideburns, and two golden axes. She commands the defenses at the Spokesmithy and is initially suspicious of the party. She is moved to stand down after hearing of Tark's tragedy and learning that Syndle was mentored by Bondor Brood Grind, whom she knew.

Reginald Ironhelm

A dwarf mage and merchant wearing a monocle and a gold-buttoned trench coat filled with mechanical bits, with a bandolier, a satchel of tools, a huge mustache, and mutton chops. He handles the business side of the Iron Helms' delirium operation and turned invisible when the fighting broke out.

Mordecai Ironhelm

A skulky dwarf garbed in a black cloak with several daggers along his coat, long black hair, a scar down the side of his face, and a black goatee trailing to his belt buckle. He climbed to the roof to join the fight against the party but was hindered by Oiroa's slowing magic.

Eloise Ironhelm

A dwarven priestess in gray robes with thick leather strappings and a breastplate, a mechanical trinket around her neck, and a belt of hammers and tools. She acts as a peacemaker during the conflict and reveals that the Iron Helms receive their anti-contamination potions from the Pale Man.

Buck Furius

A massive warrior who served as the last remaining hired muscle for the Iron Helm dwarves. He wore a cloak made from bugbear pelts and was identified by Tark as the leader of the mercenary band responsible for the destruction of his tribe. He fought with a greataxe in a barbarian rage before being killed by Tark on the roof of the Spokesmithy.

Bondor Brood Grind

Known as 'the Flying Axe', Syndle's dwarven mentor and father figure. He was known to Gertrude Ironhelm from their gladiatorial days, and his magical axe is now wielded by Syndle.

Locations

Emberwood Village

The party's current base of operations where they receive correspondence, recover from their exploits, and meet with faction representatives like River.

The Scar

A 300-foot long, 20-to-30-foot wide, 10-foot deep ravine created by a massive delirium boulder ejected from the initial crater impact. The melted earth has turned to black glass and glittering obsidian, making it one of the richest delirium veins outside the city center.

Spokesmithy

Also known as Smithy on the Scar, this former blacksmith shop in the industrial Spokes neighborhood sits near the crater and the Scar ravine. It has been heavily fortified by the Iron Helm dwarves with barricades, spike poles, and three massive dwarven cannons. The L-shaped building features a rooftop with crenellations and serves as the base for the Iron Helms' delirium mining operation. A field of monstrous corpses surrounds the perimeter.

Noble Estates

An area of nicer housing northeast of the city where the Pale Man is reportedly based, currently shrouded in haze.

Items

Mentor's Axe (the Flying Axe)

A powerful magical finesse axe once belonging to Syndle's mentor Bondor Brood Grind, reclaimed after Syndle defeated the stone giant champion in the fighting pits. The axe doubles the wielder's jumping distance and requires attunement. Syndle used it to leap onto the roof of the Spokesmithy during the confrontation with Buck Furius.

Ioun Stone of Protection

A magical stone that orbited Syndle's head, providing a bonus to his armor class. He continues to use it as one of his three attuned items alongside his new axe and shield.

Magical Mask

A mask used by Yazzy that magnifies her voice up to 300 feet, making it booming and resonant. It grants advantage on performance checks when addressing five or more people. Used during negotiations with the Iron Helm dwarves.

Ignatius

Tark's magical sword that can be lit with radiant energy. Used to deliver the final killing blow to Buck Furius, with Tark sinking the blade into the roof and letting the radiant energy burn through his enemy.

Bugbear Pelt

The cloak worn by Buck Furius, made from the remains of bugbears. Tark reclaimed it after the battle, intending to give it a proper burial ceremony.

Protective Potions

Potions supplied by the Pale Man that provide an eight-hour burst of protection from the effects of the haze and contamination. The Iron Helms receive regular deliveries of these potions and pay for them in delirium.

Delirium

Meteorite crystals mined from the Scar ravine by the Iron Helm dwarves. Sold at roughly half the market rate at the Spoksmithy, the party plans to purchase a large quantity to resell to the Amethyst Academy for a significant profit. Also used as currency by the Iron Helms to pay the Pale Man for his protective potions.

Necklace of Fireballs

A magical item mentioned by the party as a potential tool for rigging an explosive trap using delirium, with the idea of having the Silver Order confiscate a rigged piece of delirium and trigger a massive explosion.

Spells

Purge Contamination

Used on Yazzy upon returning to Emberwood Village to remove levels of magical contamination she had accumulated. The spell left her with levels of exhaustion, though after a couple of days of rest she recovered fully.

Tongues

Cast by Yazzy to enable her to sing and communicate fluently in Dwarvish during the negotiations with the Iron Helm clan at the Spoksmithy.

Heroism

Cast by Oiroa on Tark before the rooftop confrontation, providing him with a continuous influx of temporary hit points and bolstering his courage throughout the duel with Buck Furius.

Slow

Cast by Oiroa targeting six creatures — Gertrude, Mordecai, and four other Iron Helm dwarves. All but Gertrude failed their Wisdom saving throws, drastically reducing their speed, armor class, and ability to react, effectively preventing them from interfering in the rooftop duel.

Animate Objects

Ned readied this spell with the intention of bringing the dwarven cannons to life should the Iron Helm dwarves turn fully hostile. The spell was never triggered as the situation was de-escalated.

Invisibility

Employed by Reginald Ironhelm to disappear from the battlefield as soon as the confrontation on the roof turned violent.

Silence

Cast by Ned on Ignatius, Tark's sword, during the rooftop combat.

Haste

Cast by Xakarium on Tark, granting him supernatural speed and additional attacks that allowed him to deliver the killing blow to Buck Furius.

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