

# **Journal:**

## **Part 7,**

### **Dwarven Redoubt of Tix**

#### **Party Members**

Brillock Stoneweaver, Male Human Fighter/Wizard/Spellsworn  
Darius Darkhammer, Male Dwarven Fighter/Cleric of Moradin  
Dzindra (Dizzy) Daggersmith, Female Human Monk  
Paks, Female Half-Elven Paladin of Yondalla  
Merilath, Male Human Ranger/Ghostwalker

**with**

Stony, Earth Elemental, Familiar to Brillock Stoneweaver

#### **Prelude:**

They say that when deprived of sensory input, the brain will sometimes make its own projections to fill the void. Stumbling through the sheets of ice and snow, too frostbitten to feel and too snowblind to see, visions of your past swirl up from the drifts in effervescent images and fleeting sensations.

Months ago you set out... Paks the Elven Paladin servant of the halfling god Yondalla, Dzindra the human monk with dark elf ancestry, and Darius the dwarven warrior-priest of Moradin. A simple quest given to you by the mayor of Oakhurst to investigate the Sunless Citadel led you to the sword Shatterspike, which in turn held the key to recovering an ancient cube from the stony ruins of Durgeddin's redoubt. How simple things seemed before the fallen angel Cassiopeia disappeared, and it became obvious that forces far vaster than yourselves were intent on collecting the cube... at any cost.

At first you tried to gather information, returning to Dzindra's hometown of Beaufort. But soon you uncovered an ancient cult led by a mad illithid called the Speaker in Dreams, and it became clear that the problem of the cube would not be solved easily. By traveling further north into the great woods you learned of the ancient party of adventurers Saithnar the Warlord, Dydd the Wise, Durgeddin the Smith and Cassiopeia the Fallen Angel, who worked together to rid the world of the ancient dragon Ashardalon. You fought and vanquished the scheming tiefling wizard Dyson, and let the terrible Vrock called the Cuckoo escape.

Still your journey took you north, to the very frontier itself, and the little town of Twilight Hollow. Here you uncovered the Temple of Loviatar, Goddess of Pain, which led you to its

founder, the vile vampire Gulthias, who had in his possession the necromantically charged still-beating heart of Ashardalon. Gulthias was defeated by heroic effort, only to bring you to the attention of his master, the deadly Winter Mage. As the orcish army chased you through the snow-heavy mountains, wearing away your defenses, it looked like all was lost... until an equally powerful army of mysterious dwarves saved you from the edge of death once again.

You have met so many people on your travels... there are the dead companions... Shaidorol, Caleshorn, Artol. Those who have left on separate paths... Erky Timbers the gnome, Couradil the chicken farmer, and that damnable imp that had a thing for Paks... And you have been joined by new companions, as cloaked in secrets as is your quest: Brillock the dwarf-raised human Spellsworn and the Mysterious GhostWalker Ranger whose name remains unknown.

Finally, the details of your current goals re-emerge, as a suddenly thin blue sky shines warm sunlight on your faces and exposes a golden citadel, glittering in the mountain air up ahead. Paks knows that Diz is a descendant of Dydd, and important enough to Yondalla that Paks's own life has been tied to hers. The party is aware that the only way to safely conceal the cube of anchoring from the forces of the Winter Wizard is to bring it to the soul of Durgeddin himself, which would require a journey beyond the veil of death, a feat that could only be accomplished by great magic.

Darius recalls the ancient forge he discovered, which sits near his shrine in Twilight Hollow, and wonders if it will be of use in forging a weapon to defeat the foul Demonic Ogre King who leads the orcish forces that now pursue you... the very same who defeated Cassiopeia, and once destroyed Darius's childhood dwarven home. Diz thinks of her ancestry, and wonders what role the gods may have in store for her. And Paks is aware of another problem, evident in all the towns you have visited... that no new births are occurring in all the land, only stillbirths, regardless of which race you ask. The shadow walker, brooding and quiet, is thinking about the cube, and the way it has blocked his abilities. Brillock, having now proven himself a loyal and capable companion, just wonders what he may learn by following such poorly fated heroes wherever they might travel.

As you are led by the dwarves to their ancient home, you can feel great magics in the air, and the possibility that the dwarves may have a way to send you to the worlds beyond this one, is too important to ignore. The quest begins again...

## **What has come before:**

In the ruins of the Sunless Citadel, the party uncovered – and defeated – a plot by the Druid Belak to control the world through the Gulthias Tree. Belak was spreading the seeds of the Gulthias Tree. These seeds grew into creatures known as Twig Blights and, given enough time, into other Gulthias trees under the control of the original. The original Gulthias Tree had grown from the wooden stake that was used to slay a dragon-priest who had become a vampire. The party defeated Belak and burned the Gulthias tree ending the immediate threat to the community of Oakhurst. Little did the party realize what they had started.

In the ruins of the Citadel, the party also recovered a bone scroll case carved with the dwarven runes "*Khundrukar*", which translated as "*Glitterhame*." Inside they found an old crumbling scroll that read "*...the remaining few. By order of Durgeddin the Black, we have created a secret dwarven redoubt. None shall find us; however...*" This and a letter from Cassiopeia to the fallen Paladin Sir Bradford, wielder of the stolen blade *Shatterspike*, led the party to Blasingdell – a town being threatened by a very organized band of orcs.

In Blasingdell the party learned that *Durgeddin the Black* was a fantastic swordsmith and founder of *Glitterhame*. *Glitterhame* was overrun by orcs and its location became lost to time.

Darius's suspicion that *Shatterspike* was made by *Durgeddin* was confirmed and the party found an ancient map in a secret compartment in *Shatterspike's* pommel – a map they could not read.

The diviner Cassiopeia agreed to interpret the map in exchange for recovering an item - a "weightless" box – from *Glitterhame*. The party followed the map to *Glitterhame* and after defeating many foes – orcs, stirges, troglodytes, and the young black dragon Nightscale – the party recovered the "box". The party lost one of their own – the psychic warrior Shaidarol – and rescued two people – the elven rogue/illusionist Caleshorn and the chicken farmer Couradil – in their explorations. Upon returning to Blasingdell the party found the town deserted and Cassiopeia's house destroyed. In the rubble they found a recording sphere showing that an orc army under the command of a half-ogre / half-demon had attacked the town and captured the populace. The demon attacked Cassiopeia looking for the "box", but Cassiopeia managed to escape. At the end of the recording the demon said, "*Tell Gulthias, we should be ...*"

The party traveled to Brindinford, near Dzindra's hometown of Beaufort, to restock and recover. While there, the party was attacked by many nefarious creatures and eventually uncovered a plot by the mind flayer Ghaerleth Axom. During their final battle the mind flayer told them "... *if I had not been betrayed by Cassiopeia I would still be standing in the illithiad city*" and "*Cassiopeia summoned the great machine. She helped them open the way to the planes and then cut the gates to the other parts of Gheddon.*" Unfortunately, just before the party could defeat him, Ghaerleth sent Claeshorn to another plane.

While in Brindinford, Paks accepted a quest from Dentheria, Halfling priestess of Yondalla to investigate a great scar – a region of evil – to the north. Only two members of an earlier party sent to investigate ever returned – and they were fatally wounded. Before they died they told Dentheria that there were many types of undead there; they also mentioned a word or a name – *Gulthias*. In return for her assistance, Paks was offered membership *The Stargazing Society*.

Following the map provided by Dentheria, the party set out for the great scar. Halfway there the party stopped at the village of Ossington to re-supply for the next leg of their journey.

In Ossington, the party met the Warlord Saithner, an earth spirit, laid to rest the soul of a slain Paladin, and defeated the plans of the Wizard Dyson to raise an army of faux humans – animals transformed into humans. Unfortunately, Caleshorn was slain and the Wizard Dyson, Henwen and the Cuckoo – a Vrock - escaped. To prevent Dyson from using the standing stones to create another army, Darius destroyed them and reduced Dyson's tower to a pile of rubble. While Darius vented his frustrations, their new companion Brill summoned a familiar – a 2-foot tall earth elemental named Stoney. One of the runes from Saithner's tomb always appears somewhere on Stoney's body.

While still in Ossington, a halfling, Artol Underhill, arrived from Brindinford. He was sent by Dentheria with a letter for Paks which sent the party to the village of Twilight Hollow in the nearby Sunset Mountains. The party freed Twilight Hollow from the clutches of Andress, a Cleric of Loviatar, and again encountered – and this time defeated – the Wizard Dyson.

The party continued with Paks' quest to the great scar - which they now new to be Nightfang Spire, the home of the vampire Gulthias. The party invaded his lair and after many battles defeated Gulthias and his minions.

The party left Nightfang spire and fled before an armory of orcs under the command of the Winter Wizard. The party was rescued from the orcs by dwarves, dressed in fantastic armor with rivulets of gold and mechanical insignia. They approached from all sides at once, bearing crafted brass guns like the one Darius had held onto until now. They said nothing, but parted to allow a mighty general clad in silver and his wiry academic companion to approach the surrounded party. The General looked down upon the heroes of Twilight Hollow, and looked most carefully into Darius Darkhammer's unwavering eyes.

Finally he spoke, in a voice that commanded attention. "*I am Cord, War General of the Dwarven Redoubt of Tix. My companion is Endarion, of the Order of Mathematicians. We've*

*spent these last few centuries withdrawing from the world of men, so we could prepare to fight the legions of madness when the final summer has ended. And here you few have undone the work of our ancestors, and led the Horde directly to our doorstep. We should kill you outright for that alone."*

The wiry companion whispered something at that, and the General turned away in discussion to low to hear. Dwarven warriors watched the party's every move, their guns pointing down, but ready to be used at a moment's provocation. The general and the mathematician seemed to come to a resolution, and for the briefest moment the party could see Endarion's eyes, made of liquid dripping gold, focus their unearthly gaze upon them. And then the companion had backed away, and the General had turned to make a final pronouncement to the helplessly outmatched heroes.

"We should kill you, but we will not. I have a better use for those who could rid us of the pestilence of Nightfang Spire." And with that, he turned to Darius Darkhammer, and in a voice loud enough for all in the valley to hear he bellowed "Welcome back, oh Great and Mighty King of the Dwarves!" And with that he, and the hundred Dwarven warriors surrounding the party, dropped to their knees in praise of the returning king.

Thus ended the Winter Saga Part I of IV: The Old Road

Adventures:

- The Sunless Citadel
- The Forge of Fury
- The Speaker In Dreams
- The Standing Stones
- Tears for Twilight Hollow
- The Heart of Nightfang Spire

Now begins the Winter Saga Part II of IV: Beyond the Great Machine

## **Dwarven Redoubt of Tix, Day 1**

Twenty Seventh Game Session

The last thing each of you remember before the freezing cold and exhaustion got the better of you was ascending into a break from the constant white of snow... a brilliant dark blue sky greeting your weary eyes. Ahead you see a glittering fastness of gold and bronze, built into the side of one of the largest peaks in view. The fortress, which runs down half the mountain, is surrounded by a maze of circular and semi-circular excavations, housing countless clay and stone huts of superior construction, and protecting them all from the fiercely whistling mountain winds. As you watch a pair of adult gold dragons circle majestically around the tip of the peak, gracefully winging through flapping red and black banners each with the motif of a golden gear.

When you awake you find yourselves in a brightly lit bath chamber, 40' by 100' and curving in semicircular fashion. The entire east wall is a sheet of transparent ice, affording a spectacular view of stormy blizzard conditions on the surrounding mountains below. The ice does not seem to melt, despite the warmth generated by the steaming hot baths that occupy much of the center of the room. The back wall is draped with elaborate tapestries showing dwarven deities, and images of a dwarf you do not recognize on some kind of journey. The remainder of the chamber is well furnished with polar bear fur couches and silk pillows arranged around pits with magically heated stones.

As you regain your wits and realize your wounds have been expertly treated, you realize that Paks is missing. Your equipment is stacked on shelves near the north door, including the Anchoring Cube, which has been separated from the rest and sits on a small pedestal all of its own.

There is a knock at the door and a middle-aged dwarf with emerald jewels in his lapel enters the room. In a gruff but kind voice he informs you that the lady Paksennarion has suffered greater injury from the cold, due to her metal armor and her not being a dwarf (the speaker looks critical about both of these choices.) He reassures you that she is being treated, and should be hale in a couple of days. He indicates that new clothes have been left for each of you, and he asks that when you are ready to receive them, "important dwarves" would like an audience. He indicates a pull rope near the door that you can pull to indicate you are ready to receive your visitors... and with that, he steps out of the room and you hear the door lock with a complicated series of mechanical clicks.

After the party dresses and equips themselves, they pull the rope and a short time later General Cord and the Mathematician Endarion come to speak with them. The party learns that Tix was constructed to protect the surrounding lands; the prophecy says Tix will be needed when the Orc Hordes are led by the forces of Winter. They also learn that the last King Tix was Arton Wayfinder. Currently there is no king and the last regent of the city was Rope, before he was turned into a spawn by Gulthias.

The ruling body of Tix is the Metal Council and is made up of clan lords and faction heads. Cord is one of three generals of Tix, the other two being Twine and Knot, and Endarion is his chief strategist and a high ranking member of the Evenfire Ring, a society dedicated to mathematics, magic, and prophecy. Cord tells Darius that Tix has been an isolated kingdom for centuries as it has prepared for the prophecy.

General Cord asks Darius to perform a service for him and the dwarves of Tix. He tells Darius that the dwarf Hastex Wayfinder, a distant descendant of Arton Wayfinder, is a candidate to become the next King Regent. General Cord does not trust Hastex; Hastex is promoting increased trade with the outside and reducing the redoubt's military. Both are in direct conflict with the prophecy and the beliefs Tix was founded upon. Cord also tells Darius that Hastex trades with the Jerren – Halflings from the east. Hastex is backed by the Jerren Ideal, the Forge Group and the Priesthood of Gond as a candidate for the regency. The Jerren Ideal is a halfling organization dedicated to improved trade between Jerren and Tix. The Forge Group controls much of the economy of Tix, in particular the use of forges and the distribution of magic items. They also keep rosters – the lineage - of all the clans.

Cord gives Darius back his musket and tells him that it once belonged to King Arton Wayfinder. He also informs Darius of another prophecy: he who returns with the Musket of Arton Wayfinder will be King. Cord asks Darius to become a candidate for King Regent. There is no one else who can stand against Hastex.

He also informs Darius that an Orc army is camped at the border of Tix and that they have raised a fortress over night by magic.

Darius agrees to become Cord's candidate for King Regent. Cord informs him that he also has the backing of the War Field, the Evenfire Ring and the Wayfinder Cult. The War Field is the privatized military arm of Tix. He says that all of these groups believe in the old prophecies, maintaining a strong military, and maintaining their isolationist ways – all of the traditional values.

The regency is to begin in 3 days.

Endarion also speaks to the party about the Anchoring Cube and what they know. After the party tells him their story, he says that eight keys were made to shape all things, eight cubes, and that the Anchoring Cube is one of the eight Cubes of Gheddon. The cube, although it

appears to be smooth actually has a number of invisible switches. He also informs the party that Gheddon is a constructed world.

The party and Endarion discuss their quest and that they are searching for a way to contact the spirit of the dwarven smith Durgeddin. Endarion says contacting the planes is very difficult from Gheddon, but not impossible. He believes that it could be done. He will talk to the other members of the Evenfire Ring.

Endarion gives the party a tour of the Citadel showing them the War-keep, ramparts, Great Stair, baths and the Great Calendar. From the ramparts, Endarion points out major areas of the Tix: the Grand Market, the Arts District, the Tavern District, the theater, and the Jerren tent city. When he points out the halfling city he seems very disturbed. He mentions that many of the city's younger dwarves waste a great deal of time with the halfling; the halflings sell Scarlet Wine – the best wine in Tix.

Darius understands that Gond is the patron deity of Tix, but wants to know if there are any followers of Moradin in the city. Endarion tells him that most of Moradin's followers have joined the Wayfinder Cult. The Cult is an organization dedicated to traditional values involving the ancient prophecies of the Returned King. According to legend the Chosen of Arton Wayfinder would come to Tix in a time of great crisis, and would lead the dwarves into a great battle with the forces of darkness. Whether this battle would be won or if Tix would survive is not known. Politically, the Cult is militant and isolationist. They believe that the city should always be preparing for this future war, and having little to do with the outside world otherwise. The Cult is opposed by those who are interested in peaceful solutions (such as handing over the cube and your adventuring party to the orcs) and those involved in trade (who want to continue relations with the Jerren halflings, for instance.) They tend to feel that the prophecy is a bunch of religious hooey that has held back progress, both economic and political, for too long.

Endarion points out that the Forge Alliance has its headquarters in the Tavern district and that the city utilizes llamas in the salt trade; salt is a major export from Tix.

The party sets out from the citadel to tour the city and meet the populace. During the tour, the party meets several people and learn many things. They meet a female dwarf Belola, a weapons and armor shop owner. She tells the party that her favorite tavern is the Gold Tooth Swine; she says there is an exquisite dwarf bard performing there.

The party also locates the headquarters of most of the guilds. The Forge Group headquarters is a large metal building in the tavern district. The Evenfire Rings headquarters has a starry motif. There is a diplomatic building run by the Jerren halflings. And the War Field headquarters is a small military outpost within the city.

Darius and the party enter visit the Forge Group headquarters where they meet Grimstili; he is a radical Forge Group employee who thinks Tix should conquer the world. Darius and Brill learn they need to be members of the Forge Group to craft and sell Weapons and Armor within the city. They either need to be a member of a clan of the city who is already associated with the forge group or have their own forge. Darius checks with Grimstili (the Forge Group also maintains the lineage of all dwarves in Tix) to see if any distant relatives survived and made it to Tix. He doesn't expect the answer he gets. There is a Borus Darkhammer who owns and runs a warehouse within the city. Darius eagerly gets directions. Darius also learns that if they can move the party's forge from Twilight Hollow to Tix, the Forge Group will grant them membership. Grimstili suggests that the Evenfire Ring may be able to move the forge.

After leaving the Forge Group, Brill wants to visit the Evenfire Ring. Brill meets with a few members and asks to join the society. He is informed there is a test he must pass. Brill is directed to a location where the test takes place and he figures out the pattern to the red and blue jars of oil and finds the Evenfire Store. Brill is offered membership and he accepts. Merilath also solves the puzzle and locates the store.

In the Jerren tent city, Darius notices that many of the younger dwarves have a vacant glassy eyes expression. Darius suspects the dwarves are being drugged via the wine. He and the party manage to acquire a sample. The party also learns that only the halflings sell wondrous items.

After leaving the halflings, the party decides to visit the Gold Tooth Swine Inn before going to find Darius' relative. A Drow bard is giving a performance and is telling the tale of "The Fall of Chael-Rekshaar"; Chael-Rekshaar was a drow metropolis that was destroyed long ago. No one really knows what caused the city's destruction. After the performance Diz strikes up a conversation with the drow bard, Rizz T'thoqqua.

Darius and the party finally head to the warehouse of

Borus Darkhammer. Could he party reaches the warehouse strange collection of middle of the warehouse, were a huge golem – a warforged materials. One arm ends in a maul. Next to it stands a larger than any member of the supporting a thick insectoid



a slaughterstone eviscerator. Darius calls out, "*Borus Darkhammer, you have visitors.*" An older dwarf dressed in a padded jacket whose pockets are stuffed with wands and scrolls steps out from behind a workbench and asks, "*Who are you and what can I do for you?*" Darius steps forward and answers, "*I am Darius, Darius Darkhammer.*" Suddenly the two intact constructs begin to whirl and move to attack the party. Borus snarls, "*Dagnabit, defend yourselves. These constructs were programmed to defend me, the last of the Darkhammers. Your proclamation has overwhelmed their limited intelligence. They have gone rogue. You must destroy them. I will do what I can to help.*" Brill and Diz fight the insect and chase it outside where it begins to attack the populace of Tix. Inside Darius and Merilath take on the Warforged titan with Borus' help. After a short but vicious battle, they destroy the titan and move to help the others outside. Darius teleports into the path of the slaughterstone eviscerator (to defend the citizens) and is nearly slain. The others finish off the creature and Darius moves to help the wounded civilians. No one seems overly surprised by the incident. Borus remarks that constructs occasionally go rogue; it's something you come to expect.

After the fight, Darius and the party learn that Borus is a construct, a warforged remnant of the Darkhammer Clan; he is an artificer who specializes in construct repairs. Darius and Borus spend many hours discussing what has befallen each of them. Afterwards, Darius suggests that they try to move the party's forge to Borus' shop. This will allow all of them to use it and become members of the Forge Group. Borus is extremely excited by the prospect. He has been trying to join the Forge Group, but has been unable due to no clan allegiance and no magical forge. Borus and Darius teleport to Twilight Hollow to examine the forge. Borus exclaims, "*This is one of the great lost forges of dwarvenkind. It's a Forge of the Weaponsmith. Mighty weapons have been forged in its fires.*" (Game Note: +20 Competence Bonus to Forge



really be a distant relative? The and enters. Inside they see a automatons and constructs. In the some clanking can be heard, stands titan - made from composite massive axe and the other in a smaller construct (although still party) with six squat powerful legs body and four serrated blade arms,



**Weapons)** Borus and Darius teleport back to Tix and talk with the party. Brill will contact the Evenfire Ring in the morning and make arrangements to have the forged moved.

Borus becomes a close confidant to Darius and the party over the weeks ahead. He even helps them construct a number of enchanted items to aide in their quest.

## **Dwarven Redoubt of Tix, Day 2**

Twenty Seventh Game Session

Brill contacts the Evenfire Ring and they organize wagons, drivers, and mages to teleport everyone (4000 gp). The Ring teleports everyone to Twilight Hollow, where they cause a great deal of commotion. No one has seen this many dwarves in a long time. It takes a good portion of the day to disassemble the forge and load it into the wagons. Once it is loaded, the Ring teleports everyone back to Tix. The wagons are driven from the Evenfire teleportation site to Borus' warehouse where the forge is reassembled.

Once the Forge of the Weaponsmith is reassembled, the Forge Group grants Clan Darkhammer membership; Borus will oversee and care for the forge and will now be able to craft and sell weapons and armor (in addition to his constructs) if he wishes.

The party moves into spare chambers within the warehouse and begin laying plans for their quest.

## **Dwarven Redoubt of Tix, Day 3**

Twenty Seventh Game Session

The party spends most of the day relaxing and continuing to tour the city. Darius spends most of his time talking to the populace of Tix, trying to get to know them, their fears, and what they think the future holds for the city.

That night, General Cord, Endarion, Darius and the party attend a meeting of the Metal Council in the Grand Chamber. Hastex Wayfinder is there along with the halfling diplomat Lenacious Spugg, his chief strategist.

Hastex announces his intention to be King Regent.

The council asks if any other contenders, although it is clear they do not expect any.

With General Cord nearby, Darius steps forward and loudly proclaims, "*I Darius Darkhammer, Warrior Cleric of Moradin, Slayer of Gulthias, and Wielder of the Musket of Arton Wayfinder*", which he brandishes high in the air, "*seek to be King Regent, to Guide and Protect Tix through the difficult time ahead.*" The chamber erupts into heated discussions. The musket has been found. Is this the time of the prophecy? The council quiets the chamber and withdraws to discuss the situation. Hastex stands quietly through it all.

The council returns and announces that both candidates are qualified and their petitions for the position are worthy. They have decided that a contest will be held to select the new King Regent. Both candidates, along with his companions, will travel to the ruins of Chael-Rekshaar and recover a text from that city to prove a theorem. The first to return will be proclaimed King Regent of Tix. The contest will begin in just over 2 weeks. The candidates have that long to prepare for the expedition. Darius will proceed along the Glacier Path and Hastex will go by way of the Salt Mines.

After the council's announcement Darius and Cord are greeted and congratulated by many in the chamber. Later, Endarion approaches Darius and the party and tells them that the text they need to recover may solve their other dilemma also. When the text is used to prove the theorem, a great deal of power will be released and that power can be used to open a connection, a gate to Mechanus.

The ruins of Chael-Rekshaar await, some 90 miles beneath the surface of Gheddon!

## Dwarven Redoubt of Tix, Day 4 and After

Twenty Seventh Game Session

The news of the contest rapidly spreads through Tix as does the fact that Darius has recovered the Musket of Arton Wayfinder. Now that Darius has apparently arrived as the Chosen of legend (at least according to most sages' interpretation) the Wayfinder Cult rallies behind him, preparing for the great battle against the Orcish armada controlled by the Winter Mage.

The party begins preparations for the expedition to recover mathematical results from the fallen Drow city of Chael-Rekshaar. Darius is informed that he may select six specialists and four low-ranking dwarven warriors to accompany him in addition to his companions. As the party wanders around Tix, it becomes apparent that these are your choices for specialists:

- Diplomat: to smooth contact with other intelligent creatures.
- Mathematician: can identify the mathematical theorem at the heart of the quest.
- Musketeer: a warrior who specializes in the dwarven musket.
- Scout: can detect traps, natural dangers and ambushes. He can't deal with any of them... but will likely detect them.
- Defender: a warrior specializing in protecting other specialists and soldiers.
- Healer: trained in general healing and to deal with specific types of damage, like frostbite and vile.
- Climber: aid the party to traverse the glacier and underdark passages.
- Sherpa (with pack animal): to aide the party in carrying supplies.
- Diviner:
- Linguist: to aide the party in speaking with other intelligent creatures
- Gond Priest: offers mild healing, but improves morale among specialists and troops. They also have moderate fighting capability.
- Cartographer: a mapmaker.
- Food forager: to find edible food to supplement the party's supplies.
- Hedge mage: a minor wizard
- Camp Coordinator:
- Flanker: a warrior who specializes in flanking opponents. Uses full defense option and tumble to get to a foe's backside and threaten.
- Appraiser:
- Potion forager: concoct potions with materials scavenged during journey. May stray from party on occasion if more powerful potion reagents are available.
- Lore teller: knows the local legends.
- Identifier: identify the magical properties of discovered items, tomes, apparatus, etc. Can detect cursed items.
- Cook: can turn the party's supplies into a better meal and keep morale higher.
- Naturalist: can identify or make good guesses at any natural protections or weaknesses of encountered creatures. Knowledgeable about underground wildlife and beings.
- Miner: clear a cave-in in record speed, identify shaped rock versus naturally occurring passages, and detect certain underground dangers (and know what to do about them).

The party spends several days discussing what specialists they should take and who they have met, and trust, within the city. Diz also suggests that we attempt to convince the Drow Bard Rizz T'hoqqua to join in place of one specialist.

Dzindra says to the party, *"At this point, I think except for Paks we've all given Darius our input, so let's let him make the final decision. This is his quest, after all."* She pauses, then

adds, "I must confess that I am ambivalent about the coming journey. I am worried about the cube's safety, as well as the city's should the orcs attack while we are away. Moreover, I do not wish to see how drow behave in their own habitat. While there seem to be many refugees who have morals and are devoid of evil impulses, I know that's not the case for the vast majority. However, Darius, if you request my company I will gladly give it. I still owe you a life debt for the time you saved Paks and I from the mind flayer, not to mention the more recent heroics you showed in giving Gulthius the final blow which I could not deliver."

"Diz, I agree that this quest is mine and it holds special significance for me; I am sworn to do everything in my power to protect all dwarven enclaves. This quest will impact the future of Tix - perhaps even Tix's survival - and that of its citizens. DO NOT DOUBT that this mission is also crucial to our overall quest. Eandarion believes that recovery of this theorem will allow him to assist us in reaching the spirit of Durgeddin. And that will assist us in understanding the forces at work around us and what we need to do to safeguard the cube."

"As for the Drow, consider the possibility of confronting them in their own environment a test of your character and abilities. You will show the drow the error of their ways and the truth that drow - or, in your case their children - can survive and flourish in the world above and live in peace with their neighbors - BEFORE YOU KILL THEM"

"As for the life debt, I release you. You are a good companion and I would not consider holding such a debt over you. I would like you to travel with us, and believe your presence will help in the overall quest to protect the cube, but if you do not wish to travel the world below and see how your ancestors lived, I understand and accept that decision."

"If you and the others wish me to make the final decision on the specialists, I will do so."

Dzindra takes a deep sigh, then answers, "Somehow, deep down I think I've always known that my path would lead to the Underdark. You're right, Darius, it will be a supreme test of my abilities. I find it extremely distasteful that I should be forced to do more killing. I was foolish when our questing began, and hoped to adventure with minimal bloodshed, but that has not turned out to be the case. Still, many of our foes up to this point have been demonic, undead, or insane and putting them down was a mercy. But the drow ... they are an advanced civilization, capable of technological advances that even the dwarves cannot reach, yet have chosen the ways of evil, or so I am told. At this time, I don't understand them. So I will go, because that is where I must go, if ever I am to comfortably wear the label, 'heroine'."

Then she impulsively gives Darius a hug and says with a wink, "I won't let you down, King Darius."

Diz spends time cultivating her relationship with Rizz T'thoqqua. She listens to his performance of the Fall of Chael-Rekshaar. It is full of details about various drow houses and court intrigue, but the summarizing themes seem to be that Lolth was displeased with the city's failed attempts to exterminate the various beholders, illithid and "winged demons" that lived nearby. The city, which of course would never fall in battle, was destroyed instead by a massive earthquake which, among other things, redirected a lava flow through the center of town. The description of the earthquake is particularly good, and Rizz makes note that it felt almost identical to the system of quakes that were felt below the ground about a month ago.

Diz spends some time with Rizz, who proves to be a quick wit and difficult to pinpoint in personality and ability. At one point, behind closed doors, he does employ an inspirational tune that imbues Diz with an amusing boost in skill. She questions him about Chael-Rekshaar and the "winged demons." He says that "winged demon" is actually his own best guess translation from an old text that he once owned. Rizz also mentions that he doesn't think any drow remain in Chael-Rekshaar. The city has been dead for a long, long time. In fact, he came to this region partially because he knew of no drow activity anywhere nearby. Of course, he admits it wouldn't be the first time that he was catastrophically wrong about something. He then tells you a story

about the time he decided it would be fun to visit with a group of wild elves outside the town of Brindinford...

When Diz first broaches the topic of the quest, and casually wonders aloud what Rizz would make of coming along, his answer is quite simple. *"Good grief... go to the ruins of a drow city and risk the spider queen's wrath? Whatever would I want to do that for?! Good luck to you, come back safe and all that!"*

Based upon the party's recommendations, Darius finally decides they should locate a Mathematician, a Climber, a Miner, a Defender, an Identifier, and a Cartographer to accompany them. Darius asks General Cord and Eндarion for recommendations and after working at the forge all day, he goes out at night to interview candidates. When Darius meets the candidates he has spells on for *true seeing* and *detect evil/blessed sight* (just to be sure).

After many days, the party is certain they have found competent, non-evil dwarven specialists to accompany them:

- Cartographer: Boftryd Icesplitter. Brave but unkempt, this dwarven lady has icy blue eyes and dresses in rabbit fur with parchments sticking out of every pocket.
- Climber: Duroak Icesplitter. Short by dwarf standards, Duroak has a constant runny nose and a keen sense of weather. Diz has gotten to know him pretty well.
- Miner: Heldak Greatgirth. Heldak has a great singing voice when he can be persuaded to use it, although he also has a bad temper and lack of social grace.
- Mathematician: Theric Blesshall. The opposite of Heldak, Theric is extremely talkative and social. Theric has huge hands, but he uses his tiny abacus and protractor with precision nonetheless. He keeps long reams of knotted cords, with which he makes mathematical calculations.
- Identifier: Ovaim Kinbeard. Very polite and very superstitious. Ovaim is something of a loner, but he is young and looks up to the party with undisguised admiration.
- Defender: Thobere Icesplitter. A grizzled old war veteran wielding a dwarven urgosh, Thobere strikes a curious combination of seriousness and being at ease.
- Dwarven Warriors: Krunsh Icesplitter, "Mellon" Threepicks, Azloam Shelterstruck and Binidal Greatgirth.

Darius also asks Eндarion about a map and general directions to the old city and if any dwarf (or other creature) currently living in the city (or nearby) has ever been to the drow city. No currently living dwarf has been to the ruins. Eндarion provides a map to Chael-Rekshaar (an identical map was also provided to Hastex), but it is almost 200 years old, and recent seismological events may account for some changes in environs. The map should get you into the correct general region of underdark, however.

Merilath and Diz meet with various naturalists in town and ask about the 'winged demons.' The naturalists shrug their shoulders at your question, saying only that many things fitting the description of "winged demon" dwell in the Underdark, including winged demons.

The party sold all of the unclaimed magic items and divided up the monetary treasure they had recovered. Each character received 23084 gp. Individual party members also sold equipment in order to finance other purchases.

Darius is considering creating a new magic weapon - one of his own construction or enchantment. But, he is unsure about abandoning Durgeddin's Waraxe. It has served him well and he fears that particular weapon may be needed in the future. Darius stokes the forge and prays to Moradin, *"Moradin, All-Father, Master of the Forge, I seek your guidance. To protect the Dwarves of Tix and complete our quest to restore the protections Durgeddin and his companions placed upon the Cube, will I need this waraxe, Durgeddin's Waraxe, or will other*

weapons suffice" Darius receives the following response, "You are the only necessary weapon, Darkhammer. You have been well-forged."

The Party Sold:

- *Shatterspike*, Longsword of Durgeddin make, secret compartment in hilt (4315 gp)
- +1 *Lawful Short Sword* (9155 gp)
- +1 *Heavy Steel Shield* (585 gp)
- +1 *icy burst battleaxe* (9155 gp)
- +2 *keen kukri* (9154 gp)
- +1 *Ring of Protection* (1000 gp)
- *Brooch of Shielding*, 9 Charges (from Diz) (150 gp)
- *Dacrom's Conviction*, +1 *Flaming Mace* (from Diz) (4152 gp)
- +1 *Ring of Protection* (from Brill) (1000 gp)
- +1 *Heavy Steel Shield* (from Brill) (585 gp)
- +1 *Ring of Protection* (from Merilath) (1000 gp)
- Redbone's +3 *Leather Armor* (4580 gp)
- *Banded Mail of Luck* (9450 gp)
- *Lion's Shield* (4585 gp)
- *Goggle of Day* (2250 gp)
- *Gray Bag of Tricks* (from Merilath) (450 gp)
- The claws and teeth of the black dragon *Nightscale* (600 gp)

Darius sold:

- +1 *Composite Longbow*: 1200 gp
- +1 *Holy Light Mace*: 9153 gp
- +2 *Full Plate Armor*, *Immune to Acid Corrosion* (5325 gp)
- +2 *Heavy Shield of Light Fortification*, shield bears the image of a red dragon (4585 gp)
- +1 *Bracers of Armor* (500 gp)
- *Ring of Minor Electrical Resistance* (6000 gp)
- *Phylactery of Faithfulness* (500 gp)
- *Divine scroll, command* (12.5 gp)
- *Divine scroll, inflict light wounds* (12.5 gp)
- *Divine scroll, magic stone* (12.5 gp)
- *Masterwork Warhammer* (156 gp)
- *Dust of Disappearance*, 10 doses (17500 gp)
- +2 *Dwarven Waraxe* (4165 gp)

Diz sold:

- +1 *Nunchaku* (daze 1/day)
- +2 *kama*
- *Pale Piercer*, +3 *ghost bane dagger*
- *Ring of Mind Shielding*
- +1 *cloak of resistance*

Merilath sold:

- +1 *Small Shield* (500 gp)
- +1 *Bracers of Armor* (500 gp)

- *Ring of Force Shield (4250 gp)*

From party treasury, Darius purchases three *wands of cure light wounds* (one for Paks, Merilath and himself) for 2250 gp. After dividing up the treasure and purchasing the wands the party still has 2665 gp in the party treasury.

Darius purchased the following equipment and worked with Borus to enchant many of the items (72926 gp, 2368 XP):

- +2 *Aspected Dwarvencraft Everbright Mithral Full Plate Armor of Comfort and Daylight* with Fast-Donning Riding Straps
- +2 *Aspected Dwarvencraft Mithral Fortification (Light) Shield Gauntlet*
- +1 *Musket of Arton Wayfinder*
- *Aspected Helm of Teleportation*
- +1 *Adamantine Dwarvencraft Warhammer*
- +1 *Cold Iron Dwarvencraft Warhammer*
- +1 *Alchemical Silver Dwarvencraft Warhammer*
- +1 *Dwarvencraft Mithral Spiked Gauntlet of Rust.*
- *Heward's Handy Haversack*
- *Periapt of Wisdom +2*
- *Figurine of Wondrous Power, Jasper Spider*
- *Ring of Feather Falling*
- *Bag of Holding, Type 1*
- 2 Powder Horns (4lbs, 64 shots)
- 60 bullets
- *Flyer's Military Saddle*
- *Snowshoes*
- *Mithral Holy Symbol*

Darius also paid Borus for enchanting a *Belt of Giant Strength +4*, which he will pick up the next time he returns to Tix.

Diz purchased the following:

- +1 *Adamantine Construct & Elemental Bane Nunchaku*
- +1 *Silver Undead Bane Nunchaku*
- +1 *Holy Cold Iron Kama*
- +1 *Shuriken (x50)*
- +2 *Vest of Resistance*
- *Potion of Cure Moderate Wounds (x2)*
- *Potion of Cure Light Wounds (x2)*

Merilath purchased the following and Borus and Darius further enchanted some items:

- +2 *Cloak of Resistance*
- *Gauntlets of Ogre Power*
- *Quiver of Ehlonna*
- +2 *Ghost Touch Longsword*
- +2 *Short Sword*
- 50 +1 *arrows*
- +4 (Non-magical, Strength) *Composite longbow*

- *Boots of Elvenkind*
- *+2 Studded Shadow Leather Armor*

Darius approached Borus one night after working at the forge, "*Borus, during my travels I came across a pair of unusual - possibly unique - constructs. One of the constructs was modeled on a beholder and the eyestalks were all magic wands. The other was modeled on an umberhulk. Both were in good condition, but only the beholder seemed functional. Seeing your interest in and skill with constructs, I thought you might be interested in looking at them and possibly getting them both functional.*"

*"You have provided me and my companions a great deal of assistance since arriving in Tix and I am grateful to have found a kinsman again. My funds are now running low and I would like to equip myself better for the future. In exchange for the constructs, I was hoping you would agree to construct some additional items for me and my companions. Or that you might possibly repair the umberhulk and arrange for their sale for a percentage of the profits."*

*"If you are interested, we could teleport to the location of the constructs to examine them. If things still look good to you, Brill could then make arrangements with the Evenfire Ring to transport the constructs to your shop. What do you think?"*

Borus is excited by the prospect of examining the constructs Darius describes, but is cagey about purchasing them. *"By Fell's Infernal Frappe, what the hell were you thinking in not telling me about these constructs right away?! All this thinking's got you as cautious as some twerp of an elf, clan brother. By Moradin's Outhouse, let me examine the impractical crap and see if I can make something good and Dwarven out of 'em!"* Borus then begins to search for some piece of hardware, muttering and cursing to himself and throwing wrenches around. He emerges from beneath a workbench with a few more words and some spit. *"I won't buy the damn doo-dads from you, but I'll fix 'em up for free, even improve 'em if the blithering idiots who put 'em together built 'em to last. You can keep ownership... maybe they'll protect those scrawny miserable companions of yours when Pazuzu hits the fan."*

The party pays the Evenfire Ring, through Brill's contacts, for transporting the beholder construct (2500 gp) and Darius pays for transporting the Uumberhulk (2500 gp)

On his last night in Tix, Darius informs General Cord of what he has learned about the Scarlet Wine the halflings are selling; that it is a powerful, addictive drug and Darius suspects it is intended to weaken the dwarven people and the city's defense. General Cord nods his head and says he is aware of the problem, but has not had the political backing to address it, as much wealth has flowed into the city due to halfling trade. He hopes that your appointment to King will provide opportunity to "fix" a few things around Tix. With that, he wishes you good rest and preparation for tomorrow's no doubt arduous journey.

**Game Note: each 12th level party member is granted 1800 XP.**

**each 13th level party member is granted 1300 XP**

**Paks (due to her absence) is awarded half (900) XP for the session**

**Darius is awarded an additional 600 XP for identifying the wine as a drug**

**Merilath is awarded an additional 600 XP for finding the Evenfire store**