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ADVENTURE PATH[™]



WRATH OF THE
RIGHTEOUS

SWORD OF
VALOR

by Neil Spicer



Anevia Tirabade
Worldwound Border Scout

Anevia's skill at scouting will prove valuable to the heroes of Kenabres as they lead their army north—not only can she give the PCs advance warning of forces in their path, but she'll find opportunities for them to undermine the enemy's position in the ruined city of Drezen.



Aravashnial
Last Riftwarden of Kenabres

With his sight restored by either the heroes or the queen of Mendev, Aravashnial can join the army marching for Drezen, where his advice on tactics against spellcasting armies grants the Knights of Kenabres a significant advantage over their vile foes.

Horgus Gwerm
Foul-Tempered Kenabres Noble

Horgus Gwerm was never among Kenabres's most powerful nobles—that is, until the city was nearly destroyed. His resources have survived nearly intact, and he can provide the heroes' army with much-needed supplies to keep them fed during the long march to the ruins of Drezen.



Irabeth Tirabade
Leader of the Eagle Watch

Irabeth is eager to return to active duty, and sees the march to Drezen as an opportunity. Uniquely suited to command, she grants additional boons to the Knights of Kenabres if she's allowed to lead them—alternatively, she can fight by the heroes' sides in battle.



Queen Galfrey
Ruler of Mendev

Galfrey is the Queen of Mendev and leader of the crusade effort. She arrives in ruined Kenabres at this adventure's start to reward the heroes for their valor, but also to recruit them into the Fifth Crusade—and what she hopes will be the last war she and her people will have to fight.



Sosiel Vaenic
Priest of the Eternal Rose

Optimistic and passionate, Sosiel Vaenic is a priest of Shelyn—one of the last in Kenabres after the goddess's temple was destroyed. He provides a boost to morale and additional healing, but can also assist the heroes of Kenabres in numerous other ways as they march on Drezen.

Aron Kir
Crusader Tactician and Engineer

Aron has lead a rough life, but with the support of his lover Sosiel, he's made great strides forward. His knowledge of battlefield tactics aids the defense of the Knights of Kenabres, but if he succumbs to old addictions, he may well become a dangerous liability to the heroes.



Arueshalae
Risen Succubus of Desna


As this adventure begins, the succubus Arueshalae makes a miraculous escape from a prison under Citadel Drezen, leaving behind clues to her unique nature for the heroes to uncover. As the PCs take Drezen, Arueshalae flees south into the Wounded Lands to lie low for a time.



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ADVENTURE PATH  PART 2 OF 6

SWORD OF VALOR

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<i>Bestiary</i>	B1	<i>Mythic Adventures</i>	MA
<i>Bestiary 2</i>	B2	<i>NPC Codex</i>	NPC
<i>Bestiary 3</i>	B3	<i>Ultimate Campaign</i>	UCA
<i>Demons Revisited</i>	DR	<i>Ultimate Combat</i>	UC
<i>GameMastery Guide</i>	GMG	<i>Ultimate Equipment</i>	UE
<i>Lords of Chaos, Book of the Damned, Vol. 2</i>	BOTD2	<i>Ultimate Magic</i>	UM

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table of contents

Foreword	4
Sword of Valor by Neil Spicer	6
NPC Gallery by Neil Spicer	54
Wrath of the Righteous Treasures by Neil Spicer	62
Lost Relics of the Crusades by Ron Lundeen	64
Wages of Sin by Jason Nelson	70
Pathfinder's Journal: Sweet Ichor 2 of 6 by Robin D. Laws	76
Bestiary by James Jacobs, Jason Klimchok, Jason Nelson, and David Schwartz	82
Preview	92



The Road to Drezen

There's a lot going on in this adventure—mass combat, redemption, mythic monsters, mythic heroes, resource building, and more, but at its core, “Sword of Valor” is a classic “invade the dungeon and recover the treasure” plot. And while this adventure might look like it's got a pretty tightly scripted plot—with the PCs marching north, laying siege to Drezen, and then finally exploring the citadel and its dungeon—don't be afraid to go “off course” if the PCs do something unexpected. Even if they decide not to bring an army to Drezen, or worse, their army is defeated before the final battle—all is not lost. In the event that the PCs decide to invade the citadel without first defeating the army, feel free to add more low-level guards and soldiers to the citadel's defenses. Attacking Citadel Drezen while its army is still active should be more dangerous, but not automatically a death sentence. Stay flexible in how you allow the adventure's

events to unfold—the end goal should be the recovery of the *Sword of Valor* and the defeat of Staunton Vhane, but how the PCs accomplish this is in the end up to them.

Redemption

In “Sword of Valor,” the PCs will have ample opportunity to handle their enemies without violence. Not every foe in this adventure is a black-hearted dastard who was born to be bad. Many of them have fallen to their villainous ways or have been tempted or corrupted to serve as minions of the Worldwound, and if these foes can be captured alive, most of them can be redeemed. The adventure's text indicates whether a villain can be redeemed or is totally beyond redemption (the latter being rare). In “Sword of Valor,” the theme of redemption is still building from the first adventure, and won't come to a full head until the next adventure, where the PCs help a repentant succubus

Foreword

become chaotic good, but you should let the PCs know that summary execution of prisoners isn't always the only option for righteous heroes. You can use their NPC allies to suggest mercy, but when you do so, remember that nothing can sour players' attitudes toward redemption as much as the GM turning that supposedly redeemed NPC into a double-crossing traitor who stabs the party in the back. If you have plans to do something like this, you need to foreshadow the treachery and give the PCs an honest chance to forestall it and keep the NPC on the track to redemption. Put another way: if the PCs decide to redeem a captured villain and the villain starts down the path of redemption, only the failure of the PCs to keep the villain on that path should ever result in treachery, not arbitrary GM story fiat.

Non-Mythic Valor

In "Sword of Valor," the PCs are destined to be legends—be they legendary heroes or legendary victims. While the plot of this Adventure Path assumes these legendary acts are presented via the rules detailed in *Pathfinder RPG Mythic Adventures*, this doesn't necessarily have to be the case in your Wrath of the Righteous campaign.

If you want to run Wrath of the Righteous as a non-mythic game, you'll have some work cut out for you in the coming adventures, but it might not be as much work as you expect. Regardless of whether you use *Mythic Adventures*, Wrath of the Righteous is a high-powered campaign, and there are many ways you can adapt the adventure so that it works for a non-mythic group. Listed below are some tips on how to adjust your game so that you can run "Sword of Valor" for a non-mythic group, but you should also check out the messageboards at paizo.com, where I and plenty of other gamers will be around to offer advice.

Ad Hoc Experience: If you run a non-mythic group, you should strongly consider running the PCs on the fast XP track. Furthermore, each time the PCs would earn an even-numbered mythic tier, you should award them a story award in XP that advances them to the next experience level. You can spread out these story awards as you wish if you don't want to have giant chunks of XP hitting the party all at once. It might be easier to not award XP at all, and instead just inform the PCs when they level up, following the advancement track given for the adventure on page 6. If you do this, the PCs should gain a level upon defeating the mythic chimera, and should end the adventure at 10th level.

More Characters: Consider giving each PC Leadership as a bonus feat, so that each will have a cohort to lend support in battle. Keep in mind that more cohorts can quickly cause play to grow cumbersome, so if these cohorts are NPCs with supporting roles, such as healing or item crafting, they can stay out of combat and still help to bolster their leaders.

Alternate Ascension: At the end of the previous adventure, the PCs had their moment of ascension to mythic power

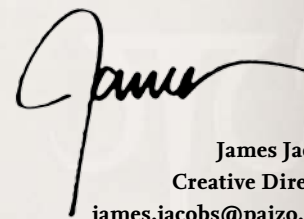
on the cover

Wayne Reynolds presents Staunton Vhane, the dwarven antipaladin and traitor crusader who now rules Drezen, along with the iconics taking on a pack of brimorak demons eager to claim bragging rights for stopping the heroes of the Fifth Crusade. Something tells me those brimoraks are deluding themselves.

when they absorbed the power of the *wardstones*. If you're not running a mythic game, you should still grant the PCs a boost in power at this point. The easiest way to do this is to tell the PCs that they can increase one of their ability scores by +4 and two by +2—these increases stack with all other increases. This ability score increase matches the increase a PC eventually obtains after gaining 10 mythic tiers—while getting all these increases at once might seem like an incredible boon, with the lack of other mythic powers, it's a pretty good replacement that still feels like a legendary award to the players while not relying upon mythic rules to model the boost in power.

Hero Points: Consider using the hero point mechanic from the *Pathfinder RPG Advanced Player's Guide* as well. This helps the players take control of their characters' fates and adjust the flow of the story in ways that allow them to accomplish normally impossible tasks. If you use hero points, each time you reach a point in the adventure where the PCs would normally gain a mythic tier, they should earn a number of hero points equal to the tier they would have gained. Of course, you can alter these hero point awards as you see fit.

Adjust Statistics: Finally, take some time to look ahead, and if you see a particularly high-CR encounter, adjust things downward to be something that you feel the PCs can tackle. You can still run mythic monsters against non-mythic players—just keep an eye on the creatures' CR, regardless of whether the creatures are mythic or not. If you absolutely don't want mythic rules in your game, you'll need to rebuild the monster or NPC to hit its target CR using the non-mythic rules—this takes a bit of work, but in the end, as long as the foe is a tough encounter, the way it's built doesn't matter, and the players will never notice the difference.



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WRATH OF THE RIGHTEOUS



SWORD OF VALOR

⌘ PART 1: CRUSADER'S MARCH

PAGE 7

The PCs are commanded to lead an army north into the Worldwound, retake the lost city of Drezen, and reclaim the magical *Sword of Valor*.

⌘ PART 2: SIEGE OF DREZEN

PAGE 23

After arriving in Drezen, the heroes lead their army against the demons and cultists arrayed in the city, ultimately laying siege to Citadel Drezen.

⌘ PART 3: INTO THE CITADEL

PAGE 32

With the rest of the city taken, the heroes must invade Citadel Drezen and its demon-forged dungeons to defeat its commander, Staunton Vhane, and reclaim one of the Crusade's greatest artifacts.

Advancement Track

"Sword of Valor" is designed for four characters and uses the medium XP track.

- L6** The PCs should begin the adventure at 6th level/1st tier.
- L7** The PCs should be 7th level soon after they start undertaking missions in Drezen.
- T2** The PCs should be 2nd tier when they defeat the mythical chimera of Drezen.
- L8** The PCs should be 8th level soon after they start exploring Citadel Drezen.
- L9** The PCs should be 9th level soon after they start exploring the dungeon.
- T3** The PCs should be 3rd tier at the adventure's end.

Sword of Valor

Adventure Background

During the height of the First Crusade, as the initial wave of demons was forced back into the heart of the Worldwound, the crusaders began to build fortresses in fallen Sarkoris to hold the defensive line. The greatest of these fortresses was built by a small army of dwarven crusaders—worshippers of Torag who drew upon the architectural styles of their ancient Sky Citadels to create Citadel Drezen, a squat, almost bunkerlike fortress situated atop a rugged bluff in the northeastern corner of the region. The citadel was completed in 4628 AR and played a key role in the successful end of the First Crusade. In the years after that crusade's end, the citadel drew more and more crusaders, and a town of stone buildings grew rapidly around the citadel's walls. For a time, Drezen served as the unofficial capital of the crusade, and it was in this fortress that many of the crusade's most beloved and sacred relics came to stay. The greatest of these was the *Sword of Valor*—a magical banner once carried into battle by Iomedae herself during the Shining Crusade. Under the aegis of the *Sword of Valor*, several crusading orders struck decisive blows against the demon armies, and its presence in Drezen was believed to make the Citadel's walls impregnable to demons.

Unfortunately, the *Sword of Valor* offered no such protection against traitors.

When a second and much larger invasion of demons surged forth from the Worldwound in 4636 AR, the crusaders rallied again to the fight. The *Sword of Valor* remained in Drezen's walls, to protect the citadel and the city that had formed around it, and its presence repelled several attacks over the course of the next 2 years. But in 4638 AR, an arrogant crusader named Staunton Vhane fell under the influence of what he believed to be a warrior-princess from Kyonin. In fact, this elven beauty was a disguised glabrezu named Jerribeth (a demon who now serves the Templars of the Ivory Labyrinth—see “Demon's Heresy”), who convinced Staunton that Drezen was adequately protected, and that the *Sword of Valor* needed to be carried into battle once again. Believing that the leaders of Drezen were cowards who hid behind the magical banner for their own personal safety, Staunton stole the *Sword of Valor* and brought it out of the city to Jerribeth, who had promised to bring it to the front lines. But when Staunton delivered it, she revealed her true form after accepting the gift, and made Staunton watch as the marilith Aponavicius led her army into the city and took it in a single ruinous assault. Thousands died that night in Drezen, and many more died in the weeks to come as they fled the fallen city into the inhospitable wilds. Staunton was the first and last of that night's victims, for as the battle ended, he was brought before Aponavicius herself and given a choice—death or servitude. Staunton chose the latter.

The loss of Drezen triggered the official start of the Second Crusade, but this time the demons were better

organized, more numerous, and more powerful. The crusaders did their best, but in the end, they were forced to abandon Drezen and its holdings as they raised the *wardstones* along the river banks bordering lost Sarkoris.

And so for the next 75 years, the city of Drezen remained under demonic control. Aponavicius was the nominal ruler of the place, but she spent much of her time elsewhere in the Worldwound or back in the Abyss itself, treating Drezen almost as an aristocrat might treat a summer vacation home. Unable to destroy the *Sword of Valor*, she instead placed it in a secure vault hidden within a new set of chambers she had constructed below the Citadel and promptly forgot about it. When “The Worldwound Incursion” began, Aponavicius did not take part in the attack on Kenabres—rather, she was busy gathering her resources for a protracted siege of Nerosyan itself. That siege began at some point near the end of the previous adventure, so that as “Sword of Valor” begins, not only has the City of Drezen been left in the command of lesser creatures, but the bulk of her armies have moved south to join the war efforts along the Worldwound's southern border. Today, in an ironic twist of fate, Drezen is ruled by the same man who delivered it into demonic hands 75 years ago—Staunton Vhane.

Retrieving the *Sword of Valor* and reclaiming the city of Drezen would be a major victory and a much-needed boost to morale, and as the PCs are about to learn, the time has never been better for a group of specialists to lead a small army north to do just that!

Part 1: Crusader's March

Kenabres took a devastating blow when the Storm King destroyed the *wardstone*. The attack that swiftly followed involved the opening of several rifts in the ground that swallowed up entire city blocks even as armies of demons, from relatively minor fiends like dretches and babaus on up to the hulking destroyers known as ulkreths, rose up to attack and destroy. Many of Kenabres's citizens died during the assault, but many more managed to escape the city, fleeing into the surrounding countryside while the demons remained distracted by the presence of buildings and stragglers within the city walls. Even after the demons retreated, leaving Kenabres a smoking ruin, the situation in the city remained grim. It isn't until the PCs and the city's largest surviving group of crusaders, the Eagle Watch, mount a coordinated attack on the remaining demonic defenders that things start to change for the better.

With the lure of a *wardstone* fragment ripe for corruption removed and the sudden final death-pulse of the border's *wardstones*, the demons have retreated for now. A few stragglers remain in the ruins, but they will soon be hunted down and exterminated. As “Sword of Valor” begins, a new ray of hope shines on the beleaguered city

WRATH OF THE RIGHTEOUS

with the arrival of Queen Galfrey and her armies, fresh from the defense of other cities along the south. Kenabres is as far north as Galfrey intends to lead her troops, for word is that the demons are focusing most of their attacks to the south, but before she leaves, she intends to meet with the heroes who played such a vital role in the city's defense—and who, if rumors are to be trusted, are the heritors of the *wardstones'* power.

The timing of when to begin “Sword of Valor” is left to you. When the adventure begins, the PCs should be 6th level and 1st tier—if the events of “The Worldwound IncurSION” have left the PCs a bit shy of 6th level, feel free to have them undertake a few missions for the Eagle Watch in rooting out some of the cultists and demons remaining in the city. If the PCs skipped encounter areas in the previous adventure, now's a great time to go back and pick them up.

Kenabres after the fall is a very different city—whereas before the attack it boasted a population of 12,330 souls, at the lowest point only 3,400 people remained within its walls. Even after those who fled the city return, Kenabres's total population rises to only 6,520—barely half its original number. The city feels broken and empty, yet as the PCs pass by, glimpses of hope shine in the eyes of her people. This adventure doesn't spend much time in Kenabres, and once the PCs leave for Drezon, the Wrath of the Righteous Adventure Path does not return to the city, but you can use the following modified city stat block for the new Kenabres, should the PCs have need of purchasing or selling gear or otherwise staying in town.

RUINS OF KENABRES

LG large ruined city

Corruption +2; **Crime** -3; **Economy** -3; **Law** +6; **Lore** +2; **Society** -3

Qualities insular, racially intolerant (tieflings), strategic location, tenacious, war-torn

Disadvantage devastated

Danger +20

DEMOGRAPHICS

Government overlord

Population 6,520 (6,061 humans, 312 halflings, 66 half-elves, 81 other)

Notable NPCs

Queen Galfrey (LG female human paladin 15)

Captain Irabeth Tirabade (LG female half-orc paladin 5)

Master Quednys Orlun (LG old male human wizard 6)

MARKETPLACE

Base Value 4,400 gp; **Purchase Limit** 10,000 gp; **Spellcasting** 4th

Minor Items +1 halberd, ring of minor fire resistance, ring of sustenance, scroll of raise dead, scroll of restoration;

Medium Items lesser rod of maximize metamagic, stone of good luck, wand of cure serious wounds (48 charges)

NOTES

Devastated The demonic attack on Kenabres has devastated the city—nearly half its population (including all of its powerful leaders) perished and many of its buildings, including two of its most iconic structures (the Cathedral of Saint Clydwell and the Kite) have been destroyed. (Economy -6, Society -4, increase Danger by +10, reduce base value and purchase limit by 60%, reduce Spellcasting by 3 levels, available magic items reduced in number to Village level.)

Government Kenabres is currently without leadership. For now, Queen Galfrey has assumed control of the city as a benevolent overlord—once she has it under control and has ensured there's a new lord to replace Hulrun, the city's government returns to Autocracy.

Tenacious Kenabres refuses to be beaten; despite its devastation, it continues to be a bastion of law and goodness. (Corruption -2; Crime -2.)

War-Torn Kenabres has been fighting against the Worldwound for over a century, and this protracted war has affected its economy. (Increase base value by 10%; decrease purchase limit by 20%.)

A VISIT WITH THE QUEEN

News of Queen Galfrey's arrival spreads quickly through the city as her armies arrive—thousands upon thousands of road-weary and battle-worn crusaders thankful for a place to rest, even if that place has been significantly damaged. The crusaders set about refortifying the city even as their leader seeks out those who played such a key role in its defense, and in the transformation, however temporarily, of the *wardstones* into a potent defense that drove the demons back into the Worldwound, if only for a short time.

By the time she seeks out the PCs, Queen Galfrey has heard the rumors that they are the ones who triggered this event, and that they've become imbued with the *wardstones'* power. The queen is eager to hear their story about how things developed in the Gray Garrison, and is both respectful and wary about the PCs. Present her as a weary commander who nonetheless maintains a heroic facade of hope and faith that, despite current events, this newest crusade will be the last, and that it will end with the forces of good triumphant. Galfrey would prefer to meet with the PCs in a place where they're comfortable—this adventure assumes this to be somewhere within Defender's Heart, but if the PCs have another place in mind, she readily agrees. After she hears their story, she speaks to the PCs directly about their actions and what she wants from them. Read or paraphrase the following.

“While there are some narrow-minded souls among the crusade who blame you for the destruction of the wardstone border, I do not begrudge you for what you did. Far from it. From the sound of it, you saved entire legions of crusaders from a most

Sword of Valor

vile fate by preventing Vorlesh from transforming them, and the blast of energy gave us the time we needed to regroup and prepare for what will certainly come next. But you understand the implications of what you've done, I'm sure—the wardstones are gone, but Iomedae has seen fit that you will be their replacement. I can think of no other reason that would explain why their power would have settled in your bodies and souls and didn't merely fade into the ether. In time, the demons will regroup and reorganize—we can trust their inherent chaos to make this period of regrouping longer than it otherwise would take, but we shouldn't underestimate them. They'll be back soon enough. Already I've had reports from along the front lines that small groups of demons are attacking fortifications and settlements along the southern border.

But what intrigues me most is news from several reliable sources that as our fiendish enemies are starting to mass in the southern reaches along the Riftshadow within the Worldwound, they have left several of their northern lairs relatively unprotected. In particular, the fiend Aponavicius has taken the bulk of her army from Drezen, leaving it only moderately protected as she joins with the Storm King in Iz to, no doubt, plot greater attacks on larger targets like Nerosyan, Karcau, and beyond. The time is right to strike into their territory. Drezen was the first of our cities to fall after the First Crusade, and we lost more than our kin and our pride that day. We lost the Sword of Valor, a magical banner carried by the Inheritor herself during the Shining Crusade. If Drezen could be retaken—if the Sword of Valor could once again be held by the crusade... well, I trust I don't need to explain how well that would affect morale. But with the imminent attacks along the border, I cannot spare many to lead an assault on Drezen. And even if I could, a large army attacking the city would only draw Aponavicius back to defend the place. The obvious tactic is to send in a group of capable heroes with a modest but well-trained army to strike now, while the proverbial iron is hot. And this is why I've sought you out. If you can retake Drezen and reclaim the Sword of Valor, not only will you silence the fools who would brand you traitors for destroying the wardstone, but more importantly, you would bolster the entire war effort with your heroism. And I fear we need all the bolstering we can get!

Once she's done, Galfrey notes that she would like the PCs to set off as soon as possible—every day spent waiting is one more day for the demons to catch wind of the plans and to reinforce the city. She certainly has time to answer a few questions though. Likely questions and her answers follow.

How are things on the front lines? “Relatively quiet for the moment, but I expect that to change any moment. Scouts within the Worldwound tell us that the demons and their minions are massing all along the Sarkora River in Riftshadow, and we expect them to hit Nerosyan, Karcau, and other southern points within the week. I need to get Kenabres in order and head back south in a few days as a result, and I hope you'll be well on your way north by then.”

Why do you think this plan will work? “It's risky, but the reward is worth it. And the demons won't expect it. In fact, they might not even notice it, what with their attention focused on the southern borders. If you can secure Drezen quickly enough and find the *Sword of Valor*, it will do most of the work of keeping the place safe once you've reactivated it.”

What's stopping demons from teleporting in as reinforcements once we attack? “Their own nature. Those left behind have been charged with protecting Drezen, and if they abandon that post, even to teleport away for help, they'll likely be killed. No demon wants to be killed. That and their arrogance about their superiority over mortal life should be more than enough to keep them in Drezen until the very end. At that point, when you've broken their morale, they'll teleport away in droves, which should give you several days to complete your mission.”

What can you tell us about Citadel Drezen? “It was built during the First Mendevian Crusade as a strategic foothold inside the Worldwound. Dwarves chiseled it from a rocky hill near the source of the Sellen River. It held for well over a decade, withstanding almost constant war before a traitor turned the *Sword of Valor* over to the demons. We never found out who it was, but with the *Sword of Valor*'s protection gone, the demons overwhelmed Drezen in a night.”

What can you tell us about the Sword of Valor? “Despite the name, it's not a sword. It's a battle standard—an artifact once used by Iomedae herself during the Shining Crusade. The church loaned the banner to the First Mendevian Crusade and allowed it to hang in Drezen, where it bolstered crusader morale and, perhaps more importantly, warded against demonic attacks, deceptions, and even teleportation.”

Where is the Sword of Valor located? “Somewhere inside Citadel Drezen. At one point, it was held in a special vault, but our divinations have only revealed that the banner remains in the Citadel somewhere. Alas, the same wards that protect it against demons also hamper divination attempts—but we know it's still in there, likely kept as a trophy.”

Who are you sending with us? “We're sending three specialists with you. Aron Kir was a cleric of Shelyn here in Kenabres before the temple was destroyed—he can help with healing as needed, but he's also quite knowledgeable about demons and their tactics. Sosiel Vaenic is an expert on siege tactics, traps, infiltration, scouting, and the like; he's where you'll be getting your map of the Citadel, incidentally. And lastly, there's Nurah Dendiwhar. She'll be supporting you with her bardic magic, but she's also an expert on the region and knows more about Drezen than anyone in Kenabres at this point, I'll wager. I'm also going to be sending an army of crusaders with you. There's only a hundred of them, but they're all devout paladins of Iomedae. It's not a large army, but you'll be able to move without attracting attention. Trust me, that's an advantage when it comes to demonic foes. They hit hard, so it's best not to give them the opportunity.”

WRATH OF THE RIGHTEOUS

About the Queen

Queen Galfrey has what amounts to an extended cameo in this adventure—but she'll have a much larger role to play in the campaign's fourth adventure, "The Midnight Isles." Her appearance here should serve to foreshadow the point where she'll be joining the PCs in the upcoming adventure—you want the PCs to be a little in awe of the queen here, so that by the time she joins them to aid their quest, that event will have the right amount of gravitas. Until then, if the PCs ask for more information about her, you can tantalize them with rumors—that she's immortal (she took the crown in 4601 AR, but has in fact stayed alive for so long through a combination of skill and a few church-provided draughts of the *sun orchid elixir*), that she's met Iomedae (not true, and if asked about this rumor she smiles and says as much), or that she receives visions from her goddess (true, but Galfrey doesn't speak of these except with her closest friends). There are more sinister rumors as well, such as a persistent one that she's secretly in league with the Worldwound and hopes to drag out the conflict as long as possible—these rumors are mere slander, though, and Galfrey generally doesn't regard them as worth talking about when there are more important matters, leaving her deeds and reputation to defend her against such lies. More information about Queen Galfrey appears in "The Midnight Isles."

COMMENDATIONS

Before she takes the PCs to meet their army and experts, Queen Galfrey smiles and tells them that their successes and triumphs have not gone unnoticed. To make it official, she dubs the PCs "Knights of the Fifth Crusade." The title gives the PCs permission to lead armies and rule lands. Of a more immediate note, though, when a knight accomplishes a significant task, he or she is rewarded with one or more *righteous medals*. Currently, there are six different medals a knight can earn in the crusades, each of which comes with a small boon of magic imbued by priests of Iomedae, Sarenrae, and Torag. All six of these *righteous medals* are detailed on pages 62–63. The PCs are each awarded every medal that is appropriate for their achievements and glories so far. Make sure to let the PCs know what they need to do to earn the other medals—once they've accomplished those goals, they can be awarded new medals at the end of any Wrath of the Righteous adventure.

Once the PCs agree to the mission and have been awarded their *righteous medals*, Queen Galfrey escorts them to the camps just outside of Kenabres's northern wall, where her armies wait. She leads the PCs to a group of crusaders at the northern edge of the camps, and as they approach, the knights quickly fall into line, standing at attention.

The queen informs the PCs that these knights have volunteered to aid them in retaking Drezen, and that their loyalty and devotion are true. Three others wait at the camp—the three experts who'll be joining the PCs on their journey. Queen Galfrey introduces Aron, Sosiel, and Nurah, then nods in approval. "I've never been one for ceremony, and you've a lot of work ahead of you—I wish you luck in your mission, and hope to hear of your triumph soon!"

Story Award: Each time everyone in the party earns an identical *righteous medal*, award the party 800 XP—for a maximum total of 4,800 XP if all PCs earn every medal.

AN ARMY AT YOUR BACK

At times during "Sword of Valor," the PCs will face small armies of demons and cultists. These encounters are intended to be resolved with the narrative mass combat rules detailed on pages 234–250 of *Pathfinder RPG Ultimate Campaign*. If you'd rather not include these elements in your Wrath of the Righteous game, you can omit the mass combat encounters that take place in this adventure, but you should replace these encounters with more personal combats against demons and cultists to make up for the loss of potential experience points.

The PCs can choose among themselves who'll serve as their army's commander—it could be one of them, or it could be an NPC they've befriended. Irabeth Tirabade would make an excellent commander, for example. The commander should be someone with a high Charisma score and ranks in Profession (soldier) or the Leadership feat, but these are not requirements for command.

If you can, ask your players to read up on the mass combat rules before this adventure begins. You can also take a moment here to run a few "training combats" for the PCs, where they lead their army against an equal group of crusaders in a mock battle—any damage taken in these training battles isn't real damage, and is instantly healed at the battle's end.

While the PCs' army is currently called the Knights of Kenabres, the PCs are free to rename them to whatever they wish. Remember to adjust the army's Morale check as appropriate for its commander's Charisma modifier and Profession (soldier) ranks or Leadership. Normally, a commander knows a number of boons equal to 1 + 1 additional boon for every 5 ranks in Profession (soldier), but at the start of this adventure, the commander is brand new and doesn't know any boons. New boons can be learned during the course of play as battles are won.

KNIGHTS OF KENABRES

ACR 3

LG Medium army of humans (paladin 4)

hp 16

DV 18; **OM** +8 ranged

Tactics expert flankers, standard, withdraw

Sword of Valor

Resources improved armor, improved weapons (mwk cold iron), mounts, ranged weapons (longbows)

Special aura of courage, channel positive energy, divine health, lay on hands, mercy, smite evil, spellcasting

Speed 3; **Morale** +1; **Consumption** 5

SWORD OF VALOR NPCs

Three important NPCs accompany the heroes north—a priest of Shelyn, a tactician and scout, and a Drezen historian. Each of these NPCs has his or her own entry in the NPC Gallery at the end of this adventure. In addition, the PCs may wish to bring allies from the previous adventure along with them as well. This adventure assumes that only Aron, Sosiel, and Nurah accompany the PCs, but you can use the following notes and those on the inside front cover as guides for if the PCs also wish to involve Irabeth, Anevia, Horgus, or Aravashnial in the adventure. These NPCs only accompany the PCs if they're at least friendly. In addition, at times these NPCs may have insights, comments, or actions that can be triggered by certain encounters. When these occur, they appear near the end of the encounter under a heading of NPC Reactions.

Anevia Tirabade: Anevia only accompanies the PCs if Irabeth does as well. If she travels with the PCs, she fights alongside her wife. She scouts a short distance ahead of the army, and before any battle begins, she gives reports that allows the PCs' army to always gain battlefield advantage, increasing its OM and DC by 2.

Aravashnial: Aravashnial only agrees to accompany the PCs if his blindness is cured—fortunately, if the PCs ask Queen Galfrey, she arranges for a *scroll of regeneration* that can be used to restore the elven wizard's sight. In this case, Aravashnial is so grateful to regain his sight that he falls into the role of supporting the PCs and the Knights of Kenabres with great zeal—his advice on how to handle enemy spellcasters grants the army Spellbreaker as a bonus tactic, increasing the army's DV by 4 against armies with the spellcasting ability.

Aron Kir: Aron automatically accompanies the party. His skill at tactics grants the army a +1 bonus to its DV—this bonus is included in the stats above. Aron's presence also helps the PCs in other ways, as noted specifically in the adventure. Unfortunately, Aron's got a secret—he has long battled addiction to a dangerous drug called *shadowblood* (see page 63). When the adventure begins, Aron has mostly kicked his habit, in no small part through the support and aid of his lover, Sosiel. The priest of Shelyn knows Aron's ashamed of the addiction and, against his better judgment, has agreed to keep quiet about it as long as Aron never gets back onto the blood. Unfortunately, Nurah knows of this character flaw, and she soon arranges for a few doses of *shadowblood* to show up in Aron's supplies, tempting him greatly.

Mythic Commanders

If one of the PCs serves as the commander of the Knights of Kenabres, his command of the army is such that he can use his surge mythic ability to adjust *Offense* checks and *Morale* checks. A commander can expend two uses of mythic power to increase his army's DV by the result of a surge die for one battle.

Horgus Gwerm: Horgus has little to add to the tactics of battle, but many of his resources have survived Kenabres's fall intact. If he accompanies the party, his support reduces the army's *Consumption* score by 2.

Irabeth Tirabade: Irabeth only accompanies the PCs if her wife Anevia does as well. If she travels with the PCs, she fights alongside her wife. She can command the army—if she does so, she grants the Bloodied but Unbroken boon to the army (*Ultimate Campaign* 240).

Nurah Dendiwhar: Nurah automatically accompanies the party. Her skill at bolstering courage and lightening spirits grants the army a +1 bonus to its OM—this bonus is included in the stats above. Nurah is a traitor, however—she's secretly a member of the Templars of the Ivory Labyrinth. At certain points, Nurah engages in secret acts of betrayal and sabotage, as detailed in the adventure. Each of these comes with a chance of catching her in the act—if the PCs expose her and either defeat her or let her escape, any further acts of betrayal do not occur, but the PCs only retain the +1 bonus to their army's OM if they can redeem her.

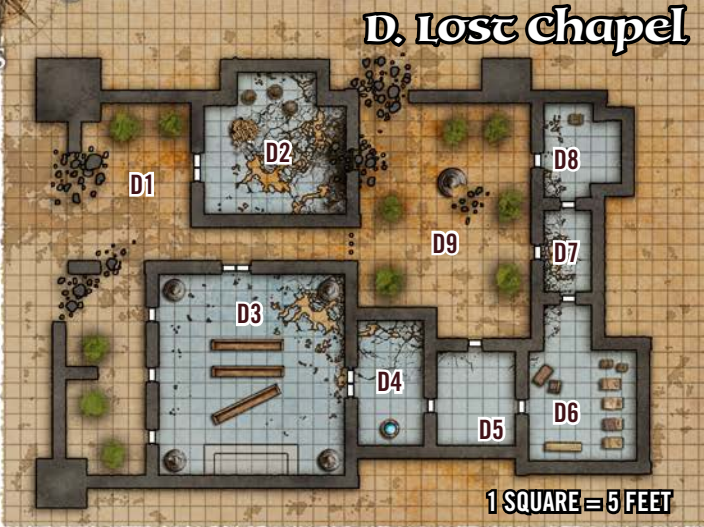
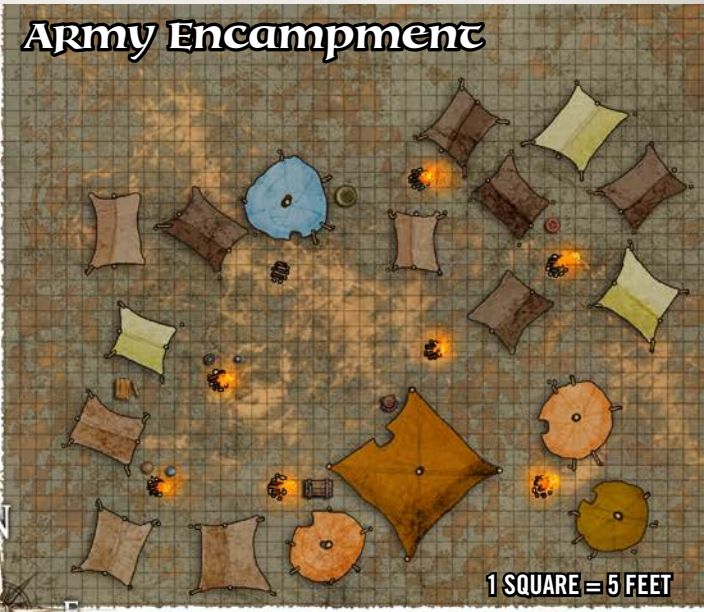
Sosiel Vaenic: Sosiel automatically accompanies the party. Despite the fact that he's a worshiper of Shelyn rather than Iomedae, his faith and inspiring attitude grants the army a +1 bonus to its morale—this bonus is included in the stats above. Sosiel's presence also helps the PCs in other ways, as noted specifically in the adventure.

MARCHING TO DREZEN

Before she leaves to set Kenabres in order, Galfrey has one final bit of advice—she suggests the PCs travel north directly to Valas's Gift and then follow the east bank of the Sellen River north until they come to Vilareth Ford, at which point they can cross the West Sellen and continue north along its west bank to the dry Ahari riverbed, since this route will provide something of a natural trail to follow. The adventure assumes the PCs take this advice—if they want to change the route, let them. You can simply reassign the encounters along the way (or add new ones) as you wish.

It's a 160-mile journey to Drezen along this route, and the army, which consists of a hundred heavily armored mounted paladins, can cover 36 miles a day (including time lost breaking and setting up camp)—assuming no

Wrath of the Righteous



Sword of Valor

complications, this means the journey to Drezen takes 4-1/2 days. Each day, the army uses a number of units of food and water equal to its Consumption—5 per day (if Horgus is accompanying the PCs, that number decreases to 3 per day). Since foraging for food isn't really an option in the Worldwound, the army must carry its own food and water supplies. While the PCs may be able to resupply along the way, Galfrey strongly recommends they carry as much as they can when they set out to account for delays, such as time spent recovering from battle, or time spent camped near Drezen while the PCs pursue their mission.

The army can carry up to 50 units of food and water at any one time—enough to supply the army to Drezen and give the PCs 5-1/2 days to take the city. The army begins its march fully stocked with food. With Horgus's aid, resupplying along the way, and by keeping focused and not spending too long on encounters or recovery along the way, the army should be able to keep itself fed, but if it runs out of food, it takes a -2 penalty to Morale and takes 1d4 points of damage per day—this damage cannot be healed until food is secured.

The PCs' army is just the right size for the march—big enough to scare off wandering monsters, but small enough not to attract the attention of larger groups of the enemy... with the exception of the armies that lie in wait at Vilareth Ford and Keeper's Canyon.

A. VALAS'S GIFT (CR 3)

Distance from Kenabres: 28 miles

Army Travel Time from Kenabres: About 1 day

Valas's Gift lies northeast of Kenabres, a small town surrounded by surprisingly fertile lands. Once one of Kenabres's primary sources of food and grain, Valas's Gift has been destroyed by demons, and its citizens have scattered into the surrounding hinterlands. When the PCs arrive, they find the village a smoking ruin—a day spent searching the ruins uncovers 2d4 units of food, but no evidence of survivors.

B. VILARETH FORD (CR 2)

Distance from Valas's Gift: 52 miles

Army Travel Time from Valas's Gift: 1-1/2 days

Vilareth Ford is the northernmost crossing point on the West Sellen—few settlements and no fords or bridges exist farther north from here on the Mendev side of the river. Named for the crusader general who first held the ford against a host of tiefling cultists eager to use it as an invasion point, Vilareth Ford has long been watched over by a small contingent of crusaders—yet as the PCs approach the ford, their scouts (Anevia if she's with the PCs) come racing south to intercept the army about 15 minutes before the ford is in sight, bearing grim news. Vilareth Ford has been taken by the enemy!

Battlefield: Just yesterday, the defenders of Vilareth Ford were defeated by an army of tiefling cultists,

Army Encampment Map

A map of the central part of the PCs' army camp is provided on page 12. No specific encounter takes place in this area, but you can use this map as a place for the PCs to confront Nurah when the time comes—whether they catch her stashing *shadowblood* in Aron's gear or otherwise attempting to sabotage something. Alternatively, if the PCs attack the lost chapel (area D) and fail to defeat its half-fiend ruler, they may be attacked later that evening in a retaliatory strike by a few nabasu. They could even be ambushed in their camp after they begin the attack on Drezen, perhaps by the mythic chimera that dwells there!

minions of an incubus named Exorius who serves as one of Drezen's commanders. Exorius is responsible for the eastern approach to the town, and as such has placed the bulk of his armies in the Ahari gorge at Keeper's canyon. A few days ago, he sent one of his smaller groups of tiefling rogues south to claim the ford. These tieflings are led by a cackling, goat-faced brimorak demon named **Umestil** (CE female brimorak), and they managed to take the ford by surprise. The bulk of the crusaders who once protected the place are dead, and their heads and entrails now decorate the bunkerlike structures that line the river's east bank. The tieflings themselves are enjoying a few days of relaxation after the battle, awaiting reinforcements, but they marshal quickly once they realize they're under attack.

There are only 200 tieflings present at Vilareth Ford. The ford itself has a large open area where the army could stage a battle—it's currently being used by the tieflings as an encampment. The surrounding terrain can provide concealment if the PCs wish to attempt to ambush the tieflings (*Ultimate Campaign* 237).

This encounter gives the PCs (and players) a chance to try out the mass combat rules in a situation that favors them. The tieflings were a potent force against the surprised crusaders originally stationed here, but against a highly trained army of paladins who may well have the advantage of surprise, they should be easy prey.

TIEFLING ARMY

ACR 2

XP 600

CE Large army of tieflings (rogue 1)

hp 9

DV 12; OM +4

Tactics standard, withdraw

Special darkvision, sneak attack, spellcasting

Speed 2; Morale +2; Consumption 1

Commander Umestil (Cha +2; no boons)

WRATH OF THE RIGHTEOUS

NPC Reactions: Immediately after the chaos on the battlefield, ask the PCs what they're doing to recover from the fight. Anevia and Aron slip into the surrounding regions to scout out the place and ensure no other enemies lie in wait. At the same time Irabeth, Sosiel, and Nurah set out separately to seek survivors to heal and rescue from the aftermath. In Irabeth and Sosiel's cases, this is legitimate activity, but in Nurah's case it's just an excuse to seek out Aron's equipment so she can stash 4 four doses of *shadowblood* where he'll soon find them. As she does so, she dismisses the *magic auras* on the four vials, knowing that if a PC notices their evil aura even before Aron uses one of them, the damage will be done. Nurah casts *invisibility* while in hiding before she does this to aid her chances of not being seen. Each PC gets a Perception check (opposed by Nurah's Stealth check) and a Sense Motive check (opposed by Nurah's Bluff check) to notice the halfling woman skulking away to a hiding spot to cast *invisibility*—both checks must be successful to notice her and realize she's up to something. At your discretion, a PC who's engaged in something particularly distracting (such as aiding with healing or triage) takes a -4 penalty on these checks. If she's confronted, Nurah abandons her plan and claims to have heard something suspicious and was going to make sure there wasn't a tiefling survivor. If the PC sees through this Bluff, she simply throws her hands up in frustration, saying, "Doesn't matter, I guess, what it was... There's obviously nothing now." She'll attempt again later that night and each night thereafter to plant the drugs amid Aron's gear. If the PCs catch her in the act, she realizes her cover's been blown and attempts to flee, as detailed in her tactics on page 56.

If she's successful, Aron finds the *shadowblood* soon, and while he tries his best to resist, at some point before the PCs reach Drezen he gives in and takes a dose of the drug. He's well-practiced at hiding his habit, but if a PC spends time talking to him after he's started using again, Aron is slightly nervous, and if a PC beats Aron's Bluff check, the PC gets the idea that something is amiss. Aron claims the problem is his fear that the demons are going to finally win this crusade; if the PC doesn't believe this lie, he gets surly and refuses to speak more. If a PC brings this knowledge to Sosiel, the priest knows immediately what's going on and curses at himself for not noticing, blaming the distractions of the march. He's hesitant to reveal what he knows, but if a PC succeeds at a successful 17 Diplomacy check (at your discretion, this check is automatic if the PC

has already established a good relationship with Sosiel) he reveals the fact that Aron's had problems in the past with drug abuse, and that it sounds like he's backsliding.

If the PCs confront Aron about his drug use, with a successful DC 25 Diplomacy check (Sosiel's presence grants a +5 bonus on this check), the PCs convince Aron to give up his supply of *shadowblood*—Sosiel uses *remove disease* to get rid of his addiction in this case. If the check fails, Aron panics and flees. Whether or not the PCs can find him depends on their actions and your leniency—if Aron escapes, he ends up making his way to Drezen on his own where he seeks out the shadow demon under Castle Drezen, as detailed in Part 3. If Aron escapes, Sосiel falls into a bleak depression as well. While he remains with the party, treat him as unfriendly until Aron can be rescued.

Treasure: After the conflict, Aron suggests that the PCs have their army do what they can to scavenge gear and supplies from the field of battle. Some of the paladins might grumble a bit at the idea of looting tieflings, but they'll do as ordered. If a PC succeeds at a successful 20 Diplomacy check while issuing the orders, the grumbling goes away entirely. Scavenged supplies can help the PCs in two ways. First, the PCs can gather up 1d6 units of food and water from the site. Secondly, the weapons, gear, and tools gathered reward the PCs with 3 units of Goods. While this form of capital won't help them immediately, Aron explains that if they do manage to take Drezen, they'll need more goods, and also influence, labor, magic, and of course gold to help get the city up and running again. For now, someone in the party should keep track of the capital they gain in this manner, since it will help them pay for downtime activities during the next adventure. See Chapter 2 of *Ultimate Campaign* for more information on this subject.

Development: As the battle draws to a close, Umestil uses *greater teleport* to return to Exorius at Keeper's Canyon to report. Exorius isn't pleased with the brimorak's failure, and kills her as a punishment. If the PCs manage to prevent Umestil from warning Exorius, though (perhaps by sneaking into the encampment before the battle to assassinate the brimorak), they can ambush Exorius's armies at Keeper's Canyon.

Only a handful of wounded survivors remain of the small contingent that once guarded the area. All of them are imprisoned in a stone building. Currently led by a sergeant named **Kamilo Dann** (LG female human fighter 3), the survivors number a dozen in all. Kamilo puts on a brave face, and her assurance and leadership kept the other survivors from despair, even when some of them



Kamilo Dann

SWORD OF VALOR

were taken away every few hours by Umestil for sacrifice—or worse. The dozen survivors are in no shape to keep the ford protected, but they do know that a greater army lies somewhere to the north in a place called “Keeper’s Canyon.” With a successful DC 25 Knowledge (geography) check, a character confirms this canyon is the one that contains the Ahari riverbed; knowing that a greater army lies in wait there will help the PCs in that battle.

Kamilo volunteers to lead her survivors back south to Kenabres to report that the ford has fallen—Queen Galfrey will send more troops north to reoccupy it soon enough, allowing the PCs to continue on their northern march. With a successful DC 15 Diplomacy check, the PCs can instead convince Kamilo and her soldiers to join their army. Doing so doesn’t change the size of the PCs’ army, but it does allow them to replace fallen soldiers and thus “heal” 1d6+2 points of damage that their army has suffered.

If the PCs are forced to retreat from the battle, however, the tiefling army executes all these prisoners soon thereafter.

Story Award: If the PCs manage to rescue Kamilo and the other survivors, award them 800 XP.

C. KEEPER’S CANYON (CR 4)

Distance from Vilareth Ford: 46 miles

Army Travel Time from Vilareth Ford: 1-1/4 days

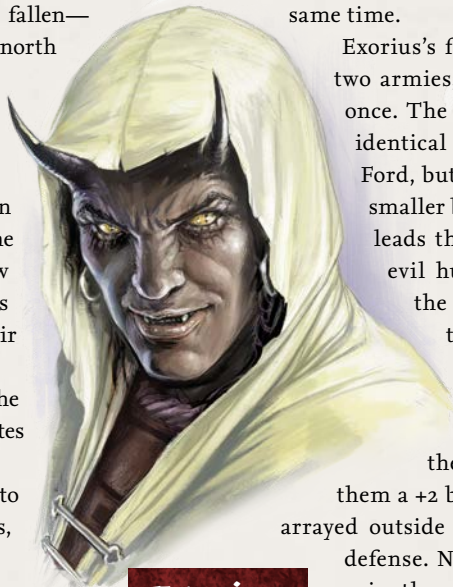
As the PCs continue north along the western banks of the West Sellen River, they’re skirting the edge of the Worldwound itself. Impress upon them how strange and alien things seem on this side of the river—even though they’re not really heading into the blighted lands yet, the sky above seems darker and dimmer, and no vegetation grows on the desolate ground. No easy route inland exists once the PCs start north—the cliffs of the gorge are steep.

If the PCs know (or suspect) that an army lies in wait for them at Keeper’s Canyon, the point at which the now-dry Ahari River once fed into the West Selen, they can slow their approach and prepare an ambush for the forces there. If they simply march up the river, though, they find a larger force than they faced at the ford lying in wait, ready to attack.

Battlefield: Keeper’s Canyon was once a holding of Drezen—a small town that helped to facilitate shipments to and from Drezen. Today, only the shells of a few stone buildings remain, along with a half-dozen leaning pilings in the river from what was once an extensive maze of piers. The incubus Exorius has been ordered by Staunton to guard this choke point, as the dwarf knows this is the most likely route the enemy will take if they’re

foolish enough to march on Drezen. Staunton doesn’t really expect such an attack, though, and neither does Exorius unless he’s been alerted by the brimorak Umestil. Even if he has been warned, Exorius doesn’t see the need to teleport back to Drezen to warn Staunton—after all, he wouldn’t expect any different treatment from Staunton than he plans to give the brimorak from Vilareth Ford. It would be much better, in Exorius’s mind, to report both the attack and his successful defeat of the enemy at the same time.

Exorius’s forces at Keeper’s Canyon consist of two armies, and the PCs need to fight both at once. The larger of the two is a tiefling army identical to the one they faced at Vilareth Ford, but the more dangerous of the two is a smaller but deadlier unit of dretches. Exorius leads the dretches, while an unexceptional evil human fighter named Berrexi leads the tieflings. In the unlikely event that the brimorak Umestil was not able to report to Exorius about the PCs, they can attempt to ambush the demon army. In any event, the ruins the dretches occupy grant them a +2 bonus to their DV—the tieflings are arrayed outside of the ruins and do not gain this defense. Normally an army of dretches would gain the significant defense ability, but the paladin army that the PCs command is armed with cold iron weapons and can smite evil, so this ability doesn’t work against them.



EXORIUS

DRETCH ARMY

ACR 2

XP 600

CE Medium army of dretches

hp 9

DV 14; OM +5 ranged

Tactics relentless brutality, standard, withdraw

Special darkvision, spellcasting

Speed 1; **Morale** +5; **Consumption** 0

Commander Exorius (Cha +5; merciless)

TIEFLING ARMY

ACR 2

XP 600

hp 9 (see page 13)

NPC Reactions: The PCs’ allies take the same actions they did after the previous battle—if she hasn’t yet stashed the *shadowblood* in Aron’s gear, Nurah attempts to do so again.

Treasure: Scavenging the field of battle and the ruins turns up 1d6 units of food and water and 2 units of Goods.

Development: Exorius teleports up into the cliffs above the battlefield once it’s apparent his army is defeated, but

WRATH OF THE RIGHTEOUS

then watches from above—the next time the PCs camp, he teleports into the camp and attempts to kill as many PCs as he can. If brought down to fewer than 15 hit points, he teleports away, abandoning the fight, Drezen, and Staunton alike. He may return to torment and attack the PCs in the future at your discretion.

EXORIUS

CR 6

XP 2,400

Incubus

hp 76 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 3 73)

INTO THE WORLDWOUND

Beyond Keeper's Canyon, the PCs' route finally takes them westward into the Worldwound itself. It won't take long for the PCs and their allies to notice the difference even a few hundred yards into enemy territory makes, for the Worldwound is the very definition of "hostile territory."

More than demons and monsters, the very environs of the Worldwound are dangerous. Infections, parasites, and diseases infest the water and game alike, making the idea of living off the land dangerous. The weather can vary wildly—calm one day and blasted by hurricane-force winds the next. Some storms are supernatural in nature, and can open rifts to the Abyss or rain down strange precipitation like frozen eyeballs or shards of crystallized locusts. The sun rises later and sets earlier than it should, and the skies are almost always overcast with black and red clouds. When they part, the sky seems dull in color at day, and at night the stars are all wrong, as if one were looking up at an alien realm above. Navigation in the Worldwound is difficult as a result, but in this adventure, the PCs can follow the Ahari gorge so navigation isn't an issue. For simplicity, you should assume that the short journey the PCs make up the Ahari riverbed is not plagued by things like supernatural storms or the like. The next adventure, "Demon's Heresy," confronts the PCs with many of these dangers as they explore the Worldwound on their own. But if you want to challenge your PCs, *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: The Worldwound* contains numerous additional rules on survival in this desolate land.

The difficult terrain of the riverbed route to Drezen halves movement rates—the army can only cover 18 miles a day here rather than 36 miles.

Normally, leading an army into the Worldwound is a difficult task, but in this case, the PCs' army consists of fearless paladins—or mostly so. One man, **Arles Jhestander**

(NG male human ex-paladin 4), is a veteran of several conflicts, each of which ended poorly. His faith has been shaken, and while he's hidden this from his fellows, he can't hide it from Iomedae—as this adventure begins, Arles is an ex-paladin. His fear about the mission only continues to grow as the adventure progresses, and if the PCs don't handle the situation delicately, his loss of faith can work almost as a creeping form of madness among the troops.

At some point after the PCs set out up the riverbed from Keeper's Canyon, Irabeth or Sosiell or another NPC should bring to the PCs' attention that one of the men in the army has been talking about the hopelessness of their task, and predicting a grisly death for everyone involved. Until the PCs do something to curb Arles' demoralizing talk, their army takes a –2 penalty on Morale checks. If the PCs take an extreme solution, such as discharging, exiling, or even executing Arles, this penalty increases to a –4 penalty. The best way to handle the situation is for a PC to sit down with Arles and talk out his fears. You can roleplay this out as much as you want, and if the player does a good job, you can rule that the speech is automatically successful at turning Arles back toward the path toward law. Otherwise, the PC must succeed at a

successful 23 Diplomacy check to do so. One such check can be attempted per day, and after five failed checks, Arles and a few others he's convinced of the futility of the mission sneak out of the army and make their way back to Mendev—if the PCs track down the deserters, the PCs find their mangled bodies a mile or so back, picked off by demons. In this event, the morale penalty increases to –4, as detailed above. Once the PCs manage to successfully take Drezen, any of these penalties to Morale vanish.

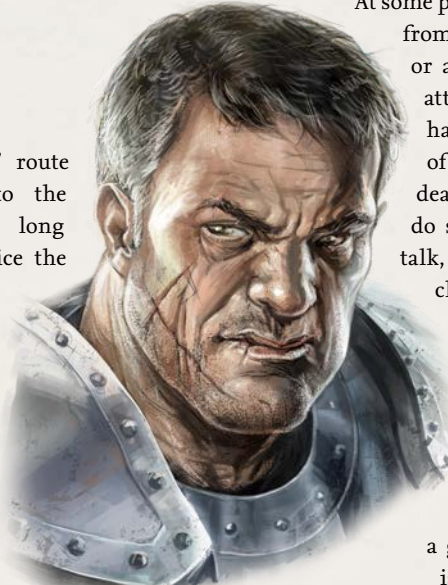
Story Award: If the PCs manage to restore hope to Arles, award them 1,200 XP.

D. LOST CHAPEL

Distance from Keeper's Canyon: 15 miles

Army Travel Time from Keeper's Canyon: A little less than a day

In 4629 AR, a year after Drezen was founded and a year before the First Crusade ended, several crusading paladins and priests built a number of chapels in the lands surrounding their new fortress city. Each of these chapels was devoted to a different deity of the crusade (mostly Iomedae, Erastil, Torag, Sarenrae, Shelyn, or Abadar—deities normally served by paladins), and each was intended to serve as a hospital for injured soldiers and a waystation for weary travelers.



Arles Jhestander

Sword of Valor

The crusaders built one such chapel here, perched atop the cliff above and overlooking the river below. The specific deity to which this chapel was consecrated to has been deliberately left vague so that you can customize it to your game. If a paladin in your group is wielding the weapon *Radiance* from “The Worldwound IncurSION,” the chapel should be devoted to that paladin’s deity, so that cleansing the chapel can help to awaken *Radiance*’s power. Otherwise, pick a deity associated with a religious PC if possible—or Iomedae or Shelyn if not.

Since Drezan’s loss, these chapels have fallen into ruin. Today, a half-nabasu inquisitor of Kabriri (demon lord of ghouls) named Nulkineth has taken over the ruin, repurposing it for his own dark rites. The vile inquisitor routinely abducts soldiers from the crusaders’ ranks, snatching them from their sentry posts or even wounded soldiers from active battlefields, so he can sacrifice them in Kabriri’s name. Nulkineth has helped countless nabasus achieve maturity over the years he’s been living here—his latest ally is a nabasu named Maugla that is currently out exploring and hunting on its own. When the PCs arrive in the region, Nulkineth sends a gargoyle to find Maugla—the demon then returns to the lost chapel via teleportation for a climactic fight against the PCs as detailed in area D9.

The chapel sits atop the cliff, 90 feet above the Ahari gorge below. A narrow flight of stairs winds up the cliff face to the chapel, but these stairs are treacherous—two successful DC 15 Climb checks are required to navigate them safely—one at a height of 30 feet and a second at a height of 60 feet. The PCs and their army should arrive at this location near the end of a day’s march, and if the PCs don’t succumb to the lure of exploring the chapel themselves, Aron points out that, historically, these chapels often had well-hidden caches of healing magic and supplies. There’s a possibility, however small, that these supplies are still hidden—they were typically stashed in a secret compartment under the altar. At the very least, adds Sosiel, it would be nice gesture to climb up there and clean up the chapel a bit and run off any monsters that might be befouling it with their presence. Nurah is the lone voice of dissent—she points out that there likely are monsters dwelling in the ruins, and that the chapel is a distraction and will only waste time and resources. In fact, she’s hoping the PCs do head up there, since she knows who lives there, and if a fight with Nulkineth and his minions can deplete the PCs’ resources, so much the better.

If the PCs avoid the ruin, Nulkineth notices them anyway. Later that night, he sends his three gargoyles down to the camp to snatch away a few victims to feed to the nabasu. You can play this attack out using the army campsite map—any NPCs who are abducted can be rescued from the ruins above if the PCs act fast. If the gargoyles are defeated, Nulkineth seethes in anger, but prefers to let the army pass by without further antagonizing them.

D1. Temple Grounds (CR 7)

The gates to this small courtyard lie smashed and broken with tall grass growing amid the rubble. Two main buildings stand side by side to the east, separated by a single alleyway. The smaller structure appears to be a stable, while the other is much larger with several doors and stained-glass windows, apparently a chapel judging by the pious statues along its rooftop.

A successful DC 20 Perception check reveals a collection of well-gnawed human bones among the debris—past victims of Nulkineth’s ghoul minions.

Creatures: When Nulkineth first came to Mendev by way of Ustalav, he brought several gargoyle allies with him. They’ve proven to be exceptional hunters and spies, acting as go-betweens that can freely cross the *wardstones* to deliver messages or hunt. Three of these gargoyles currently roost among the statues on the chapel’s rooftop. They maintain a vigilant watch of the main approach to the ruin, relying on their freeze ability to hide. If undetected, they prepare an ambush to take intruders by surprise, eager to provide more captives for Nulkineth’s rituals.

GARGOYLES (3)

CR 4

XP 1,200

hp 42 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 137)

D2. Ruined Stable

The sharp tang of musty, decaying straw fills this large stable. Its easternmost wall has collapsed into a steep pile of broken beams and rocks that blocks the way to the other side. A large mound of discarded weaponry lies amid the rubble.

Couriers between Mendev and Drezan would stable their mounts here when traveling from Kenabres to the front lines. It stands empty now and almost nothing of value remains, though Nulkineth’s gargoyles occasionally seek shelter here when particularly violent storms hit.

Treasure: The mound of weapons are leftovers from victims snatched up by the gargoyles and fed to the nabasu. Most of the weapons are broken beyond repair, but a few still remain serviceable, including a masterwork battleaxe, a +1 *longsword*, three cold iron daggers, and a +1 *cold iron longpear*.

D3. Desecrated Chapel (CR 8)

The vaulted ceiling of this massive sanctuary reaches nearly thirty feet overhead. Smashed stained-glass windows stretch in narrow bands above the doors. Four angelic statues occupy each corner of the room, though their faces and wings are cracked and broken almost beyond recognition. The walls are covered with disturbing

Wrath of the Righteous

shapes and runes that have been scratched into the stone. An altar, befouled with grime and filth, sits against the southern wall.

A successful DC 20 Knowledge (religion) is needed to interpret what religion the defaced statues and stained-glass windows once espoused; a similar check reveals that the fiendish scribbles and markings on the wall as prayers sacred to Kabriri.

Nulkineth's self-assigned calling includes both the spread of Kabriri's faith through ghoul fever and the empowerment of nabasu demons in service to Him Who Gnaws. To this end, he either infects his captives with the disease or gives them over to his nabasu ally. Nulkineth shackles and restrains the infected victims until they perish and rise again as undead. He then soothes and aids the ghouls through their initial hunger, feeding them with carrion taken from the battlefields as he instructs and trains them in the doctrine of Kabriri. Though he currently only has a handful of ghouls at the chapel, he has many more in the surrounding hills, and plans to raise an army by having them prey on refugees and wounded who are fleeing the chaos of the new demonic incursion. Any non-spellcasting abducted NPCs are likely to be found here, bound tightly with ropes and chains. At your option, one NPC might be missing, awaiting the nabasu's return at area D8.

Creatures: Eight ghouls use this chamber as a temple to Kabriri; Nulkineth personally trained two of these as acolytes in the faith. These two cultists spend their time instructing the newest members of the pack. They immediately attack anyone who intrudes here, sending one of the ghouls to the dining hall (at area D4) to ring the temple bell to warn Nulkineth.

Nulkineth has cast *desecrate* on the chapel earlier in the day to increase the fervor of his followers. As a result, the ghouls benefit from a +2 profane bonus on all attack rolls, damage rolls, and saving throws.

ILZEK AND JADISS

CR 4

XP 1,200 each

Ghoul cleric of Kabriri 3 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 146)

CE Medium undead

Init +7; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +10

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 13, flat-footed 16 (+4 armor, +3 Dex, +2 natural)

hp 37 each (5d8+15)

Fort +6, **Ref** +6, **Will** +12

Defensive Abilities channel resistance +2; **Immune** undead traits

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee flail +8 (1d8+5), bite +6 (1d6+3 plus disease, paralysis), claws +6 (1d4+3 plus paralysis),

Special Attacks channel negative energy 6/day (DC 14, 2d6), disease (DC 14), paralysis (DC 14)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 3rd; concentration +7)

At will—lore keeper

7/day—touch of chaos

Spells Prepared (CL 3rd; concentration +7)

2nd—*cure moderate wounds*, *detect thoughts*^o (DC 16),

spiritual weapon

1st—*cure light wounds*, *divine favor*, *protection from law*^o,

sanctuary (DC 15)

0 (at will)—*bleed* (DC 14), *detect magic*, *guidance*, *resistance*

D Domain spell; Domains Chaos, Knowledge

TACTICS

During Combat The ghouls use their *scrolls of summon monster V* to each summon a babau and then cast *protection from law* in the first 2 rounds of combat while they let the other ghouls engage the PCs in melee. They then cast *spiritual weapon*, following that up with channeled negative energy before casting *divine favor* and stepping in to melee. The ghouls keep a few cure spells prepared to cast on Nulkineth, should he require their aid.

Morale The ghouls retreat to Nulkineth's side to protect him if reduced to fewer than 15 hit points.

STATISTICS

Str 17, **Dex** 17, **Con** —, **Int** 13, **Wis** 18, **Cha** 16

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +6; **CMD** 19

Feats Improved Initiative, Multiattack, Selective Channeling

Skills Acrobatics +6, Bluff +6, Disguise +9, Knowledge (planes) +5, Knowledge (religion) +7, Linguistics +7, Perception +10, Stealth +9

Languages Abyssal, Common, Hallit, Necril

Combat Gear *scroll of summon monster V*; **Other Gear** +1 studded leather, flail, 92 gp

GHOULS (6)

CR 1

XP 400 each

hp 13 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 146)

Treasure: As suspected, a cache of healing magic has lain undiscovered under this chapel's altar. The secret to moving the altar aside is very cunningly hidden—locating the switch requires a successful DC 35 Perception check, but Sosiel's tip about the treasure's location grants the PCs a +15 circumstance bonus on this check. The stash is in a sizable hollow space below the altar and is lined with lead to prevent the magical aura of the potions from shining through. In all, there are dozens of *cure light wound* potions stored in here—enough to outfit the PCs' army, granting them the healing potions resource (*Ultimate Campaign* 241). There are enough potions here to allow the army 3 uses of the resource before it is depleted.

Development: If the ghouls succeed in alerting Nulkineth at area D6, he uses his remote viewing ability to scry on the chapel, studying any intruders as he prepares to meet them.

Story Award: If the PCs recover the healing potions and distribute them to their army, award them 1,200 XP.

Sword of Valor

D4. Dining Hall

Three stone tables stand in this room, and their wooden benches lie broken and half-rotten around them. Leather straps with restraints stretch across their surface, buckled tightly in place. Nearby, a knotted rope descends through a tiny hole in the ceiling.

Before the fall of Drezen, the priests took meals here, and the rope was used to ring the temple bell and summon acolytes to dinner. Now, Nulkineth uses this room purely as an interrogation chamber, strapping prisoners to the stone tables so he can torture information out of them. His followers also rely on the temple bell to sound an alarm in the event that the chapel comes under attack.

D5. Kitchen

The ripe stench of decay chokes the air of this room, emanating from the bodies of two deceased soldiers hanging from the rafters. Various cabinets and tables stand around a fireplace in the south wall, and doors lead east, west, and north.

This room once served as a kitchen for the priests. The ashes in the fireplace are decades old, little more than fine soot. Nulkineth and his ghoulish minions use it to hang the corpses they cull from battlefields. His current larder contains two soldiers who perished during earlier battles at Keeper's Canyon.

D6. Nulkineth's Quarters (CR 8)

The broken frames of several beds lie scattered about this large room. Two of the more serviceable ones have been pushed together to make a larger sleeping pallet. A table and several chairs also occupy the center of the room.

Creatures: This room once housed the temple's acolytes. Now, Nulkineth uses it as his bedroom. Currently, he's resting here while he awaits Maugla's arrival (see area D9). A pair of loyal ghouls stands near each door, ready to defend their master if needed. If alerted by the temple bell or other alarms, Nulkineth has his ghouls stand by at each of the doors leading here, ready to flank and paralyze anyone who enters.

NULKINETH

CR 7

XP 3,200

Male half-nabasu human inquisitor of Kabriri 6 (*Pathfinder RPG Advanced Player's Guide* 38, *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Demons Revisited* 42)

CE Medium outsider (native)

Init +8; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +13

DEFENSE

AC 21, touch 12, flat-footed 21 (+7 armor, +2 profane, +2 shield)

hp 84 (6d8+54)

Fort +10, **Ref** +4, **Will** +9

DR 5/magic; **Immune** death effects, poison; **Resist** acid 10, cold 10, electricity 10, fire 10; **SR** 18

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft., fly 60 ft. (good)

Melee +1 *battle aspergillum* +10 (1d6+6/19–20), bite +4 (1d6+3), claw +4 (1d4+3)

Special Attacks bane (6 rounds/day), consume flesh 1/day, smite good 1/day



Nulkineth

WRATH OF THE RIGHTEOUS

Half-Nabasu Spell-Like Abilities (CL 6th; concentration +9)

3/day—*darkness*

1/day—*silence* (DC 15), *unholy blight* (DC 17)

Inquisitor Spell-Like Abilities (CL 6th; concentration +10)

At will—detect alignment, lore keeper (25), remote viewing (6 rounds/day)

6 rounds/day—*discern lies*

Spells Known (CL 6th; concentration +9)

2nd (4/day)—*corruption resistance*^{APG}, *cure moderate wounds*, *spiritual weapon*, *weapon of awe*^{APG}

1st (5/day)—*command* (DC 15), *cure light wounds*, *curse water*, *expeditious retreat*

0 (at will)—*bleed* (DC 14), *brand*^{APG}, *detect magic*, *guidance*, *read magic*, *resistance*

Domain Knowledge

TACTICS

Before Combat Nulkineth casts *corruption resistance* (evil) and *expeditious retreat*.

During Combat Nulkineth first pronounces a justice judgment on his foes and casts *weapon of awe* on his *+1 battle aspergillum*. He then attacks, smiting good against anyone who appears to be a cleric, paladin, or other holy servant of a good deity.

Morale Once reduced to fewer than 20 hit points, Nulkineth flees after casting *darkness* to throw off pursuit. Once he's escaped, he heals his wounds as best he can and then heads straight for Drezen, hoping to trade information about the PCs' army in exchange for safe quarter there.

STATISTICS

Str 17, **Dex** 10, **Con** 20, **Int** 12, **Wis** 18, **Cha** 16

Base Atk +4; **CMB** +7; **CMD** 19

Feats Flyby Attack, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Toughness, Outflank^{APG}, Pack Attack^{UC}

Skills Fly +8, Intimidate +15, Knowledge (local) +10, Knowledge (religion) +10, Perception +13, Sense Motive +16, Stealth +4, Survival +13

Languages Abyssal, Common

SQ cunning initiative, judgment 2/day, monster lore +4, solo tactics, stern gaze, track +3

Combat Gear *wand of hold person* (10 charges), unholy water (3);

Other Gear *+1 breastplate*, heavy steel shield, *+1 battle aspergillum*^{UE}, holy symbol of Kabriri, powdered silver worth 250 gp, key to area **D8**

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Consume Flesh (Su) Once per day, Nulkineth can entirely consume the body of a human, which takes the half-nabasu 10 minutes of grisly work—doing so grants Nulkineth a +2 profane bonus on all attack rolls and damage rolls, as well as to his AC. In addition, the act grants the half-nabasu 2 temporary hit points per Hit Die. These effects last for 1 hour per Hit Die. Nulkineth has already fed upon a 5th-level prisoner, and the benefits from this ability are figured into his stat block above.

GHOULS (4)

CR 1

XP 400 each

hp 13 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 146)

Treasure: Nulkineth keeps several trophies and treasures in a strongbox that contains 383 cp, 710 sp, 3,827 gp, a beryl worth 500 gp, three opals worth 100 gp each, a gold holy symbol of Sarenrae worth 200 gp, a *knight's pennon*^{UE} (battle), a *+1 chain shirt*, and a *+1 returning dagger*.

D7. Meditation Hall

The stained-glass windows lining the ceiling of this quiet chamber have all been shattered, leaving colorful broken glass scattered across the stone floor.

The priests often used this hall for quiet contemplation. A permanent *silence* effect blankets the room to aid such meditation. Nulkineth uses this room to house more unruly prisoners, or those he suspects are spellcasters—any abducted NPCs who can cast spells can be found here, bound tightly.

D8. High Priest's Quarters

This mostly barren room has two sets of shackles anchored within a nook along the eastern wall.

This room once served as the living quarters for the chapel's high priest. More secure than the rest of the shrine, Nulkineth has turned it into a prison for captives he intends to offer to Maugla (see area **D9**). Both of the strong wooden doors (hardness 5, 20 hp, break DC 23) leading here are locked (Disable Device DC 25).

D9. Open Courtyard (CR 9)

Stunted trees and tangled grass choke this open-air courtyard. A half-broken statue looks to the sky with what once would have been outstretched arms.

The priests used this courtyard for daily rituals to greet each sunrise. The broken statue depicts the chapel's deity, but Nulkineth and his gargoyles defaced it long ago.

Creatures: The timing of when Nulkineth's messenger gargoyle tracks down the nabasu Maugla is up to you, but as soon as it delivers its message, the demon teleports to this location. It's best if Maugla arrives soon after the PCs defeat Nulkineth and are preparing to return to the army, giving them a climactic fight. Maugla is eager to feed—he has yet to successfully gain any growth points, and is becoming increasingly convinced that Nulkineth isn't planning on providing the food he desires. In fact, the demon has decided

SWORD OF VALOR

to eat Nulkineth out of spite if it doesn't find more nourishing humanoid fare when it returns. It scours the chapel upon arrival, roaring challenges and beating its wings until it finds victims—either the PCs or as-of-yet unrescued NPCs.

MAUGLA

CR 9

XP 4,800

Nabasu (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 64)

hp 103

TACTICS

During Combat Maugla first casts *mass hold person*, followed by *enervation* targeting anyone still moving. After drawing multiple attackers toward it, the nabasu activates its death-stealing gaze in an attempt to consume a life and gain a growth point. Once reduced to fewer than 50 hit points, Maugla casts *regenerate* and uses *vampiric touch* in an attempt to outlast his opponents.

Morale If reduced to fewer than 15 hit points, Maugla teleports away and does not return.

E. THE GIBBERING SWARM

Distance from Lost Chapel: 10 miles

Army Travel Time from Lost Chapel: 1/3 of a day.

As the PCs and their army draw within 3 miles of Drezen, one final obstacle stands in their way. The Ahari gorge ahead is filled what appears to be a seething, filthy green cloud of pale vapor, but as the PCs approach, it becomes immediately obvious that this “cloud” is in fact a mass of dozens and dozens of swarming Abyssal vermin—ravenous creatures known as vescavors. These creatures are dangerous indeed, more so to an army of paladins with no real way to damage them, for the swarms are immune to weapon damage and aren't slowed by armor. Marching the army into the swarms is certain death.

Climbing the gorge walls isn't a much better option, since the paladins aren't well trained in such endeavors and scaling the 120-foot-high cliffs would require successful DC 20 Climb checks. Fortunately, a solution exists for the problem. Characters who succeed at a successful 25 Knowledge (planes) check or seek advice from Aron (who's spent some time in the past dealing with smaller groups of vescavors) realize the swarm before the PCs is unusually large, which implies the presence of a vescavor queen nearby. These large monsters typically lie at the heart of an underground complex, where they spend months repeatedly spawning ravenous swarms before exiting the caves to hunt and seek a new lair. When a vescavor queen is deep in her spawning, the surrounding area becomes inundated with the swarms, as the PCs are witnessing now. If the queen can be found and slain, the swarms will quickly dissipate, allowing the army to move onward toward Drezen.

The swarms themselves ignore even the presence of an army of a hundred paladins, so long as the army stays at

Reclaiming the Chapel

A paladin who wields *Radiance* feels a strong empathic compulsion from the weapon to spend a bit of time cleaning the chapel. If the PCs take at least three of the following actions, *Radiance* is pleased.

- Dispel the *desecrate* spell in effect in area **D3** (simply letting the spell run out isn't enough).
- Defeat/drive off all of the evil denizens of the ruins.
- Cast *consecrate* or *hallow* anywhere in the ruins.
- Spend a day cleaning up the ruins.
- Give all the healing potions from area **D3** to an army of righteous crusaders.

If at least three of these actions are completed, *Radiance* glows brightly and its enhancement bonus increases permanently by +1. Grant the PCs 2,400 XP for reclaiming the chapel, regardless of whether or not *Radiance* is involved.

least a few hundred yards away. Smaller groups, such as a party of adventurers, can approach even more closely. If the characters spend several minutes observing the swarm, it becomes obvious that clouds of the ravenous creatures constantly swarm in and out of several large holes spread throughout the riverbed. The closest of these holes on the eastern side of the swarm to the PCs lies about 80 feet from the swarm cloud's edge. The hole itself is a 5-foot-diameter opening that drops 40 feet down into area **E1** below.

E1. Hive Entrance

Warm air fills this crystalline cavern, pulled through a vent in the ceiling twenty feet overhead. A continuous, high-pitched noise issues from the three tunnels ahead, a disconcerting drone melded with the discordant buzz of an angry crowd. The walls, floor, and ceiling of this cave glisten with moisture and are caked with a thick red resin resembling dried mucus, giving the chamber the disturbing illusion of being the interior of some great beast's body.

A successful DC 20 Climb check is needed to descend the 20 feet from the surface to the entrance to this cavern, at which point it's a further 20-foot-drop to the cave floor below. The walls, floor, and ceiling are coated with foul-smelling and slippery resin secreted from the vescavors, which imposes a –4 penalty on Acrobatics checks and Climb checks (with the exception of the climb into the tunnel—the shaft above is not coated with the stuff). Here and there, relatively narrow fissures and vents in the ceiling provide access to the surface, and also allow wan sunlight to filter in. These vents allow vescavor swarms to come and go, but are too narrow for a Small or larger creature to navigate.

WRATH OF THE RIGHTEOUS

E2. The Swarming Chaos (CR 7)

Creatures: There's very little to distinguish the numerous caverns of the hive from one another, but as the PCs move deeper into the tunnels, they spot lone vescavors at first, and soon thereafter larger and larger numbers of the creatures. As long as the PCs remain stealthy, they can navigate these tunnels with relative ease. The vescavors that infest these tunnels are all newly hatched creatures, and are still recovering from the trauma of being born—have them attempt Perception checks at a –4 penalty against the PCs' Stealth checks every minute. If one of the vescavors' Perception checks ever succeeds, the vescavors in the current area suddenly rouse from their torpor and begin to gibber before they attack. Once the hive is riled, more and more vescavors swarm down from above, and in the span of only a few horrifying seconds, the PCs are faced with a fight against thousands and thousands of the ravenous creatures. This initial fight is against two swarms—once they're defeated, the PCs have only 1d6 minutes to get clear of the area before they need to start attempting Stealth checks again to avoid attracting another pair of swarms.

There's essentially no limit to the number of swarms the PCs might face here, but if fights against the swarms start to feel old, you should limit further confrontations until the PCs finally encounter the queen in area E3.



VESCAVOR

VESCAVOR SWARMS (2)

CR 5

XP 1,600

CE Diminutive outsider (chaotic, evil, extraplanar, swarm); *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Lost Kingdoms* 50)

Init +3; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +9

Aura gibber (15 ft.)

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 17, flat-footed 16 (+3 Dex, +2 natural, +4 size)

hp 47 (5d10+20)

Fort +7, **Ref** +9, **Will** +2

Immune poison, swarm traits, weapon damage; **Resist** electricity 10, fire 10; **SR** 16

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.; fly 40 ft. (good)

Melee swarm (2d6 plus distraction)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 0 ft.

Special Attacks distraction (DC 15), ravenous, traumatizing

TACTICS

During Combat The vescavors surround any quarry to cut off retreat, all while singing the chorus of the Abyss to inflict

madness on intruders with their gibber and traumatizing abilities. While swarming over opponents, they also devour any weapons and armor to further weaken those venturing into their lair.

Morale A vescavor swarm fights to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 7, **Dex** 17, **Con** 16, **Int** 4, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 12

Base Atk +5; **CMB** +4; **CMD** 12 (can't be tripped)

Feats Blind-Fight, Lightning Reflexes, Toughness

Skills Fly +21, Perception +9, Stealth +23

Languages Abyssal

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Gibber (Su) Any creature within 15 feet of a vescavor swarm or inside it must succeed at a successful 15 Will save or be confused for 1 round. This is a mind-affecting compulsion insanity effect. A creature that saves cannot be affected by the same vescavor swarm's gibbering for 24 hours. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Ravenous (Ex) If a vescavor swarm attacks an object or structure, it ignores up to 19 points of hardness (hardness of 20 or higher applies in full).

Every round a creature is in the same space as the swarm, the vescavors begin devouring one object on the creature. The object takes half its maximum

hit points in damage and gains the broken condition. If the vescavors attack an object with the broken condition, it is destroyed. An attended or magic object can attempt a successful 15 Reflex save to negate this effect. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Traumatizing (Su) Any creature that spends more than 3 rounds inside a vescavor swarm must succeed at DC 13 Will save or gain a type of madness (determined randomly from the list on page 250 of the *Pathfinder RPG GameMastery Guide*). The save DC is Charisma-based.

E3. Hatchery (CR 9)

Multiple passageways within the walls and ceiling provide access to a large cavern. Its resin-encrusted surfaces gleam with slick layers of translucent slime, reflecting a pulsating purple glow from the southeast tunnel.

Creatures: The source of the immense swarm above, a vescavor queen lairs within this cavern, nurtured by the constant ministrations of her brood. The translucent slime provides sustenance for the young swarms born from her womb. The immense creature, which slithered through the abyssal rift in area E4 to nest here, swiftly rouses itself to attack intruders and fights to the death.

Sword of Valor

VESCAVOR QUEEN

CR 9

XP 6,400

hp 114 (see page 90)

Development: Upon the queen's death, a shrieking ripple tears through the swarms above—over the course of the next 10 minutes, the vescavors gathered above disperse, leaving the way forward for the PCs' army clear.

E4. Abyssal Rift (CR 9)

A long, rippling crevice of nauseating mauve energy splits the southern wall of this otherwise empty cave, a tear in reality through which roiling clouds of mist churn and twist. The edges of the rift pulse and writhe, widen and contract, almost as if it were an organic thing. The temperature is noticeably hotter here than elsewhere in the caves, and the air carries on it the foul stench of burning flesh.

As the PCs watch, a few fresh new vescavors slip through the strange crack in the wall to buzz hungrily through the air. With a successful DC 20 Knowledge (planes) check, a character confirms the nature of the phenomenon—it is an Abyssal rift, a permanent gate-like portal that allows passage from the Abyss into the Material Plane. It was via this rift that the vescavor queen entered the world, and as the PCs watch, the edges begin to stretch and pulse as if something large were attempting to push through from beyond.

The presence of mortal lives in such close proximity to the rift has attracted a vroock from the Abyss, which seeks to cross over. The rift itself is one-way, and can be sealed automatically with a *dimensional anchor*, *dimensional lock*, *dispel chaos*, or *dispel evil* spell cast upon the rift—doing so prevents the vroock from entering the Material Plane. Casting a *magic circle against evil* or *magic circle against chaos* spell around the rift with the circle's energies radiating inward won't close the rift, but it will prevent any other creatures from emerging and drives the vroock off for now. Other methods to close the rift, such as sealing it over with stone via *wall of stone* or *stone shape* can block entrance if you wish, as can simply collapsing the cavern. If the PCs simply leave the cavern before the vroock comes through, the demon loses interest and does not complete the painful transition—otherwise, it arrives 2d6+4 rounds after the PCs enter this cave. It is staggered for 1d4 rounds, but attacks on sight nonetheless, fighting to the death.

VROOCK

CR 9

XP 6,400

hp 112 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 69)

Story Award: Award the PCs 3,200 XP if they seal the Abyssal rift; if they do so before the vroock arrives, award them additional XP as if they had defeated the demon in combat.

Part 2: Siege of Drezen

After the vescavor swarms are cleared, it's only a few more hours of marching before the PCs near the ruins of Drezen. The riverbed rises at a noticeable slope for these last few miles, rising up out of the Ahari gorge, and a stink of smoke and grime can be detected on the wind—a telltale sign of a city fallen to filth and horror.

Founded in 4628 AR by the crusaders to establish a lasting foothold in demon-controlled territory, the war-hardened city of Drezen was engineered by talented dwarven crusaders. These dwarves carved the central citadel from a massive, granite plateau, using a style reminiscent of their ancient Sky Citadels, but the city fell before many upper stories or lower levels could be added. As work on Citadel Drezen commenced, greater numbers of stonemasons and architects toiled on the surrounding lands, and it didn't take long before the city could house tens of thousands of crusaders and the many artisans, laborers, and other supporters of the war effort. River traffic and supply lines from Mendev continued to bring a steady influx of soldiers, even as two massive cemeteries were established to bury those they replaced.

Unfortunately, Citadel Drezen fell to treachery in 4638, when an eager young dwarven paladin named Staunton Vhane was deluded by a demon in disguise and tricked into removing the city's greatest defense, the *Sword of Valor*, from its walls. Now, cultists devoted to Deskari and Baphomet control the ruins as well as the city's formidable stronghold—their fires light the city's battlements, the nearby spawning grounds, and the mountain pass where valuable prisoners are taken deeper into the Worldwound for sacrifice or worse. The Abyssal influence on the surrounding terrain has also dried up the tributary of the Sellen River running through the city, creating a wide gulf separating its once-green banks. These cliffs contain several caves and aeries for gargoyles, harpies, and flying demons, all of whom delight in harassing the many slaves and prisoners who make up at least half the city's population. Soldiers and mercenaries constitute the bulk of Drezen's inhabitants, frequently patrolling the streets and eastern approaches before reporting back to the cult leaders and their demonic masters.

While the ruins of Drezen could hold a much larger number of inhabitants, the vast majority have left for the war front far to the south, reducing the settlement to the status of a small town for the time being. The town itself no longer holds much strategic value for the demons, and they're trusting the crusaders' low morale and the defenders holding the southern borders to protect this once-valued prize.

As Drezen is more of a number of standing armies housed in a ruined city rather than a proper city, no stat block is presented here for Drezen as a whole.

WRATH OF THE RIGHTEOUS

Aron's Nightmares

If Nurah's plan to get Aron using *shadowblood* succeeds, and the PCs haven't yet saved him from his addiction, Aron begins having nightmares during the first night spent near Drezen. Each day, allow the PCs and Sosciel to notice his distress with a Sense Motive check opposed by Aron's Bluff check. If Aron has nightmares three times, he abandons the camp in the third night to seek out the source of his nightmares—the PCs can encounter him again at this point at the end of the adventure, possessed by the mythic shadow demon Eustoyriax.

THE SIEGE BEGINS

The PCs may fear that the demons could simply send reinforcements to help protect Drezen once they start attacking—this is a reasonable fear, since so many demons can teleport at will, and with the *Sword of Valor* inactive, it seems as if there's nothing to prevent all the demons of the Worldwound from teleporting in as soon as word leaks out about their attack.

In fact there are a few things preventing this from occurring, and you can allow the PCs to learn about these things as the adventure proceeds, by interrogating captured prisoners, eavesdropping, casting divination spells, and so on.

First, very few of the current inhabitants of Drezen are eager to call for help. The marilith Aponavicius is short-tempered and tends to punish harbingers of bad news, so the defenders—particularly Staunton—are very keen to defeat the PCs without needing to call on help.

Second, the ruins of Drezen are really not all that tactically important anymore to the demons—the loss of the city did its damage to morale long ago, and they underestimate the boon to hope that recapturing it will bring the crusaders.

Finally, there's the simple fact that the demons are throwing the bulk of their resources into offense. What troops they're holding in reserve are there to protect locations more important to them. Quite simply, with the bulk of their more powerful forces capable of teleporting working along the Worldwound's southern border or traveling to and from locations like Iz and Undarin, there are simply not enough resources left to come to Drezen's aid.

Nonetheless, if the PCs take too long between their initial arrival in Drezen and finally defeating Staunton and his armies, demonic reinforcements will arrive. The PCs can delay this eventuality by staying on the offense, since the defenders are ironically less likely to seek aid from their superiors when things are looking chancy—it's only when they either feel they've got things under control, or realize they're losing control, that they'll seek aid.

This shifting timeline for when Staunton finally breaks down and sends some demons to call in reinforcements is represented by a slowly diminishing number of Siege Points. The PCs start with 10 Siege Points. They gain 1 additional Siege Point for each of the following NPCs still allied with them at this point (provided the NPC is at least friendly): Anevia, Aravashnial, Horgus, Irabeth, and Sosciel. Aron's specialized knowledge grants them 3 Siege Points if he's still allied with the PCs, but this drops to 0 if he's currently using *shadowblood*. If the PCs haven't uncovered Nurah's treacherous nature yet and she remains with the PCs as an "ally," her continued acts of sabotage cost the PCs 1d4 Siege Points per day. Finally, if they haven't addressed the situation with Arles Jhestander yet (see page 16), they lose an additional 1 Siege Point each day due to his spreading despair.

The PCs can earn more Siege Points by undertaking missions or succeeding at mass battles in Drezen (see Battles and Skirmishes, below). They lose 1 Siege Point each day as their troops grow more demoralized and the enemy becomes more eager to call for outside aid.

SIEGE OF DREZEN

Siege Points	Army Attitude	XP Award
0	Doomed: PCs' army takes a -6 penalty on Morale checks. In addition, once a day begins with 0 Siege Points, Staunton feels confident enough in his chances that he risks sending a demon south to the front lines to request help. Every day that the Siege Point total remains at 0, there's a cumulative 20% chance that an army of 200 babaus teleports in to supplement Citadel Drezen's defenses. At your option, more powerful or larger numbers might arrive in the days that follow.	0
1-5	Hopeless: PCs' army takes a -4 penalty on Morale checks; enemy army gains a +2 bonus on Morale checks.	0
6-10	Desperate: PCs' army takes a -2 penalty on Morale checks; enemy army gains a +1 bonus on Morale checks.	0
11-15	Nervous: PCs' army gains a +0 bonus on all Morale checks.	0
16-20	Hopeful: PCs' army gains +2 bonus on Morale checks; enemy army takes a -1 penalty on Morale checks.	800 XP
21-25	Confident: PCs' army gains +4 on Morale checks; enemy army takes a -2 penalty on Morale checks.	1,600 XP
26 or more	Victory Is Assured: PCs' army automatically succeeds at all Morale checks; -4 penalty on all enemy Morale checks.	3,200 XP

Sword of Valor



While you should keep the PCs' total number of Siege Points secret, you should not hide the current status of their army's attitude from them. Each day, inform the PCs what the army's current attitude is and what adjustments their morale currently has, as summarized on the Siege of Drezen table on page 24. The first time the PCs achieve a new tier of Siege Points, award them the listed XP.

BATTLES AND SKIRMISHES

A fair number of cultists and minor demons inhabit the ruins of the city, many of which are stationed within Citadel Drezen's courtyard, but others occupy outlying districts of the ruined city. Staunton takes no direct action for now, knowing that an army won't help much in taking the citadel itself, and it is well stocked to withstand a siege—as long as he can hold Citadel Drezen, what the PCs' armies manage to do in the city itself is of little importance to him. The PCs, meanwhile, would do well to take the city first. While they could in theory stage multiple raids and infiltrations of Citadel Drezen and slowly whittle down its defenses, they'd still need to deal with the larger armies of demons and cultists stationed throughout the city. Furthermore, once these outlying armies are defeated, there'll be much less danger to

threaten their own army, making their encampment a safer place to rest and recuperate between forays into Citadel Drezen.

As the PCs arrive in Drezen, Aron and Anevia both volunteer to scout the city to get the lay of the land. If the PCs let both NPCs go, they return in a few hours with their report, including all six of the tactical observations listed below. If only one NPC scouts, the PCs learn only three of these observations (chosen at random). At your option, a PC who is good at sneaking around can substitute for a missing NPC in this scouting mission. You can even roleplay out this initial scouting mission, but take care if you do so that the PCs who aren't as talented as scouts aren't bored. The goal here is to quickly summarize to the PCs what their options are in taking Drezen.

When the scouts return, the following missions are available for the PCs and their army to undertake. Missions listed as "battles" are mass combats, while missions listed as "skirmishes" are ones the PCs should attempt on their own, since they take place in areas where it is difficult for entire armies to function.

Battle 1—Southbank: A large number of tieflings and human cultists alike are camped in Drezen's southern district, and they're guarding a large amount of what

WRATH OF THE RIGHTEOUS

appears to be captured crusader gear. Not only will defeating these cultists decrease the city's defenses, but the gear could augment the resources of the PCs' army. The PCs earn 2 Siege Points for winning this battle, and lose 2 Siege Points if they fail to do so.

Battle 2—Paradise Hill: A large amount of schir demons hold Paradise Hill, once a district of warehouses and food stores that sat atop the high ground east of the citadel. It appears the demons are now using the area as a prison for captured crusaders—rescuing them could provide reinforcements for the army. The PCs earn 3 Siege Points for winning this battle, and lose 3 Siege Points if they fail to do so.

Battle 3—Drezen Cemetery: The scouts report sightings of large numbers of undead lurking in Drezen's cemetery, particularly ghouls. Until these undead are wiped out, they'll continue to be a dangerous element that could whittle away at the PCs' troops during the night. The PCs earn 1 Siege Point for winning this battle, and lose 1 Siege Point if they fail to do so.

Skirmish 1—Haunted Vault: The largest vault in the cemetery seems to be surrounded by eerie shadows, as if some vile magic were at work within—the vault should be investigated. The PCs earn 1 Siege Point for completing this skirmish, and lose 1 Siege Point if they fail to do so.

Skirmish 2—Ahari Bridge: While the rivers of Drezen are dry, their beds and the steep angled gulches still present a difficulty for mounted paladins to navigate. One bridge is destroyed—securing the remaining bridge will help the army's mobility when the time comes to attack the citadel. The PCs earn 3 Siege Points for completing this skirmish, and lose 3 Siege Points if they fail to do so.

Skirmish 3—Drezen Watchtowers: Citadel Drezen is surrounded by a wall and seven watchtowers. Each watchtower seems to be guarded by a few figures, and each is armed with a large catapult. Disabling as many of these catapults as possible makes the siege more effective. The PCs earn 4 Siege Points for completing this skirmish, and lose 4 Siege Points if they fail to do so.

Battle 1—Southbank

Battlefield: The ruins of Drezen along the southern bank of the Ahari are primarily occupied by cultists, mercenaries, and other human and tiefling soldiers. These groups essentially form two separate armies, both of which must be defeated if the PCs want their siege against the citadel to be able to focus properly on keeping its occupants pinned down.

Which army the PCs choose to target first is left to them, but once a battle begins, the other army is quick to come to the first army's defense. You can assume that the PCs have no more than 4 full rounds of battle before the second army arrives and joins the fight.

TIEFLING ARMY

ACR 2
XP 600

CE Large army of tieflings (rogue 1)

hp 9
DV 12; OM +4 ranged
Tactics standard, withdraw

Special darkvision, sneak attack, spellcasting

Speed 2; Morale +1; Consumption 1
Commander Alarendi (female tiefling ranger 5; Cha +1; no boons)

CULTIST ARMY

ACR 3
XP 800

CE Large army of humans (fighter 2)

hp 16
DV 14; OM +3
Tactics dirty fighters, standard, withdraw

Resources improved armor

Special bravery +1

Speed 12; Morale +2; Consumption 2
Commander Verilenn (male human fighter 4; Cha +2; no boons)

Treasure: The stockpile of captured crusader gear includes a fair amount of magic armor. This can upgrade the Knights of Kenabres's masterwork armor to magic armor, increasing the DV of the PCs' army by 1 additional point. In addition, 15 units of food and water are stored in the area.

Battle 2—Paradise Hill

Battlefield: Aside from Citadel Drezen itself, the most prominent tactical position in the city is Paradise Hill. Originally, it comprised a series of warehouses and storage silos for goods shipped upriver from Kenabres. Fortified guildhouses were later built around it, forming an additional ring of defenses. A vrock named Pozlirt rules this area today, commanding an army of schir demons. The army of schirs have dug in to this hill, and as a result the demons enjoy the benefit of fortifications that grant them a +4 bonus to their DV.

SCHIR ARMY

ACR 4
XP 1,200

 CE Medium army of schirs (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 3 74)

hp 22
DV 18; OM +6
Tactics standard, withdraw

Resources improved weapons

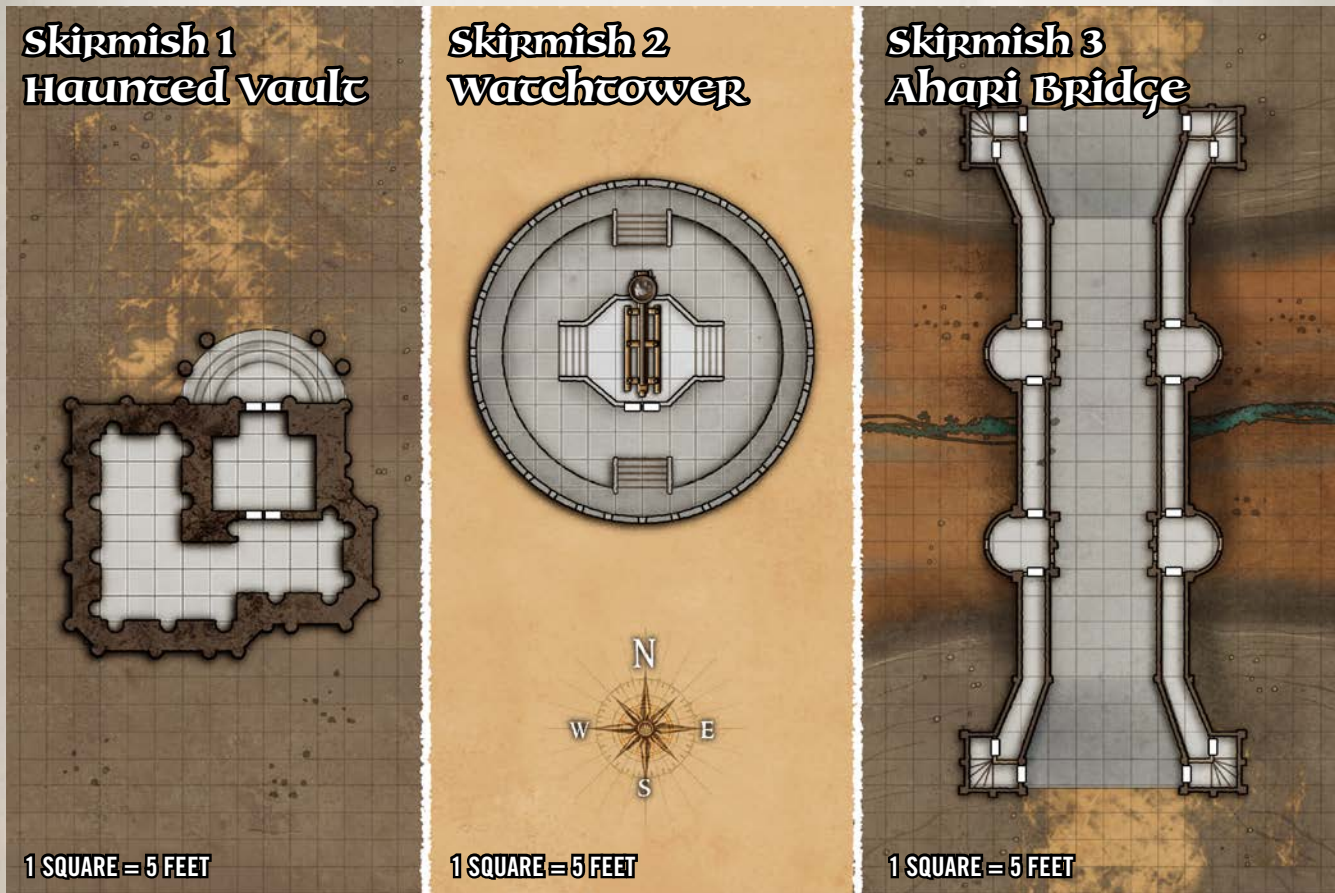
Special darkvision, disease, powerful charge

Speed 2; Morale +3; Consumption 0
Commander Pozlirt (vrock; Cha +3; merciless)

Treasure: Six units of food and water are stored here.

Development: If the PCs defeat the demons here, they can rescue the prisoners, who number just over 200 in all.

SWORD OF VALOR



The majority of them are quite capable fighters, enough to form a Large army on their own. If the PCs defeat the cultists in Battle 1 above, they can outfit the freed prisoners in standard armor and with standard weapons, at which point these crusaders can serve as a second army with the following base stats.

RESCUED MERCENARY ARMY ACR 3

1G Large army of humans (fighter 2)
DV 13; **OM** +3
Special bravery +1
Speed 1; **Morale** +0; **Consumption** 1

Battle 3—Drezen Cemetery

Battlefield: A large number of ghouls infest the Drezen cemetery. While they aren't particularly interested in helping the other denizens of Drezen, they are opportunistic, and each night the ghouls are left undefeated, they attack the PCs' army for 2 rounds before retreating back to the cemetery.

GHOUL ARMY ACR 3

XP 800
 CE Large army of ghouls (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 146)

hp 13
DV 13; **OM** +3
Tactics standard, withdraw
Special darkvision, disease, paralysis, undead traits
Speed 2; **Morale** +4; **Consumption** 0 **Commander** Turgath
 (ghast; Cha +4; no boons)

Skirmish 1—Haunted Vault (CR 7)

In the 16 years Citadel Drezen remained in crusader possession, thousands of defenders lost their lives defending it. Originally, the citizens set aside this field to bury their dead, consecrating the ground to prevent the rise of undead. Eventually, the carnage became so great they resorted to cremating remains and sprinkling the ashes across the field. The magical protections have long since faded, and the cemetery is now a desolate place where nothing grows save for a population of ghouls. Even the demons and their allies avoid it.

The ghouls themselves constitute a separate danger the PCs can defeat in Battle 3 above, but even a cursory observation of the graveyard notes that one vault seems particularly corrupted—this stone building stands at the western end of the graveyard, and seems to be cloaked in rippling shadows even during the day, not that daylight

WRATH OF THE RIGHTEOUS

ever gets all that bright in the Worldwound. The vault is protected by an *unhallow* spell (CL 11th) with *darkness* tied to it. The *unhallow* effect is centered on the center of the vault's roof and surrounds the area to a radius of 40 feet as well as the entire building interior, thanks to numerous vents within the roof that allow the magical emanation to fill the chambers within. This *unhallow* effect is particularly long-lasting, as it is fueled by the unquiet spirits within, and is permanent until dispelled.

The stone front doors to the vault are locked (DC 30 Disable Device, break DC 28), and open into an atrium strewn with bones. The inner doors are not locked. Beyond these doors lies the vault proper. The walls here are lined with niches that once contained the ashes of various commanders from the First Crusade, but they've all been smashed and the ashes strewn about.

Creature: This crypt is the home of a singular undead creature named Moxsahbuul—a winged, ghoulish creature known as a *berbalang*. Moxsahbuul has no direct affiliation with the demons or their cultists, and exists in a sort of uneasy truce with the denizens of Drezen—the demons and cultists allow it to lair in the crypt so long as it agrees to prey only upon prisoners who escape from Paradise Hill. The demons are gracious hosts; every few weeks, they allow a few prisoners to “escape” so that the *berbalang* has victims to hunt. The arrival of the PCs and their army in the vicinity gives Moxsahbuul fresh new victims to hunt, and each night until the PCs seek out this vault and slay the *berbalang*, it uses its projection ability to infiltrate their army and attack soldiers, causing 1d6 points of damage to the army. Alternatively, the creature can attack the PCs in their tents as they sleep.

Note that Moxsahbuul was created in an area affected by *desecrate*, and has more hit points than normal for an advanced *berbalang*. In addition, the unquiet spirits in the area grant the *berbalang* fast healing as long as the *unhallow* effect persists.

MOXSAHBUUL

CR 7

XP 3,200

Advanced *berbalang* (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 3 40, 290)

hp 92; fast healing 5

Development: If the PCs not only defeat the *berbalang* but also cleanse the vault by removing the *unhallow* effect, the spirits of the unquiet dead can move on to the Boneyard—but before they do so, they can sense the presence of other crusaders in the area and infuse these allies' dreams with thanks and hope. The PCs' army gains a +2 bonus on its morale check for the rest of this adventure as a result.

Story Award: If the PCs remove the *unhallow* effect, grant them 2,400 XP.

Skirmish 2—Ahari Bridge (CR 8)

A successful DC 15 Climb check is needed to move down or up one of the steep embankments of the dry riverbeds. While this is unlikely to pose a challenge for many PCs, it's a significant barrier for the PCs' army. In order to reach central Drezen and face the citadel's army, the PCs need to secure the Ahari bridge, as it is the only remaining crossing in town that provides access to the Citadel. The scouts report that the bridge is guarded by feral-looking beasts chained to the bridge's weakened supports and several tieflings on the watchtowers above, and furthermore that each support has been significantly weakened by structural damage. It might take a minute or two, but the beasts chained to the pillars could be driven to tear the bridge down. Marching an army up to the bridges will certainly cause the cultists to destroy it, but a smaller group could sneak in and defeat them quickly without, hopefully, triggering the destruction of the bridge.

Creatures: The bridge crossing into central Drezen is guarded by an 8th-level tiefling sorcerer, eight additional tiefling cultists, and four man-eating aurochs. One of these carnivorous creatures is chained to each of the four supports directly under the four watchtowers on the bridge span. These chains are 20 feet long, and limit the aurochs' movement as a result. If ordered, the aurochs move forward and strain against the chains as they attempt a successful 24 Strength check each round to pull down a support. Each support that crumbles causes a cumulative 25% chance that the bridge collapses—any character standing on the bridge when it collapses falls 30 feet and takes a total of 6d6 points of damage from the fall and crumbling rubble.

Note that while there are enough creatures in this encounter that it would normally be a CR 10 encounter, the fact that the man-eating aurochs are chained to the pilings below the bridge and have limited mobility means that the PCs can focus on them one at a time—the primary danger from the encounter comes from Barrid and his tieflings, and it is these foes that inform the CR 8 score listed above.

BARRID ISEN

CR 7

XP 3,200

Male demon-blooded tiefling sorcerer 8 (*Pathfinder Player*

Companion: Blood of Fiends 20)

CE Medium outsider (native)

Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +9

DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 12, flat-footed 15 (+4 armor, +2 Dex, +1 natural)

hp 62 (8d6+32)

Fort +6, **Ref** +6, **Will** +9; +2 vs. poison

Resist cold 5, electricity 5, fire 5

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee 2 claws +7 (1d6+3 plus 1d6 fire)

SWORD OF VALOR

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 8th; concentration +12)

1/day—*shatter* (DC 16)

Spells Known (CL 8th; concentration +12)

4th (4/day)—*summon monster IV*

3rd (6/day)—*dispel magic*, *fireball* (DC 17), *rage*

2nd (7/day)—*acid arrow*, *bull's strength*, *mirror image*, *scorching ray*

1st (7/day)—*burning hands* (DC 15), *cause fear* (DC 15), *expeditious retreat*, *mage armor*, *magic missile*, *summon monster I*

0 (at will)—*acid splash*, *arcane mark*, *dancing lights*, *detect magic*, *ghost sound* (DC 14), *mage hand*, *prestidigitation*, *read magic*

Bloodline abyssal

TACTICS

Before Combat Barrid casts *mage armor* and *bull's strength* before combat.

During Combat Barrid starts combat by casting *summon monster IV* to summon 1d3 dretches. He then hangs back to attack the PCs with spells, casting *rage* on himself if they manage to engage him in melee. He fights defensively, backing toward the northern edge before he commands the aurochs to tug at the bridge supports to destroy the bridge.

Morale Barrid flees to the citadel by using his wand if reduced to fewer than 20 hit points—the PCs should encounter him again in area **F3**, where he fights to the death. If he hasn't ordered the aurochs to destroy the bridge yet, he does so just before he flees.

STATISTICS

Str 16, **Dex** 14, **Con** 14, **Int** 10, **Wis** 8, **Cha** 18

Base Atk +4; **CMB** +7; **CMD** 19

Feats Combat Casting, Craft Wondrous Item, Eschew Materials, Iron Will, Toughness

Skills Bluff +15, Disable Device +4, Perception +9

Languages Abyssal, Common

SQ bloodline arcana (summoned creatures gain DR 4/good)

Combat Gear *potion of cure moderate wounds*, *wand of dimension door* (9 charges); **Other Gear** *amulet of natural armor +1*, *cloak of resistance +2*, 125 gp

TIEFLINGS (8)

CR 1/2

XP 200 each

hp 10 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 264)

MAN-EATING AUROCHS (4)

CR 3

XP 800 each

hp 31 each (see page 88)

Development: If the bridge is destroyed, the PCs will need to either march their army the long way around the steeper sections of the riverbed or build ramps leading down to and up from the river to facilitate movement—without magic, either of these options

takes an additional 1d4+1 days (which results in the loss of Siege Points and food stores).

Skirmish 3—Drezen Watchtowers (CR 9)

Not willing to leave the defense of Citadel Drezen to the solid rock it was carved from, its dwarven engineers also placed a curtain wall of guard towers around it. These fortifications were meant to expand the crusaders' ability to monitor all the approaches to Drezen, and to trap attacking armies that breached the outer wall between the siege engines of the fortified guard towers and the battlements of Citadel Drezen. Additionally, each of the seven watchtowers is armed with a standard catapult mounted on a turret that allows the weapon a full 360-degree arc of fire.

Creatures: Each of the remaining four guard towers is identical in layout, 40 feet high and hollow within save for a spiraling staircase that provides access to the roof. The tower's edge features a 5-foot-high walkway with battlements to provide cover. The towers themselves are guarded by a group of brimoraks—one demon per tower. The keen-eyed demons keep a lookout at all times, and if



Barrid Isen

WRATH OF THE RIGHTEOUS

they spot intruders, one of them fires a *fireball* up into the air to alert the others and the citadel itself before attacking.

BRIMORAKS (4) **CR 5**

XP 1,600 each

CE Small outsider (chaotic, demon, evil, extraplanar, fire; *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Lords of Chaos, Book of the Damned, Vol. 2* 56)

Init +7; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +18

Aura smoke breath (5 ft., DC 17)

DEFENSE

AC 18, touch 14, flat-footed 15 (+3 Dex, +4 natural, +1 size)

hp 57 each (6d10+24)

Fort +9, **Ref** +8, **Will** +3

Defensive Abilities boiling blood; **DR** 5/cold iron or good; **Immune** electricity, fire; **Resist** acid 10, cold 10; **SR** 16

Weaknesses vulnerable to cold

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee longsword +11/+6 (1d6+3/19–20 plus 1d6 fire), hoof +0 (1d3+1 plus 1d6 fire)

Special Attacks breath weapon (20-foot line of boiling blood, 5d6 fire damage, Reflex DC 17 half, usable every 1d4 rounds), burning hooves

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 6th; concentration +8)
3/day—*dispel magic*, *heat metal* (DC 14), *produce flame*
1/day—*air walk*, *fireball* (DC 15), *greater teleport* (self plus 50 lbs. of objects only), *summon* (level 3, 1 brimorak 50%)

TACTICS

During Combat The brimoraks attempt to summon more brimoraks on the first round, then throw *fireballs* at the PCs on the second. They then all teleport in to attack in melee, using *dispel magic* now and then to combat enemy defenses.

Morale The brimoraks fight to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 17, **Dex** 16, **Con** 19, **Int** 12, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 15

Base Atk +6; **CMB** +8; **CMD** 21

Feats Combat Casting, Improved Initiative, Weapon Focus (longsword)

Skills Acrobatics +12, Bluff +11, Knowledge (engineering) +10, Knowledge (planes) +10, Perception +18, Sense Motive +10, Stealth +16

Languages Abyssal, Celestial, Draconic, Ignan; telepathy 100 ft.

SQ flaming weapon

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Boiling Blood (Su) Any creature that damages a brimorak with a slashing or piercing melee weapon is sprayed by boiling blood, and takes 1d4 points of fire damage with each successful hit with such a weapon. Creatures using reach weapons are not subject to this damage.

Burning Hooves (Su) A brimorak's hooves burn with fire, leaving



Brimorak

scorched hoofprints on wood, stone, and most every other solid surface, yet this supernatural fire does not set alight surfaces the demon treads upon. Survival checks made to track a brimorak gain a +8 circumstance bonus. Against a prone foe, a brimorak can make two hoof attacks rather than just one.

Flaming Weapon (Su) As a free action, a brimorak can infuse a wielded melee weapon with fire so that it deals +1d6 points of fire damage. The weapon loses this ability if it leaves the demon's grasp.

Smoke Breath (Su) A brimorak's smoking breath fills a radius of 5 feet—while the smoke isn't thick enough to obscure vision or choke foes, it is enough to sicken breathing foes who are not immune to poison for as long as they remain in the area. A creature that succeeds at a successful 17 Fortitude save gains immunity to a particular brimorak's breath for 24 hours. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Retaliation—The Beast of Drezen (CR 9)

The PCs' successes do not go unnoticed as they wage battles and fight skirmishes in Drezen. Various denizens of the citadel often watch from afar as the PCs' army moves about, and while at first Staunton hopes and believes the city's outer defenders will handle the problem, it eventually becomes clear that they can't. At some point before the PCs are ready to attack the citadel itself (when the PCs reach 20 Siege Points is a good time), Staunton decides that it's time to cut the army's head clean off, and he coaxes one of his most dangerous minions, a chimera named Soltengrebbe, to leave its lair in area **F23** and to attack the PCs.

Creature: Soltengrebbe is no ordinary chimera. A beast with the heads of a snow leopard, a white dragon, and a mountain goat, it was one of Aponavicius's favorite pets for many years. When the shadow demon Eustoyriax came to Drezen less than a year ago, possessing the body of a crusader whom he'd used to travel to the Abyss and back within, he bore a potent gift for the marilith—5 precious doses of *Nahyndrian elixir*—a potent draught distilled from powered crystals formed from the ichor of assassinated demon lords. Each elixir carried within it the power of apotheosis—if the drinker could survive the horrific pain and transformation the elixir wrought, it would emerge more powerful than before. Infused with demonic might, these survivors became mythic creatures. After she tested the first draught out on Staunton, Aponavicius took 1 dose herself and ascended, and then used the other 3 on her favorite minions—a red dragon, a xacarpa, and the chimera Soltengrebbe. Unfortunately for her, only the chimera survived.

SWORD OF VALOR



When she left for the war, Aponavicius left Soltengrebbe behind to aid in the defense of the city. Staunton Vhane sends the mythic chimera out to slay the PCs once it becomes obvious to him he's underestimated their luck and strength. The chimera is only too eager to please, and wings out immediately, seeking the PCs out at once. The place where the chimera attacks the PCs is up to you—it might attack as they're leaving the vicinity of a Skirmish they just completed, swoop down upon them in their camp, or simply assault them while they're moving about the city. The monster isn't subtle—its roars alert the entire city that it is on the hunt!

As a mythic monster, Soltengrebbe represents a significant challenge that the PCs' army simply cannot overcome. No matter how many brave attacks they mount against it, the chimera shrugs off their efforts with its epic damage reduction and its spell resistance, ignoring the Knights of Kenabres to attack the PCs alone.

SOLTENGREBBE

CR 9/MR 4

XP 6,400

Male mythic chimera (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 44*, *Pathfinder RPG Mythic Adventures*)

CE Large magical beast (demon, mythic)

Init +10/−10^M; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, scent; Perception +17

DEFENSE

AC 24, touch 11, flat-footed 22 (+2 Dex, +13 natural, −1 size)

hp 116 (9d10+67)

Fort +9, **Ref** +8, **Will** +6

DR 5/cold iron and epic or good and epic; **Immune** electricity, poison; **Resist** acid 10, cold 10, fire 10

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., fly 50 ft. (poor)

Melee bite +14 (2d6+5/19–20), bite +14 (1d8+5/19–20), gore +13 (1d8+5), 2 claws +13 (1d6+5)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.

Special Attacks mythic breath, mythic power (4/day, surge 1d8)

TACTICS

During Combat Soltengrebbe enters battle by unleashing its mythic breath, then lands to use its devastating bites against foes. It focuses its attacks first and foremost on the most heavily armored foes.

Morale Soltengrebbe fights to the death.

WRATH OF THE RIGHTEOUS

STATISTICS

Str 21, **Dex** 14, **Con** 17, **Int** 4, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +9; **CMB** +15; **CMD** 27 (31 vs. trip)

Feats Ability Focus (mythic breath), Improved Critical (bite), Improved Initiative^M, Iron Will, Vital Strike^M, Weapon Focus (bite)

Skills Fly +5, Perception +17, Stealth -2 (+2 in scrubland or brush)

Languages Draconic

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Coordinated Bites (Ex) If Soltengrebbe attacks a single target with both of its bite attacks, it treats that target as if the target were flat-footed against those attacks.

Crushing Jaws (Ex) If Soltengrebbe hits a creature with both bite attacks, it can expend one use of mythic power to savage its prey as an immediate action. This immediately deals 2d6+1d8+7 points of damage as it chews on the victim. In addition, the victim must succeed at a DC 19 Fortitude save to resist being staggered by the pain for 1d4 rounds. The save DC is Strength-based.

Demonic (Ex) Soltengrebbe's transformation into a mythic creature has infused it with many demonic resistances and immunities. It counts as if it had the demon subtype for the purposes of effects that have additional effects against demons.

Dual Initiative (Ex) Soltengrebbe gets two turns each round, one on its initiative count and one on its initiative count -20. See page 227 of *Pathfinder RPG Mythic Adventures* for more information on this mythic monster ability.

Mythic Breath (Su) Soltengrebbe's breath weapon is enhanced from a normal chimera's. It deals 6d8 cold damage and 2d8 piercing damage in a 40-foot cone of freezing wind and shards of jagged ice (Reflex DC 19 half). The save DC is Constitution-based, and includes a +2 bonus from Ability Focus.

Story Award: If the PCs defeat Soltengrebbe, they earn 5 Siege Points. In addition, the defeat of their first truly mythic foe is a mythic trial, allowing the PCs to advance to tier 2 at this point.

Final Battle—Citadel Drezen Courtyard

Staunton keeps the bulk of his armies in reserve within the courtyard of Citadel Drezen's curtain wall. The strength of these armies as well as their defenses depend upon how many battles and skirmishes the PCs have won before they attempt this conflict.

Basic Defenses: Within the curtain wall awaits a Medium army of dretches, a Large army of tieflings, and a large army of cultists. In addition, the defending army gains a +2 bonus to its DV from existing fortifications and a +2 bonus on its Offense checks from the siege engines mounted along the citadel's walls.

Southbank Reinforcements: If the PCs haven't already defeated the two armies at Southbank, these two armies join the final battle in 1d4 battle phases unless the Ahari bridge has been destroyed.

Paradise Hill: If the PCs haven't already defeated the schir army of Paradise Hill, it joins the final battle in 1d4 battle phases (regardless of the status of the Ahari bridge, for schirs are capable climbers and can clamber down and up the river gorges with relative ease).

Drezen Cemetery/Haunted Vault: If neither of these has been defeated, the berbalang Moxsahbuul leads the ghoulish army up to join the battle in 1d4 battle phases unless the Ahari bridge has been destroyed.

Ahari Bridge: If the PCs attempt to march on the citadel before they control the bridge, Barrid orders the aurochs to destroy the bridge as the army is crossing. This deals 2d6 points of damage to the army and automatically routs the army.

Drezen Watchtowers: If the PCs attack Citadel Drezen before defeating the brimoraks and disabling the catapults, the combination of fireball-hurling demons and a few extra troops crewing the catapults increase the OM of all enemy armies by +3 (this is in addition to the existing bonuses granted by the various siege engines mounted on the citadel itself detailed in the Basic Defenses above).

The Beast of Drezen: If the PCs attack Citadel Drezen before they defeat the mythic chimera, the monster swoops down to attack the PCs at some point before their army reaches the citadel.

CULTIST ARMY

ACR 3

XP 800

CE Large army of humans (fighter 2)

hp 16 (see page 26)

DRETCH ARMY

ACR 2

XP 600

CE Medium army of dretches

hp 9 (see page 15)

TIEFLING ARMY

ACR 2

XP 600

CE Large army of tieflings (rogue 1)

hp 9 (see page 26)

Story Award: Once the PCs manage to defeat these last armies, they can begin their assault against Citadel Drezen itself—see Part 3 for details. In any event, award the PCs 4,800 XP for taking the ruins of Drezen.

Part 3: Into the citadel

Large numbers of cultists, tieflings, and minor demons hold the ruins of Drezen, and against these foes, the Knights of Kenabres are the right tool. Yet the leaders themselves are dug in within the walls of Citadel Drezen, and here, large numbers of relatively low-level soldiers are a significant disadvantage. Some of the entities

Sword of Valor

within the citadel can cause significant damage on their own, especially when they've got the citadel's defenses supporting them. At the same time, the citadel's defenders can't move against the PCs' army outside the citadel walls. In effect, the war comes to something of a standoff once the PCs seize control of the ruins.

NPC Reactions: Once the PCs besiege the citadel, their NPC advisors all suggest the same course of action: a number of surgical strikes against the Citadel to infiltrate it, take out its commanders, and find and locate the *Sword of Valor*—all before enough time has passed for the defenders to grow desperate enough to call for help. The proximity of their army not only gives the PCs a relatively safe and close place to rest and recover from forays into the citadel, but also keeps the citadel's occupants on edge. At your discretion, some or all of the NPC allies will accompany the PCs on their missions into the citadel, if asked. Irabeth and Nurah volunteer to aid, regardless of whether they're asked—while Irabeth provides welcome combat and healing support, Nurah wants to accompany the PCs to sabotage their efforts within the Citadel. If she's with the PCs, the methods she uses are noted as appropriate in the encounter descriptions.

Note that none of the NPCs are particularly well suited to face the dangers within Drezen—the dangers within are meant to challenge mythic heroes, after all. Having a few NPCs along to help in support roles can certainly aid the PCs, but some of them can provide more aid if they're left behind to focus on their core competencies outside the citadel.

Anevia: While Anevia would like to accompany her wife into the citadel, she also knows that if she's left outside the walls, she can skulk around and cause distraction after distraction in the form of sniping, damage to siege weapons, and the like. If the PCs allow her to undertake this mission, the distractions she causes impose a –1 penalty on all enemy initiative checks inside Citadel Drezen (this penalty does not extend to the Drezen basement). There's a 25% chance each day of shenanigans that Anevia is wounded enough that she needs to take a day off while she recovers.

Aravashmial: While the riftwarden accompanies the PCs if asked, he would prefer to be given leave to scout out the ruins for magical supplies. If the PCs allow this, he returns each night with 1d4 random potions and one random scroll to aid them, to a maximum of 10 potions and five scrolls in all.

Aron: Aron can accompany Anevia to help provide distractions—if he does so, the initiative check penalty imposed upon the denizens of the citadel increases to –2. Like Anevia, he runs a 25% chance of becoming injured each day.

Horgus: Horgus blanches if asked to go into the citadel—he rightly points out that he's not really going to be much help inside, but outside he can help by using his knowledge of geography and what he's learned from local conditions in Drezen to lead a small group of paladins out into the

ruins to scavenge for supplies. Each day, Horgus and his small band recover 1d3 units of food and water for the army as well as 1d4 units of Goods, up to a maximum of 25 units of Goods in all (Goods are supplies the PCs can use in the next adventure to help fortify Drezen).

Sosiel: If Sosiel remains behind, he can support Anevia and Aron alike in their distraction missions—this removes any chance of them being injured during their missions.

CITADEL DREZEN FEATURES

The interior of Citadel Drezen follows the stark practicality of dwarven design. Ceiling heights vary from room to room, but are typically 10 feet. Most hallways are at least 10 feet wide to accommodate the broader shield walls favored by dwarves. These passageways also include multiple choke points and boltholes for added defense, and all doors are made of strengthened iron (hardness 10, 60 hp, break DC 28) and include internal locking mechanisms (Disable Device DC 35) designed to seal off overrun areas. The place is kept unlit (many of the denizens have darkvision—those who don't carry everburning torches), and well-hidden 1-inch-diameter ventilation shafts run throughout the natural rock to bring in fresh air. The overall condition of the citadel's interior is a strange mix of disrepair and cleanliness—the occupants enjoy reminders of the crusaders' crushing defeat, but do not seek to live in filth.

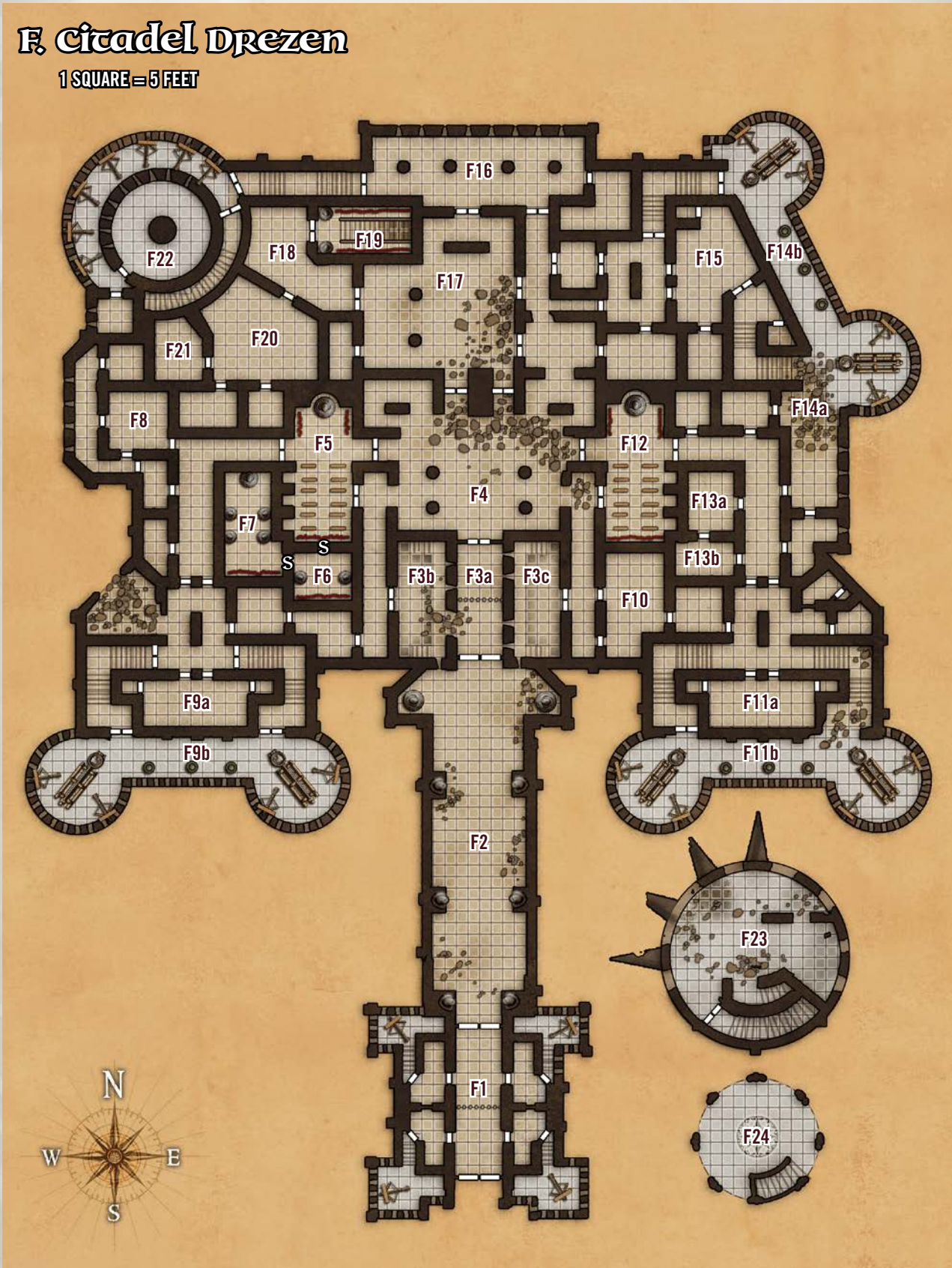
Citadel Drezen is relatively sparsely populated—while Aponavicius ruled, a lot more powerful minions dwelled here with her as advisors, companions, and sycophants. These denizens have traveled with her to the war front, leaving behind bedrooms emptied of valuables—you can assume that the otherwise empty rooms on the map consist of such unremarkable chambers. Each of these rooms has a door that locks from within, of course, so any one of them could serve as an improvised safe room for PCs or for villains.

Aron can provide the PCs with a map of Citadel Drezen—this depiction is accurate in that it shows the entire ground floor save for a few changes, since the demons have made a few alterations. None of the rubble fields in the citadel are shown on Aron's map, and area **F19** is indicated merely as a storeroom—the stairs (as well as the dungeon below) were added by the demons. You should sketch out a map of the citadel for your players to reference when they attack the citadel, adding rooms as the PCs speak to Aron and ask questions—he can tell the PCs what the original uses of the rooms were, but knows nothing of what the demons are currently using them for. This map and Aron's aid grants a +20 bonus on all Perception checks to notice secret doors on the ground floor. Finally, Aron can point out the hidden vault (area **F7**) where the *Sword of Valor* was originally kept. He expresses doubt that the demons decided to keep the artifact in the same room, but it's a good place to check nevertheless.

Wrath of the Righteous

F. Citadel Drezzen

1 SQUARE = 5 FEET



SWORD OF VALOR

F1. Gatehouse (CR 7)

Solid iron portals allow passage through this square, mostly intact gatehouse. A damaged portcullis hangs raised just five feet above the floor.

The locking mechanisms on the doors to this gatehouse are broken beyond repair, a casualty of the last assault that the demons never bothered to repair. The ballistae on the upper parapets of the tower were attended by tiefling siege engineers, but once the PCs have won the final battle, these tieflings are among the dead.

Creatures: Although the gatehouse isn't the only entrance into the citadel, it's certainly the most obvious one. A pair of brimoraks stands guard here, under strict orders to avoid becoming entangled in any battles in the courtyard. They hide in the two southern side rooms, observing the central hall through cracked doors. If they see intruders, they each hurl a fireball into the central area before throwing open the door to attack. If a brimorak is reduced to fewer than 20 hit points, it teleports to area **F4**, where it joins the vrock there.

BRIMORAKS (2) **CR 5**
XP 1,600 each
hp 57 each (6d10+24) (see page 30)

F2. Entrance Ramp (CR 8)

Eight weathered statues of horned demons crouch on platforms that overlook the rise of this massive rampway, which leads up to the north to an atrium.

Creatures: The central four demonic statues are in fact gargoyle guardians that take wing and shriek as soon as any intruders pass between them. The gargoyles fight to the death.

GARGOYLES (4) **CR 4**
XP 1,200 each
hp 42 each (Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 137)

F3. Sally Port (CR 9)

A portcullis of rune-carved iron bisects this entry hall. Arrow slits mark the passageway's walls near the ceiling twenty feet above. A seven-foot-high section near the floor of the west wall has collapsed and fallen away, allowing access to another room beyond.

The portcullis itself is locked in position (hardness 10, hp 60, lift DC 25, break DC 28). The hole that provides access to area **F3b** is real, but the rubble scattered below

it is a *permanent image* that hides a trap (see below). The double doors to area **F4** are locked.

Area **F3b** is empty, and the doors to the hall beyond have been sealed with a *stone shape* spell—they must be smashed down to gain passage.

Area **F3c** is guarded by four cultists who stand sentinel along an upper balcony along the arrowslits. The half-orc rangers are each armed with composite longbows, and they open fire on the room below as soon as the PCs attempt to bypass the portcullis. If the PCs manage to make their way to area **F4** or take shelter in area **F3b**, the cultists move north to join the vrock in area **F4**.

CULTIST ARCHERS (4) **CR 4**
XP 1,200 each
 CE half-orc ranger 4 (border guard; Pathfinder RPG NPC Codex 129)
hp 30 each

Trap: Anyone who attempts to move between area **F3a** and **F3b** by clambering over the rubble suddenly learns that the rubble is a *permanent image* (Will DC 18 to disbelieve) hiding a pit lined with poisoned spikes.

POISON SPIKED PIT TRAP **CR 5**
XP 1,600
Type mechanical; **Perception** DC 20; **Disable Device** DC 20
EFFECTS
Trigger location; **Reset** automatic
Effect 10-ft.-deep pit (1d6 falling damage); pit spikes (Atk +10 melee, 1d4 spikes per target for 1d4+2 damage each plus shadow essence poison); **Reflex** DC 20 avoids

F4. Templars' Court (CR 9)

This once-beautiful court now lies in disarray. The walls are decorated with murals of angels and templars engaged in all manner of foul acts with beasts and demons. Collapsed stone completely bars the way north, as only five decorative columns still support the thirty-foot ceiling overhead.

Creatures: A vrock named Konneshka serves as the commander for the cultists and demons charged with defending this approach to the castle. She's ready to lead an assault on anyone entering the citadel—she opens combat with a stunning screech that alerts much of the citadel to the attack, but only the denizens of areas **F1**, **F2**, and **F3** come to aid the vrock if they still live. The vrock fights to the death.

KONNESHKA **CR 9**
XP 6,400
 Vrock (Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 69)
hp 112

WRATH OF THE RIGHTEOUS

F5. Inheritor's Chapel (CR 8)

Two rows of stone benches occupy face a raised dais to the north, on which stands a twelve-foot-tall statue of an armored woman with a sword and shield. Faded tapestries hang in tatters to either side, and a larger one on the south wall depicts the armored woman on bended knee before a man wearing green robes. Three smaller, human-sized statues of armored knights stand within small alcoves to the west, each holding a longsword pointing downward.

This chamber once served as a small chapel for ceremonies and communions to the followers of Iomedae in the Mendevian Crusade. For a while, the demons had defaced this chapel, but its most recent caretaker has a more insidious use for the room. A successful DC 30 Perception check is required to notice the secret door.

Creatures: A succubus named Janeamine has claimed this chapel as a sort of “workshop” for her crusader pets. The four crusaders she keeps have served her for many months, and are not only kept charmed but also bear her profane gift (the +2 bonus applies to their Constitution scores). Janeamine enjoys leading her pet crusaders in debased prayers and highly sexual rituals where she takes on the appearance and role of Iomedae—it’s this form that she wears when the PCs arrive. She greets the PCs with a smile, claiming that she is a vision from the Inheritor herself and has come to bless the heroes in their efforts. She doesn’t really expect the PCs to fall for her ruse, but if they do, she embraces the most holy-looking PC to take her up on the offer and begins draining his or her life, telepathically commanding her pet crusaders to attack the others, telling them they are infidels and heretics. The charmed crusaders are blindly loyal to the succubus and fight to the death—if their charm effects are removed, they realize what they’ve done and pledge their support to the PCs.

JANEAMINE CR 7

XP 3,200

Succubus (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 68)

hp 84

PET CRUSADERS (4) CR 1

XP 400 each

Charmed LN human warrior 3 (guard; *Pathfinder RPG NPC*

Codex 267)

hp 28 each

F6. False Vault

Two statues stand midway into this room. They each depict an armored woman with her sword raised. Numerous smashed and empty chests sit on the floor.

The contents of this vault were coins and other valuables meant to trick looters into thinking they’d discovered the citadel’s primary treasury. The demons have long since absconded with the coinage. A successful DC 30 Perception check is needed to spot the secret door to area F7.

F7. Secret Vault (CR 8)

A metal rod on which hangs a magnificent banner depicting a sword before a sunburst is raised up in the hands of a statue of an armored woman to the north. Just south of the statue sits a gleaming alabaster altar. Another four statues flank the room, each wearing a real suit of metal armor, while to the south hangs a tattered red and gold tapestry.

Creatures: This room once housed the *Sword of Valor*, but the artifact is not here now—the banner hanging from the statue is a clever fake. Aponavicius had Staunton remove the banner to the newly constructed dungeons below the citadel, leaving behind a surprise for anyone venturing here, for the statue holding the false banner and the altar itself are advanced fiendish mimics that immediately attack anyone who approaches, fighting to the death.

ADVANCED FIENDISH MIMICS (2)

CR 6

XP 2,400 each

hp 66 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 205, 294)

Treasure: Three of the real statues wear masterwork full plate, but the southeastern statue actually wears a suit of armor of the pious (see page 62). Although Staunton wanted to use his brother’s talents and the *corruption forge* (see area G7) to corrupt the armor, Aponavicius forbade it—she preferred keeping it as is as a trophy.

NPC Reaction: If Nurah is still with the PCs for this encounter, she hangs back in an effort to stand by the secret door, intending to slip out and seal it behind the PCs with her *scroll of arcane lock*. She then hurries to alert Staunton in area F2o—she’ll fight at his side.

The discovery that the *Sword of Valor* isn’t here is disappointing to the other NPCs, but not surprising to them—Aron suggests that it makes sense the demons would move the artifact somewhere else, and that they should keep eyes out for clues.

F8. Armory

A large number of weapons are stored along the walls of this well-equipped armory.

Treasure: The choicest items kept here include an adamantite battleaxe, 50 +1 arrows, an arrow of human

SWORD OF VALOR

slaying, a +2 *breastplate*, a +1 *keen longsword*, a masterwork composite longbow (Str +2), a masterwork flail, a mithral heavy shield, and a suit of +2 *elven chain*.

F9. West Garrison (CR 9)

Dozens of beds fill this wide room, jammed together with little space between them. A dozen decapitated human bodies lie in a heap to the west, while a dozen human heads sit to the east.

The crusaders incorporated three garrisons into Citadel Drezen, each supporting the defense of one of the stronghold's battlements. The two small rooms to the east and west of this garrison are used as privies. The doors to the battlements (area **F9b**) are kept locked—when the PCs first attacked the citadel, the siege engines on the battlements were crewed by a band of Kellid siege engineers who are all dead by the time the PCs get to this part of the castle.

Creatures: The leader of the slain tiefling siege engineers is a Kellid berserker named Jestak. She remains here, brooding over the Drezen army's failure to repulse the PCs. She knows it's only a matter of time before Staunton confronts her and demands an accounting for the failure of her followers. She's already executed them, and hopes that presenting this grisly punishment to the dwarf will mitigate her own punishment, but she still worries that Staunton will kill her as well. As a result, she's been considering abandoning Drezen entirely, but she's not yet worked out how she'll avoid both Staunton and the PCs' forces.

When the PCs arrive, she sees an opportunity—if she can slay them, surely Staunton will be pleased! She shrieks in Kellid as the PCs enter: “You killed them! They died by my blade, but you killed them! Lord Staunton will stay his hand if I give him your heads!”

JESTAK CR 9

XP 6,400

Female human barbarian 10

CE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +7; Senses Perception +14

DEFENSE

AC 23, touch 12, flat-footed 19 (+6 armor, +3 Dex, +1 dodge, +5 natural, -2 rage)

hp 140 (10d12+70)

Fort +12, Ref +6, Will +8; +3 vs. traps, +4 vs. magic

Defensive Abilities improved uncanny dodge, trap sense +3;

DR 3/—

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee +1 *adamantine greatsword* +15/+10 (2d6+7/19–20)

Special Attacks rage (25 rounds/day), rage powers (increased damage reduction +1, powerful blow +3, quick reflexes, renewed vigor [2d8+7 hp], superstition +4)

TACTICS

Before Combat Jestak drinks a *potion of barkskin* +5 once she hears anyone attempting to open one of the locked doors.

During Combat Jestak rages and attacks the closest PC, focusing her attacks exclusively on that target until he falls before moving on to the next foe.

Morale Jestak fights to the death (but see Development on page 37).

STATISTICS

Str 18, Dex 16, Con 20, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8

Base Atk +10; CMB +14; CMD 26

Feats Dodge, Improved Initiative, Improved Iron Will, Iron Will, Power Attack, Toughness

Skills Acrobatics +14, Intimidate +12, Perception +14, Sense Motive +11, Survival +14



Jestak

WRATH OF THE RIGHTEOUS

Languages Common

SQ fast movement

Combat Gear *potions of barkskin +5 (2), potion of cure serious wounds*; **Other Gear** *+2 hide armor, +1 adamantite greatsword, 385 gp*

Development: Although Jestak fights to the death, if the PCs can defeat her without slaying her (a tricky thing, considering the impact ending her rage might have on her hit points), she becomes unusually meek. Humiliated at her failure and now her capture by the enemy, she sees only one chance for survival—to throw her lot in with the PCs. She's worked here in Drezen for some time—she knows about the new chambers below and that the *Sword of Valor* is hidden somewhere in the dungeon, but has never been into the dungeon. She also knows that Staunton's brother is dissatisfied with his position and that the PCs might be able to recruit him as an ally. While she pledges her loyalty to the PCs and will aid them in battle up until the final conflict with Staunton, when that battle occurs she makes a quick judgment based on which side she thinks has a better chance and aid that one—which may well be Staunton if the PCs are low on resources. She abandons the party, fleeing and taking her chances if reduced to fewer than 10 hit points. Jestak could, in theory, be redeemed, and if the PCs successfully do so, she could become a loyal follower or even cohort.

Story Award: If the PCs earn Jestak's aid and learn about the dungeon and Staunton's brother from her, award them 4,800 XP (this is in addition to the XP they earn from defeating her in the first place).

F10. Dining Hall

This room contains several long tables and benches—it's obviously a dining hall, although it seems underused.

Demons have no need to eat, but the tieflings, dwarves, and other cultists that dwell here do. They tend to eat where they wish, though—this hall, once used daily during the First Crusade, has seen relatively little use since.

F11. East Garrison (CR 9)

Overtured beds, broken furniture, and the dead bodies of several cultists litter this large room.

Creatures: This chamber once garrisoned the tieflings and dwarves who guarded the eastern battlements (area **F11b**), but when the PCs defeated the courtyard defense, the cultists here found themselves to be fair game for a ravenous, fresh-from-the-Abyss "newborn" nabasu named Daiatan. The tieflings offered no real nourishment to

the demon, and so it simply killed them, but the dwarves provided a delicious repast. The demon relaxes here now, enjoying the newfound energy and strength granted by its gluttonous punishment of the dwarves—two of whom now stand nearby as ghoul slaves. The nabasu attacks any intruders on sight, as do its ghouls. Currently, Daiatan has gained 2 growth points. If the PCs encounter the nabasu on the same day that their army defeats the citadel's army, reduce this total to 1 growth point. At your option, if the PCs take longer than 2 days to encounter the demon, you can grant it more growth points, but take care to not make it too powerful—anything more than 4 growth points is probably too much. If the PCs take too long, you can instead assume that Daiatan manages to mature and returns to the Abyss if you wish.

DAIATAN

CR 9

XP 6,400

Nabasu demon (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 64)

hp 123 (assumes 2 growth points)

GHOULS (2)

CR 1

XP 400 each

hp 13 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 146)

F12. Defender's Chapel (CR 8)

A huge statue of a squat dwarf with a massive hammer and shield stands at forefront of this small chapel, flanked by twin tapestries depicting forges. Several rows of benches extend back from the dais on which the statue is mounted, watched over by three more stone dwarven sentinels in the alcoves along the eastern wall. A final, larger tapestry covers the back of the chamber, apparently illustrating and commemorating the construction of Citadel Drezen and its stand against demonkind. All of the room's decorations have been torn, smashed, scratched, and otherwise befouled—their original sacred purpose can be barely seen below layers of filth and ruin. The three eastern statues in particular seem to have suffered the brunt of this blasphemy, for the entire surface of each has been etched with demonic runes.

Creatures: Eager to invoke the favor of Torag, the dwarven crusaders who designed Citadel Drezen established this chapel to honor him. The chapel suffered greatly under demonic rule, and has long since been despoiled, but the greatest insult is doubtless the transformation of the three statues of Torag along the east wall into animated minions of Deskari—graven guardians. While all three still appear to be depictions of Torag, their demonic rune decorations and their eagerness to attack dwarven enemies in preference to other targets leave no doubt as to their true allegiance. The graven guardians are all associated with the domains of Evil and War. Each is armed with a warhammer rather

Sword of Valor

than Deskari's typical scythe, but their associated domains still allow the weapons to be magical to a certain extent even though warhammers aren't Deskari's favored weapon.

GRAVEN GUARDIANS (3) CR 5

XP 1,600 each

hp 53 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 3 140)

Melee +2 warhammer +11/+6 (1d8+6 plus 1d6 against good targets)

F13. Food Stores

A large number of crates, containers, and barrels of food and water are kept in both of these chambers—enough to function as 16 units of food and water for the PCs' army.

F14. Ruined Parapet (CR 9)

A cascade of rubble has fallen through from the upper parapets into this ruined armory, creating a rise of debris that allows access to the citadel's northernmost parapet.

Creatures: This area was not manned during the attack, and the siege engines kept here have fallen into great disrepair and are all but useless. Until recently, this approach to the citadel was one of the main entrances—a sort of landing pad for flying mounts and other visitors, since Aponavicius looked down upon mere teleportation into the citadel. The area is currently out of service but not unprotected; a group of brimorak demons patrols the area and immediately attacks any intruders, fighting almost to the death—the last brimorak standing attempts to teleport to area F17 to alert the defenders there.

BRIMORAKS (4) CR 5

XP 1,600 each

hp 57 each (6d10+24)

F15. North Garrison (CR 9)

Several orderly military bunks fill this functional garrison, arranged diagonally across the eastern wall.

Creatures: A succubus named Kiranda has dwelled here for many years, serving Aponavicius as messenger, lover, executioner, and bounty hunter. Her current role is as an observer—she's here to watch over Staunton and report his successes and failures to Aponavicius. Kiranda teleports to Aponavicius's side to deliver her reports once per month, but like her mistress, she isn't particularly interested in keeping Drezen at this point—the tactical usefulness of the site has long since passed, and like Aponavicius she drastically underestimates the value to crusader morale should the PCs manage to retake Drezen and regain the *Sword of Valor*.

Kiranda is eager to find out more about the PCs, since if they're able to defeat Staunton and gain Drezen, they're enemies worth keeping an eye on. To a certain extent, observing how the PCs work to take Drezen and perhaps defeat Staunton is more valuable to Kiranda than directly opposing them, since she much prefers to have others face off against dangerous foes. She would prefer to be able to travel with the PCs while they explore the citadel and then return to their base camp, but she knows adventurers are hard to fool.

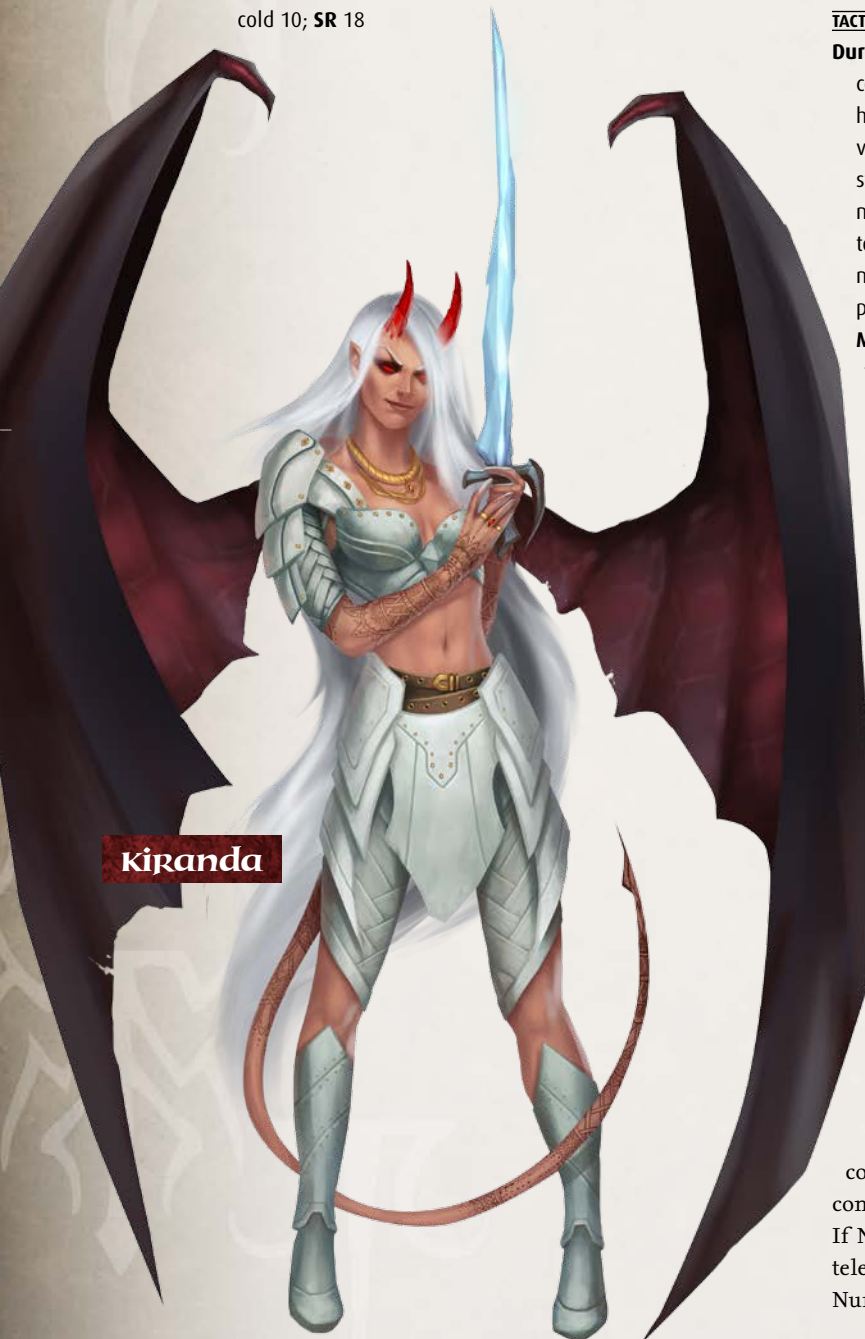
As soon as it becomes obvious that the PCs are going to invade the citadel, Kiranda assumes the form of a human man named Maranse Delaskru. The real Maranse is long dead—a swashbuckling hero from Kenabres who went missing on a mission into the Worldwound 2 years ago and eventually became Kiranda's short-lived plaything. A successful DC 20 Knowledge (history or local) check is enough to recognize her disguise as Maranse, at which point you should secretly roll Perception checks for the PCs to see whether they can penetrate the succubus's Disguise check.

Kiranda goes all out with her disguise. Before she puts manacles on herself and chains herself by the ankle to one of the large, study bunks, she casts *charm monster* on herself, voluntarily failing her saving throw. When the PCs enter, she takes on the role of a crazed man, using her glamered armor to appear to be dressed in tattered plate mail. Her rapier sits on a nearby bed, tantalizingly “out of reach.” She spouts all manner of over-the-top threats about how “Master Staunton will eat your flesh and use your skeletons as bodyguards” and the like, hoping that someone in the group recognizes her as Maranse and thinks he's under the effects of a *charm monster* spell. Her hope is that the PCs dispel the effect to try to rescue him. In this role, she claims to have been controlled by Drezen's powerful seneschal, a woman named Chorussina (in fact—Kiranda has given this woman her profane gift, and while she's deluding the PCs, she gives Chorussina constant updates as to what's going on—Chorussina is currently located below in area G10). She also claims to have endured much as her prisoner, and admits that she fears her soul has been infested with evil and chaos (she explains this is why she radiates chaos and evil if such is detected for). She begs the PCs to release her (the manacles can be opened with a successful DC 30 Disable Device check), at which point she grabs up her rapier and promises to aid them as long as she gets a chance at revenge against the enemy.

If the PCs fall for the ruse, Kiranda plays the role of helpful swashbuckler to the hilt, bravely attacking enemies and offering advice on the layout of the citadel here and there. If she's still with the PCs when they finally encounter Staunton, though, she sheds her disguise with a smirk and joins him in the fight against the PCs. Likewise, if the PCs don't fall for her ruse, she simply assumes her ethereal form to escape her manacles, then returns to solidity, snatches up her rapier, and playfully attacks the PCs.

WRATH OF THE
RIGHTEOUS**KIRANDA****CR 9****XP 6,400**Female succubus duelist 2 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 68)

CE Medium outsider (chaotic, demon, evil, extraplanar)

Init +9; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., detect good; Perception +22**DEFENSE****AC** 29, touch 20, flat-footed 21 (+1 armor, +5 Dex, +1 dodge, +2 duelist, +7 natural)**hp** 115 (10d10+60)**Fort** +9, **Ref** +12, **Will** +8**Defensive Abilities** canny defense +2, parry; **DR** 10/cold iron or good; **Immune** electricity, fire, poison; **Resist** acid 10, cold 10; **SR** 18**OFFENSE****Speed** 30 ft., fly 50 ft. (average)**Melee** +1 *frost rapier* +16/+11 (1d6+6/15–20)**Special Attacks** energy drain, precise strike +2, profane gift**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 12th; concentration +20)Constant—*detect good, tongues*At will—*charm monster* (DC 22), *detect thoughts* (DC 20), *ethereal jaunt* (self plus 50 lbs. of objects only), *greater teleport* (self plus 50 lbs. of objects only), *suggestion* (DC 21), *vampiric touch*1/day—*dominate person* (DC 23), *summon* (level 3, 1 babau 50%)**TACTICS****During Combat** Kiranda delights in using her swift, acrobatic combat style against more heavily armored foes, but if she's having trouble hitting them, she hangs back and uses her various mind-controlling spell effects to get armored foes to strip out of their armor. If she can control multiple foes, she may even have them help allies out of their armor. She prefers to leave her victims alive so she can control them thereafter as minions, but won't hesitate to strike to kill if someone proves particularly difficult to affect with mind-control techniques.**Morale** If reduced to fewer than 40 hit points, Kiranda teleports to Chorussina's side in area **G10** to warn her of the PCs. The PCs may encounter her again in that area, at which point the succubus again teleports away once reduced to fewer than 40 hit points—this time far to the south to report to Aponavicius herself. This report has no immediate repercussions, as Aponavicius is focused on her ongoing attacks against Nerosyan, but at your whim the PCs may find themselves ambushed in the future by Kiranda, as she returns with a few demonic minions in search of revenge.**STATISTICS****Str** 17, **Dex** 21, **Con** 22, **Int** 20, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 27**Base Atk** +10; **CMB** +13; **CMD** 29**Feats** Dodge, Improved Critical (rapier), Mobility, Power Attack, Weapon Finesse**Skills** Acrobatics +23, Bluff +29, Disguise +18, Fly +18, Intimidate +18, Knowledge (local) +15, Perception +22, Perform (dance) +17, Sense Motive +14, Sleight of Hand +15, Stealth +18**Languages** Abyssal, Celestial, Common, Draconic, Hallit; *tongues*, telepathy 100 ft.**SQ** change shape (alter self, Small or Medium humanoid), improved reaction +2**Gear** leather armor, +1 *frost rapier*, *boots of elvenkind***NPC Reactions:** Kiranda is one of Nurah's primary contacts among the Worldwound, although she hasn't contacted the halfling directly since the adventure began. If Nurah is with the party when they meet Kiranda, she telepathically communicates with the halfling to keep Nurah informed of her plans, and if she attacks the PCs,

SWORD OF VALOR

she commands Nurah to abandon her cover to attack as well. Nurah does so, although with some trepidation—if she takes more than 20 points of damage, she flees into the citadel to seek out Staunton, since she considers him a more powerful ally than the succubus.

F16. Northern Arcade (CR 8)

One wall of this long arcade features several arrow-slits looking out over the northern part of Drezen.

Creatures: Thoxels are demons born from insubordinate souls, and are often used to infiltrate and demoralize enemy troops. While a fair number of thoxels once dwelled in Drezen (many of whom aided in the corruption of captured holy weaponry), most went with Aponavicius on the journey south. The three stragglers found here are some of the few that remain in the city. These thoxels have been ordered to keep an eye to the north against any intrusions, and are expected to come to the aid of the defense of area **F23** or **F17** if a fight breaks out there, but in fact the demons are true to their nature and won't bother to aid combat they hear in neighboring rooms. Only if this room is intruded upon do they attack the enemy, fighting to the death.

THOXELS (3) **CR 5**
XP 1,600 each
hp 51 each (see page 86)

F17. Officers' Court (CR 8)

A ruinous field of debris covers the southeast corner of this large courtroom. Columns support the thirty-foot ceiling overhead.

Creatures: Two half-fiend minotaurs guard this chamber, acting as a last line of defense against anyone seeking to access Staunton Vhane's chambers and the entrance to the dungeons. The half-fiends roar loudly when they spot foes and fight to the death, but do not pursue fleeing foes from this room save to chase them into area **F18** if needed.

HALF-FIEND MINOTAURS (3) **CR 6**
XP 2,400 each
hp 57 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 171)

F18. Planning Room (CR 10)

An array of maps depicting the Worldwound and its border nations adorn the walls of this large chamber.

Creatures: Staunton has, over the years, drawn several of his relations into servitude of the Worldwound by dint of his forceful personality and their lack of character. Most

of these cousins, such as Thurl of Nerosyan, he left to their own devices once they were indoctrinated into the worship of demons, but he's never quite been able to wean his brother Joran from the worship of Droskar.

Joran can be found here, seated at the table to the north as he studies a book of prayers to Droskar. He grows increasingly worried not only that his brother has finally gotten in over his head in the conflict against the PCs, but also that his own faith in Droskar is finally crumbling, and by feverishly studying the texts he hopes to bolster his beliefs. Joran hasn't slept in days, and he's been casting *lesser restoration* to keep the effects of exhaustion at bay, but he's still at the end of his rope. Staunton knows this, and were it not for Joran's skill at using the *corruption forge* in area **G7**, he would have had his brother slain months ago—but the smith's ability at working weapons and armor have, so far, kept him from this fate. Still, Staunton doesn't trust Joran to stay alone, and has assigned three babaus to guard him. If faced with foes, the babaus keep Staunton informed via telepathy during the fight.

JORAN VHANE **CR 7**
XP 3,200

Male dwarf cleric of Droskar 6/fighter 2
 NE Medium humanoid (dwarf)

Init +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +3

DEFENSE

AC 21, touch 9, flat-footed 21 (+9 armor, -1 Dex, +3 shield)

hp 87 (8 HD; 6d8+2d10+46)

Fort +13, **Ref** +3, **Will** +8; +1 vs. fear, +2 vs. poison, spells, and spell-like abilities

Defensive Abilities bravery +1

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.

Melee +1 *spell storing light hammer* +11/+6 (1d4+4)

Special Attacks channel negative energy 2/day (DC 12, 3d6), hatred

Domain Spell-Like Abilities (CL 6th; concentration +9)

6/day—copycat (6 rounds), dazing touch

Spells Prepared (CL 6th; concentration +9)

3rd—*blindness/deafness* (DC 16), *cure serious wounds*, *dispel magic*, *suggestion*⁰ (DC 16)

2nd—*bear's endurance*, *cure moderate wounds*, *invisibility*⁰, *lesser restoration*, *sound burst* (DC 15)

1st—*charm person*⁰ (DC 14), *command* (DC 14), *cure light wounds* (2), *sanctuary* (DC 14)

0 (at will)—*create water*, *detect magic*, *mending*, *read magic*

D Domain spell; **Domains** Charm, Trickery

TACTICS

Before Combat Joran casts *lesser restoration* daily to fight his sleep deprivation. Before battle, he casts *bear's endurance*.

During Combat Joran doesn't immediately join the fight—he instead hangs back and casts spells on the PCs, suggesting

WRATH OF THE RIGHTEOUS

that they leave Drezen or trying to blind them or stun them so that the babaus can make sneak attacks. Once one babau is slain, he joins the fight, but he does so while fighting defensively the whole time. He casts healing spells on himself whenever he drops below 45 hit points.

Morale Joran is a coward at heart. If reduced to fewer than 20 hit points, he drops to his knees and begs for mercy. Any babaus who still live shriek in delight at this and move quickly to kill the dwarf if they can.

STATISTICS

Str 16, **Dex** 8, **Con** 20, **Int** 12, **Wis** 16, **Cha** 8

Base Atk +6; **CMB** +9; **CMD** 18 (22 vs. bull rush, 22 vs. trip)

Feats Combat Casting, Craft Magic Arms and Armor, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (light hammer)

Skills Bluff +10, Knowledge (arcana) +12, Knowledge (religion) +8, Perception +0, Sense Motive +10

Languages Abyssal, Common, Dwarven



Joran Vhane

Combat Gear *wand of silence* (8 charges); **Other Gear** +2 fire resistance banded mail, +1 heavy steel shield, +1 spell storing light hammer, 9 gp

BABAUS (3)

CR 6

XP 2,400 each

hp 73 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 57)

Treasure: The maps on the walls show planned invasion routes used by the demons to cross into Mendev, Numeria, and Ustalav—these are all quite out of date (Aponavicius either destroyed or took with her the more current maps), but they would still be quite valuable to the crusaders as historical documents that provide insights into the tactical mind of a demonic warlord. Recovering these maps and turning them over to the crusaders earns the PCs a reward of 5,000 gp and the right to wear a *righteous medal of clarity*.

Development: Once all the babaus are slain, Staunton and his allies in area F20 swiftly move in to this room to attack the PCs—and to assassinate Joran before he can surrender.

If Joran survives, he can confirm that the *Sword of Valor* is kept in the dungeons below. He knows of areas G1 through G9 (save for area G6a) and can describe them and their guardians to the PCs, but he hasn't been to area G10 or above—he knows that the *Sword of Valor* is kept somewhere deeper in the dungeon beyond the areas he's visited. He knows that one of the citadel's most important prisoners—a succubus named Arueshalae—recently escaped, and that Staunton was so furious at her escape he had the two kalavakus demons who were guarding her executed, but he's not sure why the prisoner was so important (although he's heard rumors that she was a traitor to the Abyss, Joran doesn't really know what that means and doesn't really believe it's possible for a demon to turn her back on her nature).

Joran can be redeemed in time, particularly if he's spoken to by a religious dwarf who seeks to convert him to a nonevil deity. Neither Droskar nor Deskari have done well by him.

Story Award: If the PCs can save Joran and learn about Arueshalae and other elements that await them in the dungeon below, they earn 3,200 XP (this is in addition to the amount they earn for defeating him in combat).

F19. Dungeon Entrance

These stairs lead down to the Drezen dungeon (area G1).

F20. Officers' Quarters (CR 11)

Rich appointments of fine furniture and plush carpet decorate this oddly shaped chamber. A mahogany desk with several bookshelves occupies the southeast corner, while expansive liquor cabinets follow the curving northern wall. Three doors lead south and west.

Sword of Valor

The leaders of Citadel Drezen used this chamber as a place for quiet contemplation and meetings among officers, and the cultists have put it to a similar use.

Creatures: Staunton Vhane—traitor of Kenabres and the current lord of Drezen—awaits the PCs in this room, resigned to his fate. Rather than leading the city's troops in battle of the defense of Drezen, Staunton instead chose to hole up in the citadel. As the siege wears on, he grows to regret this choice, since the stress of waiting for his minions to defeat the PCs only increases as he learns more and more of the PCs' continued success against his foes. At your discretion, if the PCs take more than a few days to finally reach Staunton here and challenge him, the dwarf grows impatient enough that he finally goes on the offensive and seeks out the PCs while they explore the citadel, bringing with him his two half-fiend minotaur guards, as well as his brother Joran and Joran's babau guards in area **F18**. Where he confronts the PCs in such an event is left to you.

In any case, once Staunton confronts the PCs, he relishes the chance to finally solve the problem. Unlike many of the enemies the PCs encounter in this Adventure Path, Staunton has no interest in redemption, and if captured alive, he seeks escape or suicide at all moments.

STAUNTON VHANE **CR 10**
XP 9,600
hp 130 (see page 60)

HALF-FIEND MINOTAURS (2) **CR 6**
XP 2,400 each
hp 57 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 171*)

Treasure: The liquor cabinets are stocked with a particularly potent dwarven ale—each of the 20 bottles here is worth 150 gp.

Development: Once Staunton is defeated, the PCs have successfully captured Drezen. Any remaining foes within the citadel walls or in the dungeons below stubbornly remain and must be defeated one at a time in order to fully cleanse the place, but all surviving demons and cultists in the city beyond swiftly flee the region once word spreads. At this point, you need no longer track the decay of Siege Points, for reinforcements are no longer a concern. The PCs can take all the time they want (within reason, of course) completing the rest of their mission in Drezen.

Story Award: Defeating Staunton counts as a mythic trial.

F21. Staunton's Chambers

This spacious bedroom is immaculate to the point of spotlessness. The bed sheets are tight against the mattress, and no splinters mar the floor near the well-used sparring dummy in one corner, despite

its obvious heavy use. An inkwell, a blotter, and a black quill sit atop an otherwise bare desk, with a three-legged stool pushed out of the way underneath. A single large chest sits at the foot of the bed.

Treasure: The contents of the locked chest (Disable Device DC 40) consist of treasure Staunton's gathered over the last year, and include 633 cp, 1,427 sp, 5,786 gp, 376 pp, nine garnets worth 100 gp each, a *pearl of power* (2nd level), a *rod of metal and mineral detection*, a *scroll of divination*, a set of stone-carved dwarven figurines worth 600 gp, an expensive pair of vases worth 250 gp each, a silver coffer worth 350 gp, an *elixir of climbing*, a *potion of neutralize poison*, a *wand of nondetection* (23 charges remaining), a dose of *oil of life* crafted from a *cure serious wounds potion* and the quicksilver from a *philosopher's stone* (if he's slain but the PCs don't find this stash, one of his minions uses this oil on Staunton's remains if possible to resurrect him). Despite these incredible treasures, the most valuable object in the chest may well be Staunton's journal.

This journal records events from Staunton's life, recited from his childhood in the Five Kings Mountains to his time spent in the First Mendevian Crusade searching for the lost Sky Citadel of Jormurdun, on to his betrayal of Drezen and his time spent serving Deskari and Baphomet alike. Staunton feels that if his enemies can penetrate this far into his defenses, at least reading the increasingly grisly and harrowing account of the atrocities he's committed over the past 75 years will horrify them, and perhaps shake their faith. The book is, after a fact, his legacy, since he never had children of his own, nor can he count on his allies singing songs of his deeds after he dies.

You can use Staunton's journal to fill in the PCs on the true history of Drezen's fall. To this day, scholars still debate the identity of the person responsible for the city's loss, and this journal finally provides definitive proof. Other notes of interest include the following.

- A list of dozens of sacred and holy weapons and armor he and his brother have successfully tainted through the use of the *corruption forge* in area **G7** (these notes can help the PCs figure out how to use the *corruption forge* and reverse its qualities, as detailed in the next adventure, "Demon's Heresy").
- A description of the *Sword of Valor*, including Staunton's frustration over Aponavicius's desire to keep it as a mere trophy and not to attempt the banner's corruption.
- Several detailed pages of how he hopes to someday torture Irabeth for "ruining nearly everything" when she confronted him almost a year ago in Kenabres.
- Notes on the shadow demon Eustoyriax, an unusually powerful shadow demon who came to Drezen a few weeks after Staunton fled here from Kenabres. The shadow demon arrived in the possessed body of a crusader named Maranse (a man the diary records as now being long dead

WRATH OF THE RIGHTEOUS

after having been turned over to the succubus Kiranda), and bore gifts from a place called the Ivory Sanctum—five elixirs of distilled power brewed from powdered *Nahyndrian crystal*. The notes explain how Staunton volunteered to take one of the elixirs to test its strength before Aponavicius used one, and of the powers the elixir unlocked in him (drinking the elixir was the antipaladin's moment of ascension to mythic power). The notes go on to describe the grisly deaths the elixirs inflicted on the dragon and xacarpa servants Aponavicius tested them on, and that only the chimera Soltengrebbe survived the transformation. The notes conclude by revealing that the shadow demon Eustoyriax remains here in a chamber below the citadel, where Aponavicius has placed him in charge of protecting the *Sword of Valor*.

- The Ivory Sanctum is the central stronghold of the Templars of the Ivory Labyrinth in the Worldwound, a fortress led by a man named Xanthir Vang who also happens to be the regional leader of the Blackflame Adepts. Staunton records his sole meeting with Xanthir Vang, and indicates he would rather not meet him again—apparently something about the man particularly revolted the antipaladin.
- Finally, Staunton mentions a special prisoner who's been kept in the Drezen dungeons—a succubus by the name of Aureshalae who was captured by Aponavicius. Staunton knows the succubus is some sort of Abyssal heretic and that the marilith wanted her kept prisoner until a special oubliette in the Rasping Rifts on the Abyss was ready for her. The fact that the succubus escaped not long after Aponavicius left Drezen in Staunton's hands is a major point of worry for the dwarf. He's sent several minions out into the Worldwound to track her, noting that her loss of certain demonic abilities is the one saving grace and hoping her inability to teleport or become ethereal will allow his agents to find her and return her to Drezen before Aponavicius finds out she's managed to flee into the wilds of the Wounded Lands. The final note in the diary talks of how he hired an annis hag cultist of Sifkesh to track her down as well, and that if this final attempt fails, he intends to seek out Aureshalae himself once "this matter with the so-called heroes of Kenabres is settled."

Story Award: Discovering the truth of Staunton's journal earns the PCs 3,200 XP.

F22. Seneschal's Tower

This chamber is furnished as a study and a bedroom, but it looks as if the room's inhabitant left the area quickly and recently.

The exterior catwalk features seven ballistae, but these siege engines were not used during the fight.

This room was, until recently, the home of the citadel's seneschal, a woman named Chorussina Domal. When the PCs won their final battle, she gathered her gear and all of the citadel's remaining cultists and relocated to area G10 below, where she's pursuing a "scorched earth" gambit to destroy Drezen rather than let it fall into enemy hands. A successful DC 15 Perception check made while searching the room reveals enough clues that the PCs can determine that the room was once the home of a powerful priestess of Deskari, and that she's relocated somewhere under the citadel and hopes to bring the entire city down into rubble using some sort of ritual.

F23. Soltengrebbe's Den

An open-air terrace looks out from the northwest side of the citadel, its interior shattered and broken. A pile of treasure lies gathered in the southeast corner, while a narrow band of stairs is half-seen just above the nearby rubble choking its entrance.

The mythic chimera Soltengrebbe uses this broken tower as an aerie and nest.

Treasure: The pile of coins and treasure comprises 3,438 cp, 1,319 sp, 7,753 gp, two pearls worth 500 gp each, three garnets worth 250 gp each, eight amethysts worth 100 gp each, 12 agates worth 50 gp each, an emerald-and-ivory scepter worth 4,000 gp, a silver candelabra worth 75 gp, a gold signet ring worth 50 gp, a *bag of holding* (type III) containing a small library of rare books that grant a +4 bonus on Knowledge (planes) checks when they are referenced (these two dozen books are worth a total of 2,000 gp) along with an empty *blessed book*, an *efficient quiver* containing two *javelins of lightning* and 19 +2 *magical beast bane arrows*, an *elemental gem* (earth), a dose of *silversheen*, a *potion of lesser restoration*, a *scroll of dimension door*, a *scroll of move earth*, a +1 *flaming heavy crossbow*, and a suit of +1 *ghost touch full plate*.

F24. Celestial Beacon

The tower's open rooftop seems to have once featured a gold-and-ivory inlay of a conjuration circle, but only the faintest remnants of the magic circle are visible today.

The crusaders arcane and divine spellcasters made use of this magic circle when defending Citadel Drezen against attacking demons, often calling upon angels, archons, and azatas to come to their aid. Unfortunately, the circle is no longer functional.

THE DUNGEON OF DREZEN

The original architects had planned on building multiple levels below Citadel Drezen, but they lost the site to the demons before they were able to begin this stage of

SWORD OF VALOR

construction. Ironically, the demons themselves carried out these plans—Aponavicius's architects and engineers built these chambers.

The dungeon lies about 40 feet under the citadel's ground floor. The ceiling height averages to 20 feet, and demonic carvings and twisting runes decorate the walls. Although demons possess darkvision, numerous patches of pulsating, luminescent red lichen brought from the heart of the Worldwound provide dim lighting throughout the dungeon, growing in patches along the walls and ceiling. All doors are made of iron (hardness 10, 60 hp, break DC 28).

In addition, three potent magical effects ward the dungeon as well—when Aponavicius dwelled here, these wards were much more potent and extended up into the citadel above as well, but with her departure the wards have lessened to their current, unaugmented state.

- **Abyssal Infusion:** The dungeon is strongly chaotic- and evil-aligned as a result, and lawful and good spells and spell-like abilities are impeded (*GameMastery Guide* 187)
- **Unhallowed:** An *unhallow* effect (CL 20th) suffuses the dungeon. A *dimensional anchor* is tied to it that affects all creatures save for chaotic evil worshipers of Deskari.
- **Whispers of Madness:** Demonic spirits haunt the walls of the dungeon, and while their constant whispering never becomes loud enough to allow intelligible speech to be heard, the constant susurrus grates on the mind. At the start of every hour spent in the dungeon, non-chaotic-evil creatures must succeed at a 14 Will save to resist taking 2 points of Charisma damage as the whispering slowly drives them mad—a creature that takes an amount of Charisma damage equal to its Charisma score becomes afflicted by a random insanity (*GameMastery Guide* 250). This is a mind-affecting sonic effect.

G1. Prison

The walls of this chamber hold numerous dark, narrow prison cells. Around the main entrance stands an iron cage, with a cell door blocking entrance into the main vault.

These cells were used to house minor prisoners who were generally left to starve to death. All of the prisoners currently imprisoned here are dead. Area **G1a** and **G1b** were used as quarters for tiefling torturers and jailers, but they are now empty. The secret door in area **G1b** can be found with a successful 30 Perception check.

G2. Jailor's Hall (CR 9)

A long passageway extends past multiple prison cells before ending within a barred chamber to the east. An alcove along

the south wall includes another set of iron doors leading south, while opposite this a barred gate provides access to another set to the north.

These larger cells handled any potentially important prisoners captured by Drezen's defenders—crusaders and spies were typically held here for only a few days before they were transferred on to Iz, or brought to area **G10** for sacrifice if they were deemed insignificant.

Creature: A pair of tormented souls guards the hall—spectres formed from the souls of crusaders who underwent particularly vile rituals designed specifically to transform them into these creatures upon death. Each appears as a horribly mangled human paladin with limbs broken in multiple places, and they reach out to suck the life from any living creatures. They do not attack any intruders within the cells or any demons at all unless attacked first—prisoners kept here learned quickly enough to leave the specters alone.

SPECTRES (2)

CR 7

XP 3,200 each

hp 52 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 256)

G3. Communal Lock-Up (CR 9)

Ten individual cells line the walls of this communal prison block.

The crusaders used this part of the dungeon to separate higher-value prisoners from the general population.

Creatures: A half-dozen soldiers from the front lines of Mendev were held captive here, but none of them still live—all six are now vampire spawn, and their prison doors are unlocked. As soon as they see intruders, they hiss, shriek, and lunge forward to attack.

VAMPIRE SPAWN (6)

CR 4

XP 1,200 each

hp 26 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 271, 276)

G4. Arcane Prison

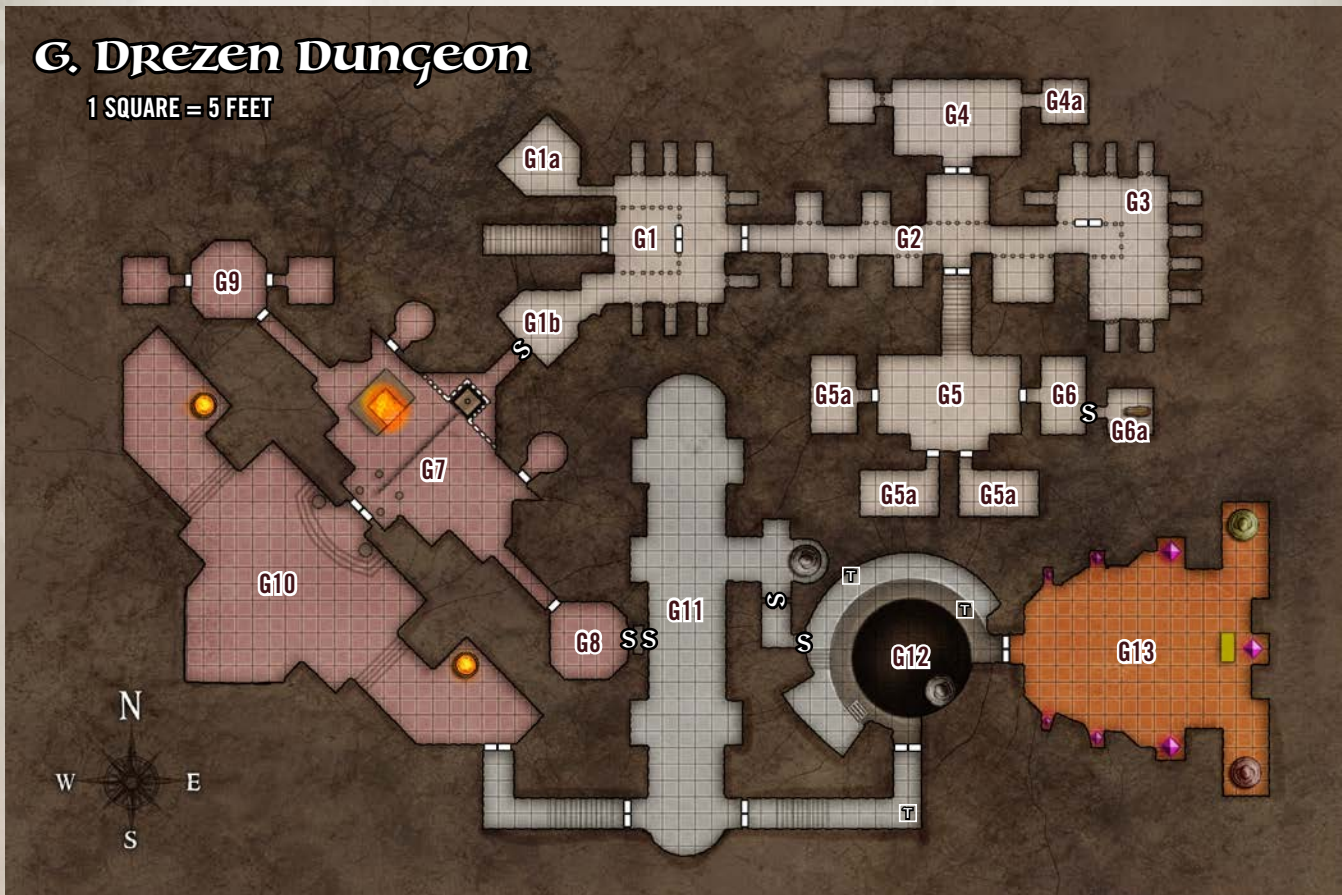
Two large prison cells flank this large interrogation chamber. The entryway to each cell is lined with multiple layers of arcane sigils scribed into the floor, lintels, and even the barred door. While the symbols around the western cell door glow with red light, those to the east do not and its prison door hangs open.

The demons often dealt with prisoners capable of spellcasting, so they provided wards here to hinder them. The wards surrounding the eastern cell have failed. The wards to the west still function, filling the cell beyond with a permanent *antimagic field* (CL 20th).

Wrath of the Righteous

G. Drezen Dungeon

1 SQUARE = 5 FEET



The cell to the east has been used for the past several months to imprison a truly wondrous and dangerous creature—a risen succubus named Arueshalae. The walls of her cell (area **G4a**) have been decorated with hundreds upon hundreds of butterfly images, scratched into the stone by the succubus' claws. While the *unhallow* effect persists here, the Abyssal infusion and whispers of madness do not. The entire cell radiates strong chaos and good—auras that increase to overwhelming on the northern wall, where a short prayer has been scratched into the wall (see the Player Handout on page 47).

While the magical aura here may feel like a respite to all characters, worshipers of Desna in this room feel particularly energetic and gain fast healing 1 as long as they remain within the room. In addition, a character who has the A Chance Encounter campaign trait from the *Wrath of the Righteous Player's Guide* experiences an overwhelming sense of *deja vu* in this chamber, and she knows that the mysterious person who saved her in childhood was the same person who, until recently, spent time in this cell.

Arueshalae's full story, along with the nature of the divine intervention that allowed her escape from this prison cell and the cell that was her demonic nature, is revealed in the next adventure, "Demon's Heresy."

G5. Torture Chamber (CR 8)

This dank hall contains a restraining table and various implements of torture. The sharp tang of fresh blood hangs heavy in the air.

This well-stocked torture chamber has seen much use over the decades—it's from here that the whispers of madness effect that fills the dungeons emanates, and in this room, and each creature in this room must attempt a saving throw at the start of every 10 minute interval to resist Charisma damage. Three of the surrounding rooms (marked **G5a**) are smaller chambers for torturing single prisoners in isolation; these are equally well-stocked.

Creatures: The babau demons that dwell here have two jobs. The first, tending to the equipment and ensuring it's in top working order, is a job they perform fastidiously but without much delight. The second, slaying all intruders, is one they relish but don't get to pursue all that often, so they greet the PCs' arrival with howls of delight (along with telepathic warnings to the vampire that dwells in area **G6**).

BABAUS (2) **CR 6**
XP 2,400 each
hp 73 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 57*)

Sword of Valor

Development: The vampire Theruk Nul listens to the telepathic battle reports while he casts a few preparatory spells. Once his “Before Combat” spells are cast, he emerges from area **G6** to join the fight.

If the two babaus and the vampire are destroyed, and if the PCs cast a *dispel evil*, *dispel chaos*, or *hallow* spell in this room, they allow the tormented souls in the dungeon to move on. If a player doesn't hit upon this solution on her own, a successful DC 25 Knowledge (arcana or religion) check reveals this possibility. This permanently ends the whispers of madness effect in the dungeon.

Story Award: Grant the PCs 4,800 XP if they remove the whispers of madness effect.

G6. Vampire's Study (CR 10)

Well-stocked bookshelves line the walls this room, while a plush carpet covers the floor.

Creatures: Born from the union of an Ustalavic noblewoman and an orc raider from Belkzen, Theruk Nul found a better life for himself when he became a vampire. Still, distrust and resentment encouraged him to move north and into the Worldwound. There, he found the cult of Shax to his liking and became both a priest and an assassin in service to the demon cause. He relishes all kinds of torture, but the bloodier the better, so he can sate himself on his victims. The undisputed jailor of Drezen, he carries the keys to the remaining cells in the citadel's prison level, only retiring here to ponder and record the secrets he pries from his captives. The loss of the succubus prisoner vexes the vampire greatly—he still can't figure out how she managed to escape her cell, kill the vampire spawn he left there to guard her, and flee the dungeon without him noticing, and hopes that Aponavicius blames Staunton for the loss, not him, when she returns.

Theruk is currently sipping blood from the veins of a doomed crusader named **Idrian Vosner** (LN male human fighter 4). Nearly drained of blood to feed Theruk's thirst, he's currently unconscious but stable at 0 hit points.

The secret door to the east can be found with a DC 30 Perception check, but the door itself is locked (no key exists—Theruk uses gaseous form to come and go, but a character can pick the lock with a successful 30 Disable Device check). The room beyond (area **G6a**) is empty save for Theruk Nul's coffin.

THERUK NUL CR 9 **XP 6,400**

Male vampire half-orc cleric of Shax 6/assassin 2
 CE Medium undead (human, orc)
Init +8; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +24

HEAR MY PRAYER, LADY LUCK. FOR IT IS LUCK I NEED IN ESCAPING THIS CELL. NOT JUST THE LIFE BEHIND THESE BARS, BUT AN ETERNITY SPENT SHACKLED TO THE ABYSS ITSELF. IF YOU TRULY ARE THE TENDER OF DREAMS, THEN TENDER UNTO ME A NEW EXISTENCE. LET ME SING THE SONG OF THE SPHERES, SEE THE STARS WITH NEW EYES, AND ESCAPE THE PIT INTO WHICH MY SOUL WAS CAST. BRING ME GOOD FORTUNE, MY LADY. BRING ME A NEW SPIRIT MADE CLEAN. AND I WILL FOREVER BE YOURS, IN LIFE, AND IN FAITH. I AM READY. FINALLY READY.

PLAYER HANDOUT

DEFENSE

AC 29, touch 18, flat-footed 24 (+5 armor, +3 deflection +4 Dex, +1 dodge, +6 natural)
hp 113 (8d8+74); fast healing 5
Fort +13, **Ref** +9, **Will** +10
Defensive Abilities channel resistance +4, orc ferocity; **DR** 10/magic and silver; **Immune** undead traits; **Resist** cold 10, electricity 10
Weaknesses vampire weaknesses

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.
Melee +1 *vicious dagger* +13 (1d4+8/19-20 plus 2d6), slam +7 (1d4+4 plus energy drain)
Special Attacks blood drain, channel negative energy 10/day (DC 20, 3d6), children of the night, create spawn, death attack (DC 13), destructive smite (+3, 7/day), dominate, sneak attack +1d6
Spell-Like Abilities (CL 7th; concentration +11) 7/day—inspiring word (3 rounds)
Cleric Spells Prepared (CL 7th; concentration +11)
 3rd—*contagion* (DC 17), *dispel magic* (2), *magic vestment*^p
 2nd—*darkness*, *eagle's splendor*, *hold person* (DC 16), *shatter*^p (DC 16), *spiritual weapon*
 1st—*command* (DC 15), *divine favor*^p, *murderous command* (DC 15, 2), *shield of faith*
 0 (at will)—*bleed* (DC 14), *detect magic*, *guidance*, *resistance*
D Domain spell; **Domains** Destruction, Nobility

TACTICS

Before Combat Theruk uses his *wand of death knell* to kill Idrian, then casts *magic vestment*, *eagle's splendor*, *shield of faith*, and finally *divine favor*.
During Combat Theruk first attempts to dominate any weak-willed warriors to turn them against their allies. Based on prior experience, he prefers to target barbarians, fighters,

Wrath of the Righteous

and rogues rather than obvious paladins or priests. Against the latter, he casts *shatter* on holy symbols and flanks with allies like dominated minions.

Morale Theruk fights until destroyed. If reduced to 0 hit points, he retreats back to his coffin at area **G6a** to recover.

STATISTICS

Str 20, **Dex** 18, **Con** —, **Int** 12, **Wis** 18, **Cha** 24

Base Atk +5; **CMB** +10; **CMD** 25

Feats Alertness, Combat Casting, Combat Reflexes, Command Undead, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack, Selective Channeling, Toughness

Skills Acrobatics +14, Bluff +15, Disguise +17, Intimidate +9, Perception +24, Sense Motive +14, Stealth +27

Languages Abyssal, Common, Orc

SQ change shape (dire bat or wolf, *beast shape II*), gaseous form, poison use, shadowless, spider climb, uncanny dodge

Combat Gear *wand of death knell* (39 charges); **Other Gear** +1 shadow studded leather, +1 vicious dagger



Theruk Nul

Treasure: Theruk Nul has devoted many years to championing the causes of the Abyss and Lord Shax. The collected works of his study represent centuries of recorded history dating back to the First Mendevian Crusade and the days of ancient Sarkoris. The vampire's tomes also serve as an authoritative source on the Outer Planes, providing a +4 circumstance bonus to anyone consulting them as part of a Knowledge (planes) check. The collection numbers 300 books in all, and is worth 2,000 gp.

Story Award: In the unlikely event that the PCs rescue Idrian, award them 1,200 XP.

G7. Corruption Forge (CR 10)

A ten-foot-wide cage encloses an elevated lift at the top of this high terrace. A line of chains and an array of pulleys allow the cage to be lowered down into the room or moved across the room to a set of double doors at the far side of the chamber. The terrace and cage both overlook a large chamber with walls that seem to glow red hot. Heat wavers in the air, and wisps of vapor periodically waft up from the floor and walls, but the temperature atop the terrace is rather cool. Below, in the center of the room, squats a large forge made of black and red metal.

This chamber radiates strong chaos and strong evil—the whole room is heavily influenced by the Abyss, and it is here that Aponavicius's minions reworked captured holy weapons and armor to transform them into corrupted versions for use by evil soldiers and demons. The heat of the room is contained purely within the room itself—those standing on the balcony or in the outer halls are protected, as are those within the cage itself (which is used not only to allow non-flying creatures to descend the 20 foot drop to the floor below, but also to contain prisoners who need to be kept alive long enough for them to be sacrificed in area **G10**). It requires a full-round action to move the cage 10 feet using the machinery atop the platform.

Characters within the room itself take 1d6 points of fire damage per round from the heat—demons are immune to this, of course, and when Joran or other humanoid crafters need to use the forge, spells like *resist elements* are employed. The forge itself grants a +2 bonus on all Craft checks made while using it, but it also allows a character with the Craft Magic Arms and Armor or Master Craftsman feat to transform a magic item from lawful and/or good to chaotic and/or evil. This process takes multiple days, during which the crafter must toil on the weapon or armor as if crafting it from scratch. Since the *corruption forge* doesn't play a significant role in this adventure, rules for how it functions do not appear here—they're detailed in the next adventure, "Demon's Heresy," where the PCs have a chance to reverse the forge's effects.

Sword of Valor

Creatures: A group of four salamanders dwell in this chamber, bound into service via binding spells cast by one of Aponavicius's many allies. The salamanders serve as assistants for any forge projects in the room, and also act as guardians—the salamanders attack any obvious intruders on sight, fighting to the death.

SALAMANDERS (4)

CR 6

XP 2,400 each

hp 76 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 240)

Development: It's possible to alter the *corruption forge* so that instead of transforming objects into chaotic or evil items, it transforms objects into good items. The notes in Staunton's journal can help this project; otherwise, a character who succeeds at a 20 Knowledge (arcana) or Spellcraft check realizes this is possible. Information on how this long-term project can be achieved (as well as rules for how the forge can be used to corrupt or redeem items) is detailed in the next adventure, but the first step is casting both *dispel evil* and *dispel chaos*—casting both of these spells on the forge within 1 round of each other causes the *corruption forge* to become magically dormant—doing so also removes the Abyssal infusion effect within the dungeon.

Story Award: Grant the CPs 3,200 XP if they remove the Abyssal infusion.

G8. Forge Maintenance

Implements and tools for crafting and shaping weapons and armor lie strewn about the tables in this hexagon-shaped chamber.

The spare tools kept here are used with the *corruption forge*. The secret door in the east wall can be found with a successful 35 Perception check, as can the second one that opens directly into the upper wall of area G11 20 feet above the floor of that room.

G9. Demonic Armory

This wide chamber connects with two small vaults to the east and west. All three chambers hold a variety of weapons and gear of varying quality, but many weapon racks lie empty, as well.

Treasure: Though the army of Aponavicius took the best equipment with them, a fair amount of armor and weaponry remains here. While none of the armor or weapons are masterwork, they're all very solidly made. Although they're not of great value to the PCs, who certainly have better gear, when taken as a whole, the armor and weapons stored here are worth 10 units of Goods, and can be of use in the next adventure when the PCs aid in the rebuilding of Drezen.

G10. Ritual Chamber (CR 10)

A small dais of steps descends into this oddly shaped chamber, while more stairs lead to the northwest and southeast. Lit candles surround the circle of arcane purpose scribed on the floor. Overhead, the ceiling rises nearly forty feet. A large crystal hangs overhead from a heavy chain, pulsing in the reflected light.

This chamber is where the demons performed most of their rituals and worship of Deskari. It's also where Aponavicius and her greatest allies performed their own conjurations—the *dimensional lock* effect that functions elsewhere in the dungeons does not function here.

The western wall in the northern side chamber features what appears to be a large archway, yet the inside of the arch is filled with solid stone. The arch radiates faint conjuration magic—a successful 25 Spellcraft check reveals that this was once a portal, but it is now inactive. This portal once led to Aponavicius's personal extraplanar domain, but when she left Drezen she deactivated it—she now accesses her lair via other methods (see "City of Locusts" for more details).

Creatures: With the collapse of their forces defending the upper levels of Citadel Drezen, a handful of surviving cultists led by the seneschal of the citadel have fled here. The seneschal is a tiefling woman named Chorussina Domal, and rather than fleeing the region, she's decided that the destruction of Drezen is a better plan. She and several demon minions have gathered here while she works at leading them in a long, grueling ritual designed to draw upon the numerous rifts throughout the Wounded Lands and trigger the formation of a new one. If successful, the ritual will destroy Citadel Drezen, affect the ruins with an earthquake, and hurl the *Sword of Valor* into the Abyss.

Fortunately for the PCs, this ritual requires a great deal of concentration, and Chorussina and her demons take a –4 penalty on Perception checks as they stand in a circle and slowly chant, focusing on the immense crystal hanging above. The amount of time they require before they finish their ritual is up to you, but this adventure assumes they're still some time away from completion when the PCs arrive. Infuriated at the interruption, they all fight to the death.

CHORUSSINA

CR 9

XP 6,400

Female middle-aged demon-spawn tiefling conjurer 7/
demoniac 3 (*Pathfinder Player Companion: Blood of Fiends* 20,
Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Lords of Chaos, Book of the Damned, Vol. 2 46)

CE Medium outsider (native)

Init +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +3

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 15, flat-footed 14 (+4 armor, +2 deflection, +3 Dex)

WRATH OF THE RIGHTEOUS

hp 112 (10 HD; 7d6+3d8+72)

Fort +10, **Ref** +8, **Will** +11; +4 vs. disease and vermin attacks

Resist cold 5, electricity 5, fire 5

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee mwk dagger +5 (1d4-1/19-20)

Special Attacks energumen +2 (3 rounds/day)

Arcane School Spell-Like Abilities (CL 9th; concentration +13)
7/day—acid dart (1d6+3 acid)

Demonic Spell-Like Abilities (CL 10th; concentration +11)
1/day—*shatter* (DC 13), *summon monster III* (vermin only)

Conjurer Spells Prepared (CL 9th; concentration +13)
5th—*summon monster V*, *wall of force*

4th—*charm monster* (DC 18), *dimension door* (2), *fire shield*
3rd—*dispel magic*, *displacement*, *lightning bolt* (DC 17),
stinking cloud (DC 17), *suggestion* (DC 17)

2nd—*bear's endurance*, *cat's grace*, *false life*, *mirror image*,
web (DC 16)

1st—*alarm*, *charm person* (DC 15), *mage armor*, *magic missile* (2), *shield*

0 (at will)—*acid splash*, *light*, *message*, *prestidigitation*

Opposition Schools divination, necromancy

TACTICS

During Combat As soon as combat begins, Chorussina quits focusing on the ritual, retreats to a corner, and casts *wall of force* to protect her from the PCs. While her minions attack the PCs, she takes the time to cast *fire shield*, *displacement*, *bear's endurance*, *cat's grace*, *false life*, *mirror image*, *mage armor*, and *shield* on herself. She uses energumen to gain a +2 bonus to her Constitution, then dismisses the *wall of force* to attack. The effects of these spells and her energumen are precalculated into the stats above. Once she attacks, she casts her offensive spells on the PCs while her energumen lasts, then continues casting unless she become confused.

Morale Chorussina fights to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 9, **Dex** 16, **Con** 19, **Int** 18, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 13

Base Atk +5; **CMB** +4; **CMD** 19

Feats Combat Casting, Craft Wondrous Item, Demonic Obedience (Deskari)^{BOTD2}, Forge Ring, Iron Will, Scribe Scroll, Toughness

Skills Disable Device +5, Intimidate +14, Knowledge (arcana, planes) +17, Knowledge (engineering, history) +10, Knowledge (religion) +11, Perception +3, Sense Motive +14, Spellcraft +17

Languages Abyssal, Common, Hallit

SQ arcane bond (*ring of forcefangs*), damned, demonic mark, profane gift, summoner's charm (3 rounds)

Combat Gear *scroll of dimension door*, *scroll of dispel magic*;

Other Gear mwk dagger, *cloak of resistance* +2, *headband of vast intelligence* +2 (grants ranks in Sense Motive), *ring of forcefangs*^{UE}, *ring of protection* +2

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Damned (Ex) If Chorussina dies, her soul travels to Deskari—a successful DC 20 caster level check is required to bring her back to life.

Demonic Mark (Ex) Deskari's rune marks the back of Chorussina's neck; she can use this mark once per day as she casts a spell to not expend that spell as it is cast—doing so gives the chaotic and evil descriptors to the spell.

Energumen (Su) Once per day, Chorussina can open her soul to a form of demonic possession for 3 rounds, during which time she gains a +2 profane bonus to an ability score of her choice. After these rounds expire, she becomes confused for 3 rounds as the spirit then revels in full control of her body; she can attempt a successful 25 Will save to end the confusion at the start of each round as a free action.



Chorussina

Sword of Valor

SCHIRS (3)

CR 4

XP 1,200 each

hp 37 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 3 74)

G11. Hall of Deception (CR 10)

Swaths of pulsating red lichen illuminate this long, 30-foot-high, alcove-lined hall. The alcoves themselves display elaborate, colorful murals of demonic entities, each with inscriptions chiseled into the stone below them. At the far end of the hall stands a massive iron framework that displays a red banner.

What appears to be the *Sword of Valor* on display in the northern part of the hall is in fact a *permanent image* meant to lure intruders near. Each of the murals on the walls depicts the demon lord Deskari mutilating and savaging a different deity—Iomedae, Sarenrae, Torag, Desna, and Shelyn.

One of the alcoves is larger than the others. This one contains a small shrine devoted to Deskari, and includes a lifelike statue of the insectoid demon lord. A secret door in the south wall of this alcove can be located with a successful 30 Perception check, as can the secret door leading to area G8 (note that this secret door is 20 feet off the ground).

Trap: The trap is triggered as soon as anyone attempts to interact with the illusory *Sword of Valor* or attempts to leave the room. When it's triggered, the murals disgorge five living, breathing Deskaris who attack up to five different targets, affecting these victims as if by *phantasmal killer*, save that any creature slain by this effect doesn't die—rather, it is rendered unconscious but stable at –1 hit points and is driven insane, gaining psychosis (*GameMastery Guide* 251) and secretly becoming chaotic evil. A worshiper of one of the five deity victims takes a –2 penalty on her saving throw.

DEATH OF RIGHTEOUSNESS (5)

CR 5

XP 1,600 each

Type magic; Perception DC 29; Disable Device DC 29

EFFECTS

Trigger location; **Reset** none

Effect spell effect (variant *phantasmal killer*, Will/Fortitude DC 16); multiple targets (up to 5 targets in area G11)

G12. Gauntlet of Ruin (CR 10)

A five-foot ledge runs the length of this circular pit. A second elevated ledge stands above the ledge with a short series of steps rising to a small platform ahead of it. To the southeast, a giant statue of a six-armed woman with a serpentine body rises out of the pit. It looms over each ledge with outstretched arms bearing an intimidating array of exotic weapons.

The statue in this chamber depicts the marilith general, Aponavicius, armed with a katana, a shotel, a falcata, a

khopesh, and a kusarigama—it can be identified as such with a successful DC 15 Knowledge (local) check. The pit itself is 40 feet deep, but appears to be 10 feet deep. In fact, the 10-foot-deep floor is in fact an *illusory wall*, with the real floor being 30 feet below this and covered by a glistening colony of green slime. The statue sits atop a 30-foot-tall pillar so that it appears to sit on the pit's false floor.

Traps: While the statue of Aponavicius looks intimidating, the traps that guard this chamber are the true perils. Each one is identical: when a creature steps in the area indicated on the map, the wall facing the pit pulses with mauve energy as a telekinetic pulse attempts to hurl the victim into the pit.

TELEKINISIS TRAPS (3)

CR 7

XP 3,200 each

Type magic; Perception DC 30; Disable Device DC 30

EFFECTS

Trigger location; **Reset** none

Effect spell effect (*telekinesis*, bull rush, +12 CMB check); 40-foot-deep pit (4d6 falling damage); green slime (*Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook* 416)

G13. Chasm of Shadows (CR 11)

This chamber is cloaked in *deeper darkness*. If the PCs manage to remove this effect, read them the following.

The north and south walls of this chamber feature three alcoves each, and each contains a large, jagged purple crystal on a pedestal. A seventh crystal sits on a seventh pedestal to east, just behind a marble slab on which sits a crumpled red banner. Two statues of demonic figures flank this slab in alcoves—the northern one depicts a goat-headed winged demon and the southern one is an insectoid horror armed with a scythe.

The seven crystals in this room are rock crystals carved to resemble *Nahyndrian crystals*. All seven radiate faint chaos and evil, but are relatively valueless. The northern statue depicts Baphomet, while the southern one depicts Deskari.

Creature: The chamber itself has served as the vault for the *Sword of Valor* for many decades. Until recently, its guardian was a snakelike demonic monster called a xacarba, but after this creature was destroyed by the side effects of a *Nahyndrian elixir*, the mythic shadow demon Eustoyriax was appointed the chamber's new guardian. If Aron has managed to slip away from the PCs while under the influence of *shadowblood*, he becomes possessed by Eustoyriax, and the PCs encounter him here, acting as the guardian of the *Sword of Valor*. While possessing Aron, the demon fights with a vengeance, knowing that Aron's death only means the demon needs to finish the fight in his true form.

An experienced, manipulative demon, Eustoyriax has lived many centuries in service to Baphomet, spying and

WRATH OF THE RIGHTEOUS

cultivating secret societies and conspiracies to tear down the trust between the crusading armies of Mendev. The demon is frustrated by having to serve as a guardian in this room, but he knows better than to disobey a demon as powerful as Aponavicius, so he does his best to guard the *Sword of Valor* from all intruders.

EUSTOYRIAX

CR 11/MR 4

XP 12,800

Male advanced mythic shadow demon (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 67, 294; *Pathfinder RPG Mythic Adventures*)

CE Medium outsider (chaotic, demon, evil, extraplanar, incorporeal, mythic)

Init +10; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., see in darkness; Perception +25



Eustoyriax

DEFENSE

AC 25, touch 25, flat-footed 17 (+7 deflection, +6 Dex, +2 dodge)

hp 155 (10d10+100)

Fort +9, **Ref** +13, **Will** +11

Defensive Abilities endure sunlight, incorporeal; **DR** 10/cold iron and epic or good and epic; **Immune** cold, electricity, poison; **Resist** acid 10, fire 10; **SR** 21+

OFFENSE

Speed fly 40 ft. (perfect)

Melee bite +16 (1d8 plus 1d6 cold), 2 claws +16 (1d6 plus 1d6 cold)

Special Attacks mythic power (4/day, surge 1d8), possession mastery, pounce, shadow blend, sprint

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 10th; concentration +17)

At will—*deeper darkness*, *fear* (DC 21), *greater teleport* (self only), *telekinesis* (DC 22), *summon* (level 2, 1d3 shadows, 75%)

3/day—*magic jar* (DC 24), *shadow conjuration* (DC 21), *shadow evocation* (DC 22)

1/day—*summon* (level 3, 1 shadow demon 50%)

TACTICS

During Combat Eustoyriax tries to possess any obvious healers in the group for the first 3 rounds of combat before switching to physical attacks. If the doors to area **G12** are open, he uses telekinesis to try to push foes into the pit in that room.

Morale Eustoyriax fights to the death.

STATISTICS

Str —, **Dex** 22, **Con** 23, **Int** 18, **Wis** 18, **Cha** 25

Base Atk +10; **CMB** +16; **CMD** 35

Feats Ability Focus (*magic jar*), Blind-Fight, Combat Reflexes^M, Dodge^M, Improved Initiative

Skills Acrobatics +19 (+7 when jumping), Bluff +20, Fly +27, Intimidate +17, Knowledge (arcana) +17, Knowledge (local) +17, Knowledge (planes) +17, Perception +25, Sense Motive +17, Stealth +19

Languages Abyssal, Common; telepathy 100 ft.

SQ shadowblood

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Endure Sunlight (Ex) Eustoyriax does not possess the standard shadow demon weakness of sunlight powerlessness.

Possession Mastery (Su) Eustoyriax can use *magic jar* three times per day. When he affects a creature with this ability, he can use all of its abilities, including spellcasting.

Shadowblood (Su) As a standard action once per day while possessing a living creature, Eustoyriax can create a single dose of *shadowblood* by cutting his borrowed flesh and allowing the blood to fill a vial.

Treasure: The *Sword of Valor* lies in a heap on the slab of marble. The artifact's betrayal and 75 years of possession by demons haven't diminished its resilience—it's just as difficult to destroy as ever and is still protected by a *dimensional anchor* effect, but its other powers lie dormant until it is touched by a lawful good character or any

Sword of Valor



good-aligned divine spellcaster. At this point, the artifact wakens, imparting its abilities to the person who activated it, and making the battle against Eustoyriax much easier!

Story Award: Reclaiming the *Sword of Valor* and defeating its mythic shadow demon guardian is a mythic trial.

Concluding the Adventure

Once both Citadel Drezen and the *Sword of Valor* are recovered, the Fifth Crusade gains a renewed foothold in the Worldwound and a potent symbol to rally their armies against the demons. Several pieces of key information the PCs likely discovered while exploring the citadel certainly suggest future missions, such as tracking down the supposedly redeemed succubus Arueshalae or seeking the source of the *Nahyndrian crystals*, but before such missions can be undertaken, the PCs need to help get Drezen back up on its metaphorical feet.

Many of the foes in this adventure can be redeemed if captured—such opportunities decline in future adventures as the PCs begin to face more and more devoted minions of the demon lords. Staunton Vhane himself is

one such foe who is beyond redemption—in fact, if he's slain, his unquiet spirit might linger, transforming him into a graveknight if his armor isn't completely destroyed. If you wish to have Staunton return as a graveknight, you can use him to hound the PCs as you wish in future adventures—this undead antipaladin has no official role to play in future *Wrath of the Righteous* adventures.

Furthermore, if one of the PCs still wields the sword *Radiance*, recovered in the previous adventure, the liberation of Drezen and recovery of the *Sword of Valor* cause the sword's latent magical properties to further resurface. In the hands of a paladin, its enhancement bonus is now 1 higher than normal.

For now, the PCs have earned the right and luxury of a short rest. Word comes soon after the *Sword of Valor's* recovery in the form of a *sending* from one of Queen Galfrey's aides that more soldiers are marching north to aid in the occupation of Drezen, and that they should arrive very soon. But the PCs should know better than to get comfortable, for the horrors that await them inside the Worldwound itself shall soon make themselves dreadfully clear in “Demon's Heresy.”

WRATH OF THE
RIGHTEOUS

ARON KIR

Haggard and beleaguered, Aron Kir has the look of a man haunted by his own weaknesses and worn down by the loss of too many friends.

ARON KIR**CR 5****XP 1,600**

Male human rogue 5/low templar 1 (*Pathfinder Campaign Setting: The Inner Sea World Guide* 280)

N Medium humanoid (human)

Init +3; **Senses** Perception -1

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 13, flat-footed 16 (+5 armor, +3 Dex, +1 shield)

hp 54 (6 HD; 5d8+1d10+23)

Fort +4, **Ref** +7, **Will** +0; +1 vs. traps

Defensive Abilities evasion, trap sense +1, uncanny dodge

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee +1 *short sword* +6 (1d6+3/19-20), mwk light spiked shield +6 (1d4+1)

Ranged dagger +7 (1d4+2/19-20)

Special Attacks crusader +1, sneak attack +3d6

TACTICS

During Combat Aron fights with an intense focus, moving in to engage foes in melee as swiftly as possible and staying mobile via 5-foot steps to try to flank. He attacks with his sword and shield, using them to great effect when he can make sneak attacks. When facing foes on his own where he can't get sneak attacks in, Aron fights defensively and does his best to reposition himself closer to allies.

Morale Aron is no coward, but he's also a realist. If faced with no chance at securing an advantage in combat, he withdraws and attempts to escape, either to strike soon thereafter in ambush or to return with allies. Only if his lover Sosiel is in danger does Aron never retreat from battle, regardless of the odds.

STATISTICS

Str 14, **Dex** 16, **Con** 14, **Int** 13, **Wis** 8, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +4; **CMB** +6; **CMD** 19

Feats Improved Shield Bash, Mounted Combat, Skill Focus (Knowledge [engineering]), Toughness, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Finesse

Skills Acrobatics +11, Bluff +11, Craft (alchemy) +6, Disable Device +13, Disguise +2, Knowledge (engineering) +10, Knowledge (local) +8, Knowledge (nobility) +10, Linguistics +10, Ride +8, Sleight of Hand +11

Languages Abyssal, Ancient Osiriani, Celestial, Common, Dwarven, Halfling, Hallit, Osiriani

SQ flag of convenience, rogue talents (combat trick, finesse rogue), trapfinding +2

Combat Gear *potions of cure light wounds* (2), *potion of invisibility*, *potions of lesser restoration* (2); **Other Gear** +1 *chain shirt*, mwk light spiked steel shield, +1 *short sword*, dagger, bedroll, cold-weather outfit, dagger, flint and steel, mwk backpack, mwk thieves' tools, rations (5 days), traveler's outfit, waterskin, winter blanket, 62 gp, 4 sp, 3 cp

Aron Kir grew up on the streets of Cassomir, working as a burglar in Dog's Teeth after his parents were thrown in prison for life on charges of treason (rightfully prosecuted, Aron is always quick to say). After establishing a solid reputation for disarming traps and locks, he joined a local gang as a more lucrative approach to a life of crime. Success came easily in those days, and he was rewarded handsomely for his contributions. Flush with coin, he soon became a frequent visitor to the brothels and pesh dens along the waterfront, indulging in all manner of decadent behaviors and addictions. This led to a gradual erosion of his abilities and a slip-up on a high-profile job that landed him in prison. Eventually, the Taldan magistrates sentenced him to a 3-year tour in the Worldwound as part of the Condemned—a military unit of low-risk criminals conscripted as disposable soldiers and frontline fodder in the Mendevian Crusades.

This life-changing event provided Aron with much needed structure and discipline, enabling him to survive and even serve with distinction. He also found religion in the war-torn north. Rather than a specific faith, he chose to honor all of the goodly deities, hoping they'd watch over him as he served penance while fighting back demons on their behalf. At the conclusion of his tour, Aron volunteered to stay on, and was reassigned from the Condemned to a larger force of trained crusaders. Unfortunately, this landed him with a band of mercenaries known as the Kenabres Wolves. These were mostly men and women of low character, many of whom had lost themselves to even harder drugs than Aron was accustomed to—drugs such as *demon blood* and *shadowblood* (see *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Lords of Chaos, Book of the Damned*, Vol. 2 44 and page 71 of "Wages of Sin," respectively). It wasn't long until Aron was mired in an addiction that challenged his fragile new faith.

NPC Gallery

Once again, Aron's addictions led to inattention on the battlefield and the death of several friends. He felt directly responsible for their fate and entered a deep depression as he fought through withdrawal. In desperation, he sought the aid of the church of Shelyn in Kenabres. There he met Sosciel Vaenic, a priest of Shelyn who eventually became far more than a friend. Sosciel has provided Aron with much needed ballast and support in his life. With the cleric's assistance, Aron broke through his addiction again and started contributing to the crusaders in Kenabres. Despite a few relapses, his ability with traps came to the attention of the dwarven engineers constructing defenses all along the Worldwound border. They soon put him to work, sharing stories and details about their own trap designs and fortifications dating as far back as Citadel Drezen and the First Mendevian Crusade. Aron readily absorbed this information and became one of their best students, distinguishing himself yet again.

A few weeks before the fall of Kenabres, Aron accepted a temporary post at Clydwell Keep, where he was to aid a team of engineers sent to overhaul and maintain the traps and defenses of the aging fortress. He'd barely started his work there when the explosion of Kenabres's *wardstone* threw his world into chaos. He almost abandoned his post to rush back to the city to find his lover, but he knew Sosciel would never approve of him abandoning his current charge. And so, against his urges, Aron remained at Clydwell Keep and aided in the castle's defense against numerous demonic assaults. The last of these was the worst—a pair of enormous *ulkreths* (*Pathfinder Adventure Path* #73 82) and a small army of lesser demons attacked the castle and destroyed several of the outer walls. The defenders were looking death in the eye when the PCs finished their task and unleashed the full final fury of the *wardstones*. The blast of holy fire slew the demons and saved everyone in the keep. Aron helped ensure the place was secure, then returned to Kenabres as soon as he could, eventually reuniting with Sosciel a harrowing few hours after finding the church of Shelyn in ruins.

With Sosciel's assistance, Aron continues to do his best to look and act the part of the dutiful crusader so can he keep his drug-addled past behind him. Even so, he constantly struggles with his inner demons, sometimes turning morose and introspective as old cravings hit him. During these times, he often busies himself by meticulously caring for his weapons and armor, all in an effort to keep his hands from shaking when the *shadowblood* calls to him. When traveling, he shares a small tent with Sosciel, as he depends on the priest to help him through his worst episodes in the darkest parts of the long nights. His affinity for dwarven culture leads him to befriend any dwarven PCs and respect their opinions in all matters.

Campaign Role

Aron plays a pivotal role in "Sword of Valor"; he possesses specific information about the defenses of Citadel Drezen that could help the PCs incur fewer losses as their army assaults the demon-controlled stronghold. Unfortunately, his history with *shadowblood* hounds him throughout the adventure, as the halfling spy, Nurah Dendiwhar, clandestinely supplies him with the drug to sabotage his efforts and cast him into the role of potential traitor. The blood actually comes from the mythic shadow demon Eustoyriax—the same fiend guarding the *Sword of Valor* in the dungeons below Citadel Drezen. As Aron undergoes withdrawal when Nurah intentionally removes his supply, Eustoyriax invades his dreams, further tormenting and weakening him with recurring nightmares.

Story Award: The PCs should learn of Aron's addiction at some point during the adventure—this discovery is assumed to occur at some point before the PCs reach Drezen, since Nurah arranges for Aron to gain more *shadowblood* after the fight for the ford. If the PCs can save Aron before he succumbs completely to his addiction and seeks out Eustoyriax, award them 1,600 XP.



WRATH OF THE
RIGHTEOUS

Nurah Dendiwhar

Small and unassuming, Nurah Dendiwhar serves as a chronicler and historian among the Worldwound crusaders, even as she consorts with demons to betray those who trust in her.

NURAH DENDIWHAR**CR 7****XP 3,200**

Female halfling bard 8

CE Small humanoid (halfling)

Init +3; **Senses** Perception +12**DEFENSE****AC** 20, touch 15, flat-footed 16 (+5 armor, +3 Dex, +1 dodge, +1 size)**hp** 79 (8d8+40)**Fort** +6, **Ref** +10, **Will** +8; +2 vs. fear, +4 vs. bardic performance, language-dependent, and sonic**OFFENSE****Speed** 20 ft.**Melee** short sword +5/+0 (1d4-2/19-20)**Ranged** sling +10/+5 (1d3-2)**Special Attacks** bardic performance 22 rounds/day (move action; countersong, dirge of doom, distraction, fascinate, inspire competence +3, inspire courage +2, suggestion)**Spells Known** (CL 8th; concentration +12)3rd (3/day)—*cure serious wounds*, *displacement*, *phantom steed*2nd (5/day)—*alter self*, *cat's grace*, *invisibility*, *suggestion* (DC 16)1st (5/day)—*cure light wounds*, *grease* (DC 15), *hideous laughter* (DC 15), *magic aura*, *undetected alignment*0 (at will)—*detect magic*, *ghost sound* (DC 14), *light*, *mage hand*, *message*, *read magic***TACTICS****Before Combat** Nurah casts *undetected alignment* on herself every day, and maintains a *magic aura* spell on her four vials of *shadowblood* at all times (this generally means she's casting one *magic aura* spell every other day).**During Combat** Nurah has little in the way of fighting prowess and prefers to hang back in combat to provide support in the form of bardic performances. She casts *cat's grace* on herself on the first round of combat, and then harries foes with *grease* or *suggestion*, switching to healing spells if her allies are wounded. While under cover, she has no qualms about doing her best to support the PCs against demonic foes—demons are easily replaced, after all. If her cover is blown, she immediately tries to flee as detailed under **Morale** below. When facing the PCs in a battle (which she might do later, if she flees to Drezen to join with Staunton), she uses bardic performances to aid her alliesand casts *displacement* on herself, then uses *suggestion* on any NPC allies to make them believe the PCs have been possessed by demons while using her *Spellsong* feat to mask the fact that she's casting spells at all.**Morale** Nurah retreats from combat once she drops below 30 hit points—if she still has allies (whether or not they're real allies), she casts healing spells on herself and continues to support them with bardic performances, but if a battle looks lost or if her true allegiance is discovered, Nurah tries to escape. She does so by first casting *invisibility* and then using her *scroll of dimension door* to get as far away from the PCs as possible. She next uses her *scroll of sending* to alert Staunton that her cover's been blown and then casts *phantom steed* to hasten her journey to Drezen, where she joins up with Staunton in area **F20** to help him fight back against the PCs.**STATISTICS****Str** 6, **Dex** 16, **Con** 16, **Int** 10, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 18**Base Atk** +6; **CMB** +3; **CMD** 17**Feats** Dodge, Skill Focus (Bluff), Toughness, *Spellsong*^{UM}**Skills** Acrobatics +4, Bluff +18, Climb -1, Knowledge (arcana) +8, Knowledge (geography) +8, Knowledge (history) +13, Knowledge (local) +8, Knowledge (nobility) +8, Knowledge (planes) +8, Knowledge (religion) +8, Perception +12, Perform (dance) +15, Perform (oratory) +15, Stealth +15**Languages** Common, Halfling**SQ** bardic knowledge +4, lore master 1/day, versatile performance (oratory, dance)**Combat Gear** *scroll of cure moderate wounds*, *scroll of dimension door*, *scroll of sending*, *shadowblood* (4 doses), *wand of modify memory* (4 charges); **Other Gear** +1 *chain shirt*, dagger, short sword, sling, *belt of mighty constitution* +2, *horn of assured victory*, bedroll, cold-weather outfit, flint and steel, backpack, rations (5 days), traveler's outfit, waterskin, winter blanket, ruby worth 100 gp, 21 gp, 9 sp, 5 cp

Nurah Dendiwhar originally came to the Worldwound at the tender age of 20, the youngest member of Lord Axilar Trezbot's entourage from Isger. Her abusive master's obsession with achieving greater in the Fourth Mendevian Crusade pulled her into battle alongside him, forcing her to serve as both a scribe for his exploits and a tactician directing his troops as they sought to retake Citadel

NPC Gallery

Drezen. Not initially enamored with the crusade, Nurah came to relish the carnage, having become somewhat desensitized to fiends after her years in Isger and Cheliax. Her admiration for demons grew over time, peaking when a group of tiefling assassins and babaus led by a possessed crusader tore apart Lord Axilar's legion and unexpectedly freed her from servitude when they slew her master before her very eyes.

There was never a question in Nurah's mind at that point—she pledged her service to the demons once she was the last survivor. The commander of the victorious demons revealed himself to be a shadow demon named Eustoyriax, and accepted Nurah's surrender, sending her with several other prisoners to Raliscrad to be processed. There, the lilitu demon Minagho saw the potential in Nurah's tainted soul, and after making sure her change of allegiance was real, sent her back to the crusaders as a spy for the Templars of the Ivory Labyrinth.

Since then, she has excelled in the role of long-term saboteur. She greatly enjoys going virtually unnoticed and unsuspected as she passes information to her masters—all while arranging the deaths of the more devout crusaders in the Worldwound. Being assigned to Queen Galfrey as one of several advisors was the result of many months of nerve-wracking machinations, and when the queen asked Nurah to assist the PCs, she at first was secretly frustrated at having to give up her position at the queen's side. But the more she learns about the PCs, the more she sees personally engineering their fall from grace as an even greater challenge and triumph than bringing low the queen herself.

Nurah has become skilled at presenting herself as an expert on the early Mendevian Crusades and the lore of ancient Sarkoris. She augments the value of her knowledge by pretending to be an excellent traveling companion—generous and complimentary without being a sycophant. She has cast herself as a tenacious survivor much like the PCs—blessed with luck and skill, while equally dedicated to stopping the demon incursion. In reality, her contacts among Baphomet's cult have instructed her to undertake her greatest challenge yet: the undoing of the PCs and the new threat posed by their mythic status.

Campaign Role

Although she is initially perceived as a valuable ally, Nurah's increasing acts of sabotage and sedition can go unrealized for only so long. This adventure assumes the PCs learn of her treachery before they reach Drezen. Until then, she works to put the PCs in harm's way, feigning support while leading them into ambushes and traps and waiting for them to fail.

Nurah doesn't just limit her attention to the PCs, however. She also targets the weaknesses and limitations of everyone in their party, including their traveling companions. Already aware of Aron Kir's addiction to *shadowblood*, she feeds his habit with doses provided by Eustoyriax starting after the PCs reach Vilareth Ford, hoping that as his addiction runs its course she can plant seeds of mistrust in the PCs' minds for all of their allies.

But just as she switched sides before, a devoted group can, in theory, redeem the woman from her evil ways. An overwhelming act of kindness, mercy, generosity, or forgiveness on a PCs' part is enough to inspire the halfling, at which point she must begin performing penances in order to rise from corruption. Rules and guidelines for redemption may be found on pages 18–19 of *Pathfinder Player Companion: Champions of Purity*.

Story Award: Once the PCs uncover Nurah's treachery, award them 2,400 XP—this is in addition to any XP they might earn later by defeating her in combat. If she's redeemed, award the PCs XP as if they had defeated her in combat.



WRATH OF THE
RIGHTEOUS

SOSIEL VAENIC

A dedicated supporter of the Mendevian Crusades, Sosiel Vaenic wisely tempers his zeal in opposing the demons of the Worldwound with an abiding love for those scarred by the righteous conflict.

SOSIEL VAENIC**CR 5****XP 1,600**

Male human cleric of Shelyn 6

NG Medium humanoid (human)

Init -1; **Senses** Perception +4**DEFENSE****AC** 16, touch 9, flat-footed 16 (+7 armor, -1 Dex)**hp** 48 (6d8+18)**Fort** +6, **Ref** +1, **Will** +9**OFFENSE****Speed** 20 ft.**Melee** +1 *glaive* +6 (1d10+2/×3) or

mwk light mace +6 (1d6+1)

Ranged mwk light crossbow +4 (1d8/19–20)**Special Attacks** channel positive energy 7/day (DC 15, 3d6),**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 6th; concentration +10)

7/day—bit of luck, touch of good (+3)

Cleric Spells Prepared (CL 6th; concentration +10)3rd—*dispel magic*, *protection from energy*⁰, *remove disease* (DC 17), *searing light*2nd—*aid*, *align weapon*⁰ (good only), *delay poison* (DC 16), *lesser restoration*, *shield other*1st—*detect evil*, *protection from evil*⁰, *remove fear*, *sanctuary* (DC 15), *shield of faith*0 (at will)—*create water*, *detect poison*, *light*, *stabilize***D** Domain spell; **Domains** Good, Luck**TACTICS**

During Combat Sosiel always seeks to protect and support his allies, granting them a bit of luck or a touch of good when appropriate. He generally prefers to cast *shield other* on Aron if Aron's in the fight as well, but casts the spell on a PC otherwise. He saves *shield of faith* for himself whenever he goes up against demons, antipaladins, or the like. Against evil outsiders, he casts *align weapon* on his +1 *glaive*. If several allies are already in combat, Sosiel prefers to hang back and heal, casting *sanctuary* at the start of the fight so he can move about the combat more easily.

Morale Sosiel recognizes the need to retreat when necessary—provided friends aren't left behind. He fights to the death to protect Aron or any PC who has truly earned his friendship, sacrificing himself to give the companion a chance to live.

STATISTICS**Str** 13, **Dex** 8, **Con** 12, **Int** 10, **Wis** 18, **Cha** 14**Base Atk** +4; **CMB** +5; **CMD** 14**Feats** Combat Casting, Craft Magic Arms and Armor, Extra Channel, Toughness**Skills** Craft (painting) +6, Diplomacy +11, Heal +10, Knowledge (religion) +9**Languages** Common, Osiriani**SQ** good fortune (1/day)

Combat Gear *scroll of dispel magic*, *scrolls of lesser restoration* (3), *wand of cure moderate wounds* (14 charges); **Other Gear** +1 *breastplate*, +1 *glaive*, mwk light crossbow with 10 bolts, mwk light mace, masterwork backpack, oil (2 flasks), rations (5 days), silver holy symbol of Shelyn, spell component pouch, traveler's outfit, waterskin, winter blanket, 6 gp, 7 sp, 4 cp

Sosiel Vaenic has spent several years among the crusaders of Mendev, serving in the (now-destroyed) church of Shelyn in Kenabres. He is no stranger to how the intensity of the conflict can wear down crusaders, having seen this despair strike his lover Aron. Sosiel maintains a frank optimism in the face of even the most daunting atrocities committed by the enemy, working tirelessly to oppose the temptations, ailments, and despair the demons inflict on those in his care. His jovial spirit and genuine concern for others has had a profound effect on those he meets.

Sosiel's childhood and early years as an adult consisted of a quiet, peaceful life in the Andoren countryside, serving Shelyn's parish on the outskirts of Carpenden. A gardener, painter, and sculptor by trade, he played an active role in the city's vineyards and art community before joining the clergy. Later, when his Eagle Knight brother, Trever Vaenic, marched north to join the Mendevian Crusade, Sosiel felt compelled to follow, if for no other reason than ensure his sibling's safe return. However, after arriving on the front line, Sosiel became horrified by the erosion of beauty across the Worldwound's landscape as well as the ugliness of the wounds—both physical and mental—suffered by those waging war against the demons.

When his brother went missing on the field of battle in the northeastern Worldwound, Sosiel knew in his heart that he would never be able to leave Mendev before the Worldwound was defeated. He moved to Kenabres and joined the church of Shelyn there, throwing himself into the impossible task of comforting and healing those whose

NPC Gallery

bodies and minds have been fractured and damaged by the war. He's done his best to set numerous crusaders and refugees alike on the path to redemption.

It was in this way that he met Aron Kir, and as he helped the man recover from a particularly horrible addiction to a demonic drug known as *shadowblood*, he fell in love. Until this point, Sosiel's life was without focus—he wanted only to see the crusades end, but knew he alone could not bring that end about. With Aron's love, he at least now feels that even if he doesn't live to see the end of the war against the Worldwound, his life will not have been for nothing. Since they've met, Sosiel has seen Aron relapse twice into his addiction; both times, he's helped Aron recover, and both times he's hidden the true nature of his lover's vice from the crusade, knowing that if officials knew Aron had been under the influence of demonic drugs, he would be exiled from the crusades at best or imprisoned at worst. It's been some time since Aron's last relapse, though, and Sosiel hopes his lover has finally kicked the ugly habit for good.

During the fall of Kenabres, a large group of abrikandilu demons attacked the church of Shelyn. The ratlike demons were tenacious, and each time Sosiel and the other priests drove them off, they returned in larger numbers. Each wave further reduced the priests' resources, and in the end they made the tough call to get its remaining wards and recovering patients to safety elsewhere while the priests acted as a rearguard. In the end, the demons tore the church apart and killed all of the priests but Sosiel. He tries to keep a brave and positive attitude, focusing on those he saved (who, in truth, outnumber those who perished), but the loss of the temple still gnaws at him. He joined up with the Eagle Watch at Defender's Heart, and when Queen Galfrey was looking for experts to send with the PCs, his name topped the list.

Sosiel projects a sense of calm and serenity. He believes that maintaining an impeccable appearance in his clerical vestments and well-worn gear inspires those around him, and he's not wrong. He cuts an imposing figure on the battlefield with his tall frame and spinning glaive. A crystal medallion with the embossed image of Shelyn's thrush always hangs from his neck against his chest under his armor, taking on an iridescent sheen in the light of the sun.

Campaign Role

Sosiel is one of three companions sent with the PCs to retrieve the *Sword of Valor*. Of them all, he carries the most conviction and determination to recover the artifact, fully believing the magical banner can make a real difference in breaking the demons' advance and taking the fight into the Worldwound. Of the three specialists, his knowledge skills will aid the PCs the least, but his healing should always be welcome.

While on the road to Citadel Drezen, Sosiel spends his evenings in camp painting scenes of the Worldwound

and Mendev's countryside. He even creates portraits to commemorate the heroic accomplishments of the PCs, planning on sharing his work with those in more civilized lands for its historical significance. These portraits are inspired, and each one, once completed, is worth 500 gp—he gives one to each PC as a gift as he finishes them. He also solicits the PCs' aid in helping him look after the rest of the crusaders, especially Aron Kir, whom he believes has much to contribute to the crusader efforts. Assuming he and Aron survive the assault on Drezen, Sosiel will help in future adventures by serving as a priest in Drezen. In addition, the PCs will have a chance to repay his kindness in the next adventure, when they have an opportunity to learn what became of his missing brother Trever.



WRATH OF THE
RIGHTEOUS

Staunton Vhane

A former paladin of Torag, Staunton Vhane betrayed his vows and his allies for a pact with the Worldwound and a chance to gain an ancient dwarven secret for himself—the location of a lost Sky Citadel.

STAUNTON VHANE

CR 10

XP 9,600

Male dwarf antipaladin of Deskari 8/champion 2 (*Pathfinder RPG Advanced Player Guide* 118, *Pathfinder RPG Mythic Adventures* 20)

CE Medium humanoid (dwarf)

Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +1

Aura cowardice (10 ft.), despair (10 ft.)

DEFENSE

AC 24, touch 10, flat-footed 24 (+12 armor, +2 natural)

hp 130 (8d10+82)

Fort +15, **Ref** +4, **Will** +9; +2 vs. poison, spells, and spell-like abilities

Defensive Abilities hard to kill; **Immune** disease

OFFENSE

Speed 50 ft.

Melee *Soulshear* +15/+10 (1d10+9/x3) or spiked armor +13/+8 (1d6+5/x3)

Ranged +1 *returning throwing axe* +9/+4 (1d6+6)

Special Attacks champion's strike, channel negative energy (DC 16, 4d6), clean blade, dwarven hatred, mythic power (2/day, 1d6), smite good 3/day (+2 attack and AC, +8 damage), sudden attack

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 8th; concentration +10)

At will—*detect good*

Spells Prepared (CL 5th; concentration +7)

2nd—*bull's strength*, *hold person* (DC 14)

1st—*command* (DC 13), *protection from good*

TACTICS

Before Combat Staunton casts *bull's strength* before combat.

During Combat Staunton casts *protection from good* on the first round of combat. He prefers to charge into the thick of battle with *Soulshear*. He attacks with his spiked armor if he can't maintain proper reach with foes. He always invokes smite good on any virtuous priests or paladins, using his mythic power to make sudden attacks with his champion's strike ability. Whenever he attacks, he uses Mythic Power Attack to bolster his damage. He uses his clean blade power as often as he can against healers. Against heavily armored foes, he relies on his touch of corruption, inflicting a cruelty of fatigue first and then disease (bubonic plague). His glaive summons a babau to aid him on the first round of combat.

Morale Staunton fights to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 20, **Dex** 10, **Con** 24, **Int** 10, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 14

Base Atk +8; **CMB** +13; **CMD** 23 (27 vs. bull rush and trip)

Feats Craft Magic Arms and Armor, Power Attack^M, Skill Focus (Bluff), Toughness

Skills Bluff +12, Intimidate +7, Linguistics +1, Perception +0 (+2 to notice unusual stonework), Ride +4, Sense Motive +7

Languages Abyssal, Common, Dwarven

SQ amazing initiative, cruelties (diseased, fatigued), fiendish boon (mount, fiendish giant wasp named Vrexed), impossible speed, touch of corruption (4d6, 6/day)

Combat Gear *wand of blindness/deafness* (8 charges); **Other Gear** +3 *spiked full plate*, +1 *returning throwing axe*, *Soulshear*, *amulet of natural armor* +2, *belt of mighty constitution* +4, *headband of alluring charisma* +2, skeleton key to Citadel Drezen (works on all doors within the citadel and on his footlocker in area **F21**, but not on doors in the dungeon), 68 gp

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Exceptional Stats (Ex) Staunton is exceptional, and his ability scores were generated using 25 points rather than the standard 15-point buy used to create most NPCs. In addition, he has the full support of the Worldwound behind him, and thus has gear equal to that of a PC rather than an NPC. These modifications increase his total CR by +2.

Staunton Vhane joined the Mendevian crusade at the fresh young age of 46, eager to aid in the fight against the Worldwound. While the opportunity to clash with demons was certainly a draw for the headstrong young paladin, the actual reason for joining the crusaders at Drezen was a bit more personal—he'd heard rumors that the lost Sky Citadel of Jormurdun was located somewhere behind enemy lines. Dazzled by dreams of fame and power for finding lost Jormurdun, Staunton hoped for a swift end to the demonic threat so he could explore Sarkoris in relative safety.

But over the next 2 years, the fighting quickly wore on Staunton. With each report of another lost battle or influx of a seemingly endless number of demons, his hopes for a swift resolution to the conflict and the opportunity to find Jormurdun faded, and when the marilith Aponavicius laid siege to the city of Drezen early in 4638 AR, the dwarf knew these fears had become fact. The presence of the *Sword of Valor* kept the bulk of the demonic armies from harming Drezen, but the city would soon be broken by the smaller groups of skirmishers that continually harried its walls.

NPC Gallery

Then one day while on a patrol beyond the walls, the crusading company to which Staunton belonged was ambushed by demons, and all but Staunton were slain before the demons suddenly fled, howling in fear as a beautiful elven soldier leading a troop of powerful-looking archers arrived on the scene. The elf pulled Staunton from the grime and introduced herself as Jerribeth, and what she said next resonated with Staunton to the core: "Drezen is protected enough, but the city's rulers are too cowardly to defeat the demons. While they know they could break the host if they rode out to meet the enemy with the *Sword of Valor* carried proudly at the vanguard, they fear taking risks. Drezen is strong; it doesn't need a magic banner to stand fast. But if you bring this banner to me, I will use its power to lead my army against the demons and save us all!"

Staunton already harbored similar beliefs in his soul, and immediately vowed to bring the elven general the *Sword of Valor*, knowing that by the time anyone noticed it was missing, the demons would have been driven back to the Abyss. Unfortunately, in Staunton's eagerness to believe, he fell right into the "elf's" trap—Jerribeth was in fact a glabrezu, and when Staunton delivered the *Sword of Valor*, she revealed her true nature and made him watch as the demons invaded Drezen. As he watched, something woke within Staunton's heart. He realized he was glad to see the cowards go, and in awe of the power of the demonic host. His fall from grace was completed when he was brought by Jerribeth into the captured city and pledged his loyalty to the conquering marilith Aponavicius.

And so for the next 75 years, Staunton Vhane served the Worldwound. At first, he played the role of advisor for the marilith, informing her about crusader tactics and advising her on the best ways to battle paladins. In time, he was recruited by the Templars of the Ivory Labyrinth and trained to be a double agent. With their aid, he forged himself a powerful weapon, *Soulshear*, to aid his quest, and in 4658 he returned to Mendev and joined the crusade again as a captain of an all-dwarven mercenary company called the Hammers of Heaven. But this time, Staunton and his mercenaries were in fact hidden disciples of Baphomet.

Over the following decades, Staunton and the Hammers of Heaven served both sides of the war. He lured his cousin Thurl to Mendev, and used his connections to the Pathfinder Society to fund his own expeditions deep into the Worldwound to seek Jormurdun when he could, but most of his time was spent fighting in small skirmishes against demons whose defeat wouldn't matter to the Worldwound while simultaneously sabotaging countless war efforts all along the border. His last act of treachery was to compromise many of the defenses of the Kite in Kenabres, an act that ultimately allowed the Storm King to attack the city once again, but it was in this final act that he

was ultimately discovered by the paladin Irabeth. In the ensuing fight, Staunton was defeated, and fled north to Drezen on his fiendish giant wasp mount Vrexed. Since his return to Drezen, he's burned for a chance to face Irabeth, or any paladin, again in battle, but for now he obeys his marilith commander's orders to hold the city of Drezen for her while she's away on the front lines.

Campaign Role

Staunton plays a villainous role in "Sword of Valor," destined to stand against the PCs as they assault Citadel Drezen and recover the holy banner of Iomedae. While some of the foes the PCs face in this campaign can be redeemed, Staunton is not one of them. If he escapes the PCs, he can continue to vex them for much of the campaign as he grows more and more desperate to rebuild his reputation with his demonic masters. At your discretion, his eventual fate may well be to rise as a graveknight to seek out the PCs for one final fight.

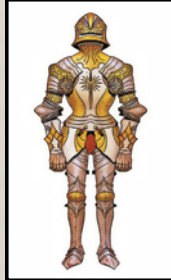




WRATH OF THE RIGHTEOUS TREASURES

The following unique treasures can be found in “Sword of Valor.” Player-appropriate handouts for the treasures detailed here appear in the *Pathfinder Cards: Wrath of the Righteous Item Cards*.

ARMOR OF THE PIOUS		PRICE 23,300 GP
SLOT none	CL 9th	WEIGHT 25 lbs.
AURA moderate abjuration [good]		



This gold-plated +1 *mithral full plate* armor has images of Iomedae’s symbol etched into its immaculately gleaming surface. The armor requires 24 hours to attune itself to the wearer and her patron deity, after which point the images on the armor shift to match the symbol of the wearer’s patron deity (or remain associated with Iomedae if the wearer doesn’t worship a deity).

Thereafter, once per day the armor’s wearer can offer a prayer to her deity (or Iomedae) as a swift action to increase the armor’s enhancement bonus to +2 for 10 rounds. For this duration, the armor also grants a +2 sacred bonus on saving throws. A paladin wearing *armor of the pious* can use her lay on hands ability one additional time per day; a mythic paladin wearing *armor of the pious* also gains one additional use of mythic power per day. An evil character who wears *armor of the pious* gains 2 negative levels. These negative levels remain as long as the armor is worn and disappear when the armor is removed—they never become permanent but can’t be overcome in any way as long as the armor is worn.

CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS	COST 16,900 GP
Craft Magic Arms and Armor, <i>prayer</i> , <i>sanctify armor</i> ^{APG}	

HORN OF ASSURED VICTORY		PRICE 13,000 GP
SLOT none	CL 11th	WEIGHT 3 lbs.
AURA moderate enchantment		



This coiled battle horn is crafted from fine brass. When blown, its clarion call can be heard clearly up to a range of 2 miles, cutting through any weather condition short of a windstorm. Once per day, the commander of an army can blow the horn to bolster the troops. This grants the army a +2 bonus on OM checks and Morale checks. The army also gains an additional number of hit points equal to its ACR for that battle.

CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS	COST 6,500 GP
Craft Wondrous Item, <i>aid</i>	

RIGHTEOUS MEDAL		PRICE 6,000 GP
SLOT none	CL 11th	WEIGHT —
AURA moderate abjuration and transmutation		

These ornate military medals are awarded to crusaders and adventurers who excel and deserve commendation in the war against the Worldwound. A medal must be affixed to a worn article of clothing to function, but doesn’t have to be worn visibly. Any number of righteous medals can be worn, but the effects of multiple medals of a single type don’t stack. A *righteous medal* functions only if the wearer has legitimately achieved the feat for which she received the medal. As a swift action, the wearer can gain a +2 sacred bonus to the medal’s associated ability score for 1 minute. In addition, each *righteous medal* grants a constant sacred bonus on one type of roll, as detailed below.



Righteous Medal of Agility: This triangular iron medal shows a demonic face surrounded by three swords. It is awarded to a hero who delivers a death blow to a demon in combat before that demon gets a chance to act in the combat. This medal is associated with Dexterity and grants a +1 sacred bonus on Initiative checks.



Righteous Medal of Clarity: This circular blue medal depicts a pair of feminine gray eyes surrounded by a circular silver lightning bolt. It is awarded to a hero who recovers vital information of great use against the Worldwound and delivers this intelligence to the crusaders. This medal is associated with Intelligence and grants a +2 sacred bonus on saves against insanity or confusion effects.



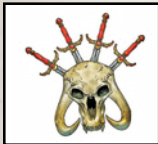
Righteous Medal of Command: This circular medal depicts a leering demon head before two crossed swords. It is awarded to a hero who redeems one of the enemy and convinces the redeemed character to join the crusade. This medal is associated with Charisma and grants a +2 sacred bonus on saves against emotion-based effects (including fear effects).



Righteous Medal of Spirit: This rectangular medal depicts the symbol of Iomedae on a field of red. It is awarded to a hero who becomes possessed or mentally controlled by a demon but escapes from that control.

Wrath of the Righteous Treasures

before he is forced to do evil. This medal is associated with Wisdom and grants a +2 sacred bonus on saves against charm and possession effects (including *dominate* effects).



Righteous Medal of Valor: This medal looks like a demonic skull, the top of which has been pierced by four red-hilted swords. It is awarded to a hero who delivers a death blow to a demon whose CR is at least 1 higher than the hero's character level. This medal is associated with Strength and grants a +2 sacred bonus to CMD.



Righteous Medal of Vigor: This hexagonal medal depicts a white castle on a field of red with gold trim. It is awarded to a hero who is reduced to negative hit points by a demon but survives (or alternately, is restored to life) and rejoins the battle before that demon is defeated. This medal is associated with Constitution and grants a +2 sacred bonus on saves against death effects.

A mythic character who wears all six *righteous medals* gains one additional use of mythic power per day.

CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS	COST 3,000 GP
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Craft Wondrous Item; *bless*; *bear's endurance*, *bull's strength*, *cat's grace*, *eagle's splendor*, *fox's cunning*, or *owl's wisdom*

SHADOWBLOOD		PRICE 1,500 GP
SLOT none	CL 9th	WEIGHT —
AURA moderate evocation [evil]		



Shadowblood is among the most notorious of drugs—a fluid infused with a shadow demon's essence. Anyone who drinks this substance must succeed at a DC 20 Fortitude save or take 1d6 points of cold damage and 1d4 points of Wisdom damage, and become nauseated for 1d6 rounds. Thereafter, the target gains 1d10+5 temporary hit points, cold resistance 5, and darkvision 60 feet. These effects persist for 1 hour, during which demons take a –4 penalty on saving throws against the drinker's spells and spell-like abilities of the shadow subschool.

Shadowblood is exceedingly addictive and carries some significant disadvantages. Each time a creature takes a dose of *shadowblood*, it must succeed at a DC 20 Fortitude save or become addicted—*shadowblood* addiction is a severe addiction (see page 236 of the *Pathfinder RPG GameMastery Guide*). A creature under the influence of *shadowblood* or suffering from *shadowblood* addiction takes a –4 penalty on all saving throws against possession type effects made by demons, and can never gain the benefits of *protection from evil* or similar spells against such effects.

CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS	COST 750 GP
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Craft Wondrous Item, *desecrate*, *shadow evocation*, creator must be a shadow demon or must have the cooperation of a shadow demon

SOULSHEAR			PRICE 45,508 GP
AURA strong conjuration [evil]	CL 15th	WEIGHT 10 lbs.	
Alignment chaotic evil	Senses 60 ft. (vision and hearing)		
Intelligence 16	Wisdom 12	Charisma 14	Ego 14
Language speech (Abyssal, Common, Giant)			



Forged by Staunton Vhane with the aid of several Templars of the Ivory Labyrinth, this intelligent +2 *transformative^{UE}* glaive is infused with a babau's sentience and eagerness for murder. *Soulshear* is capable of hiding its evil nature with *misdirection*, and if its wielder's alignment isn't chaotic evil, it delights in infiltrating enemy forces to create personality conflicts with its wielder, manipulating his downfall through acts of conspiracy, betrayal, and murder. Even without dominating those who carry it, *Soulshear* can occasionally summon a babau demon to clandestinely carry out its will. These summonings often result in unexplained murders, or even the

death of *Soulshear's* owner so the glaive can pass to further victims or be returned to the devoted cultists of Baphomet.

Soulshear can use *misdirection* on itself three times per day, typically selecting an unaligned magic item carried by its wielder to hide its evil. Once per day, it can cast *summon monster V*, but only to summon a babau demon.

CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS	COST 22,908 GP
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Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *major creation*, *planar binding*

SWORD OF VALOR		MAJOR ARTIFACT
SLOT none	CL 20th	WEIGHT 3 lbs.
AURA strong abjuration and evocation [good]		



The Inheritor herself carried this crimson banner into battle during the Shining Crusade. An army commander who carries the *Sword of Valor* increases the DV and OM of her army by 4 against armies of undead or evil outsiders. Yet the *Sword of Valor's* greatest power lies not in offense but

in defense. Mounted firmly upon an interior wall in a visible, public place, the *Sword of Valor* creates a 10-mile-radius area that bars demons and those who worship demons from using teleportation spells and effects and imparts on such creatures a –4 penalty to Armor Class and on all saving throws. Once per month while the banner is mounted on a wall, a worshiper of Iomedae within 30 feet of the banner can use it to summon a planetar to protect the banner and its surroundings for 1 day. Any nonevil creature that sleeps within a 1-mile radius becomes immune to fear effects from demons and demon worshipers for 24 hours.

DESTRUCTION

The *Sword of Valor* can be destroyed by Iomedae herself, but only if she chooses to do so and rips it apart with her bare hands.

Wrath of the Righteous



LOST RELICS OF THE CRUSADES

Thousands of good men and women have marched to their deaths against the demons of the worldwound. Some of these warriors have been truly saintly figures who, even in death, have furthered the cause through their earthly remains. Other now-fallen crusaders carried tools of war imbued with the essence of the potent saints, and these items await new champions. A lengthy quest for any of these treasures would make a satisfying adventure, but fate also has a way of steering these relics into the hands of heroes. Therefore, each entry includes suggestions on how the PCs might hear rumors about the relic or how destiny might place the relic directly in a worthy PC's path.

Lost Relics of the Crusades

Barding of Pleated Light

Ripples of light surround this full plate barding, chasing away nearby shadows.

BARDING OF PLEATED LIGHT		MAJOR ARTIFACT
SLOT armor (barding)	CL 20th	WEIGHT 100 lbs.
AURA overwhelming abjuration		

The *barding of pleated light* was crafted by angels in service to Pulura, the Shimmering Maiden, an empyreal lord once venerated by the conquered people of Sarkoris. This ornately crafted mithral full plate armor resizes to fit a horse, warhorse, or equivalent mount that it is placed upon. It acts as *+2 greater spell resistance (19) full plate barding*. The *barding of pleated light* grants additional powers related to the rippling light of an aurora. These powers can be activated by the wearer's rider; the wearer can activate the barding's powers only if it has an Intelligence score of 3 or greater.

First, the barding can be activated as the *blinding shield* special ability at will, but the wearer and the wearer's rider are both immune to this blinding effect. Second, as an immediate action, the armor can be activated to divert harmful light or shadows. This grants the armor's spell resistance to the wearer's rider for 1 round, but this spell resistance only protects against spells with the light or shadow descriptor. Finally, the armor allows the wearer to pass through shimmering curtains of light. As an immediate action when charging, the armor can be activated to select any 10-foot-square area in the path of the charge. A curtain of multicolored light appears momentarily on each side of this area. The wearer can charge across this area as though it did not exist, disappearing into a ripple of light on one side and reappearing in a ripple of light on the other side. The wearer ignores terrain or obstacles in the intervening area (allowing the wearer to charge through allies in the area, for example), and the intervening area does not count toward the wearer's charge movement. The ripple of light cannot be used for movement by anyone except the wearer and the wearer's rider.

DESTRUCTION

The *barding of pleated light* is destroyed if it's reduced to 0 hit points in an area of absolute darkness with no light—not even a candle's flicker or reflected moonbeam—within 10 miles in any direction.

HISTORY

One evening early in the First Crusade, mounted scouts exploring the tundra along the western edge of the

Worldwound encountered an unusually bright aurora streaking through the sky above them. The scouts followed the ripples and curves of the shimmering light to the hills near the town of Dyinglight, a former center of worship in Sarkoris overrun by demons and marsh giants. The wavering lights appeared to reach down and touch the top of a high hill. Only one of the scouts, a strong and courageous woman named Jennivar Sharp-Tongue, was brave enough to investigate. As Jennivar approached, she heard an angelic choir praising the empyreal lord Pulura and offering to gird the worthy in light and righteousness. Jennivar rode closer and disappeared in a wrinkle of light.



The astonished scouts retreated from the hill and blundered into a group of marsh giants. The giants quickly surrounded the scouts, cutting off escape. Before the giants could close in, Jennivar came charging out of a curtain of light that appeared in the air. The brave scout was now clad in fine plate mail and carrying a golden lance. Her horse was barded in blindingly bright plate armor.

Jennivar broke through the circle of marsh giants, rallied the scouts, and routed the giants. Jennivar then wished the scouts well but declared that she had been given a higher calling to take the fight directly to the demonic invaders. As her speechless audience looked on, Jennivar charged through the luminous curtain and disappeared.

Over the next 10 years, Jennivar appeared occasionally throughout the Worldwound, her arrival heralded by the appearance of a shimmer of multicolored light, to turn a key battle in the crusaders' favor. On the few occasions when Jennivar would stop to rest after a battle, she spoke earnestly of the virtue of a righteous war and the glorious beauty of cold starlight.

In 4634 AR, a large force of crusaders from Nerosyan found themselves locked in perilous battle with a horde of demons led by a marilith. The former scout Jennivar appeared from a ripple of light near the marilith, charging on her steed with her golden lance held firm. The marilith twisted to avoid the charge, and with a mighty stroke from one of her many swords cut Jennivar's head from her body. Jennivar's armor and lance disappeared, instantly reclaimed by their celestial creators. Jennivar's horse was recovered by the crusaders, and its barding is currently maintained in the Cruciform Cathedral. The quartermaster in Nerosyan might loan the barding to a PC that has demonstrated significant bravery in advancing the crusaders' cause.

Wrath of the Righteous

Fiendsplitter

This sturdy battleaxe is finely made, and its wide blade is carved with the symbol of a rune-encrusted hammer.

FIENDSPLITTER			PRICE 28,715 GP
AURA moderate conjuration and evocation	CL 7th	WEIGHT 6 lbs.	
Alignment lawful good	Senses 60 ft.		
Intelligence 10	Wisdom 14	Charisma 12	Ego 10
Language empathy			

This sturdy weapon acts as a +1 *demon-bane battleaxe* and constantly emits a susurrus of faint, overlapping voices. In the presence of demons, the murmur of voices increases to a cacophony of angry cries. These voices are individually unintelligible; the item communicates by empathy rather than speech because its intelligence is a collection of several dozen essences rather than a single powerful personality. The battleaxe has the destruction of demons as its special purpose and the dedicated power to detect demons within 60 feet, even when the demons are hidden or in disguise.

Fiendsplitter is embossed with the symbol of Torag and can be used as a holy symbol by followers of that stern god. Three times per day, *Fiendsplitter* can imbue itself with *bless weapon*. Additionally, to combat the foul poisons and life-sapping powers employed by many demons, *Fiendsplitter* can affect its wielder with *lesser restoration* three times per day.

CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS	COST 14,357 GP
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Craft Arms and Armor, *bless weapon*, *lesser restoration*, *summon monster I*

History

Centuries ago, the Ulfen blacksmith Njali Janisdottir returned from a trading mission to find her village under attack by a horde of demons. Njali fought alongside her kinfolk as best she could, but the vicious demons overwhelmed and destroyed the town. Njali awoke under rubble what seemed like days later, assuming the demons had left her for dead. Swearing vengeance on their monstrous ilk, Njali returned to her forge to craft the finest axe she had ever made. Another villager, wounded but shaking with rage, stepped into Njali's forge, touched the axe, and turned to leave without a word. Njali was glad to see another survivor, but did not stop working on her axe. Soon other furious villagers came into her forge to silently touch the axe and depart. Finally, the leader of the village—a wise priest of Torag—arrived to touch the axe. As he did, the symbol of Torag appeared on the blade. Njali realized then that the villagers were merely spirits, blessing the axe as she forged it and imparting their

righteous anger into the weapon. As Njali finished the axe and held it aloft to evaluate her work, she could not see herself reflected in the gleaming blade. Njali knew then that she, too, was only a spirit of vengeance, and the axe clattered to the floor of the empty forge.

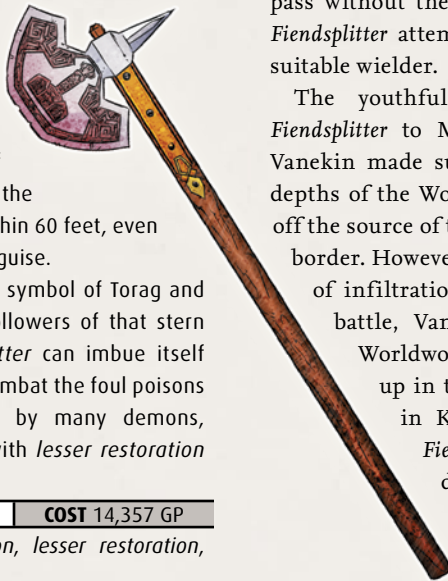
The battleaxe was discovered by a dwarven paladin some time later. He carried the weapon for decades and named it *Fiendsplitter*. *Fiendsplitter* has since passed through the hands of several paladins and warrior-priests over the years.

Fiendsplitter encourages its bearer to seek out areas suffering from demonic attack. If the bearer dawdles in taking the fight to demonkind, the battleaxe's faint muttering grows into surly grumbles. If weeks pass without the bearer seeking out demonic activity, *Fiendsplitter* attempts to assert control or find a more suitable wielder.

The youthful inquisitor Vanekin Stell carried *Fiendsplitter* to Mendev early in the Third Crusade. Vanekin made successful incursions into the horrific depths of the Worldwound from Kenabres to try to cut off the source of the demons massing on the Mendevian border. However, as the demons shifted to a campaign of infiltration and subversion instead of outright battle, Vanekin made fewer journeys into the Worldwound. Instead, the inquisitor was caught up in the witch-hunts and paranoia rampant in Kenabres at the time, where he used *Fiendsplitter's* ability to detect disguised demons to great advantage. But late one evening, the inquisitor simply disappeared from Kenabres and was never seen again.

In order to eliminate the threat of exposure posed by Vanekin and his battleaxe, the demons orchestrating the campaign of mistrust and animosity in Kenabres had dispatched a vrock named Vezzendezar to finally deal with the troublesome inquisitor that thwarted their subtle plans. Flying high above Kenabres and cloaked by a moonless night, Vezzendezar telekinetically lifted Vanekin from the street, murdered the inquisitor in midair, and carried the corpse back to his aerie to feed. *Fiendsplitter*, along with the rest of Vanekin's equipment, now lies discarded in the vrock's nest on a high pinnacle of rock a day's flight west of Kenabres. Vezzendezar is amused and comforted by the ceaseless cries of rage emanating from the battleaxe.

Travelers through the desolate area west of Kenabres occasionally overhear *Fiendsplitter's* indecipherable roars of anger carried by the wind from atop the lonely pinnacle. If they investigate these strange, interminable howls, the PCs must overcome the wily vrock Vezzendezar to claim the powerful battleaxe.



Lost Relics of the Crusades

Jawbone of the Venerable Galevius

This weathered human jawbone, its teeth old and worn, dangles from a simple leather cord.

JAWBONE OF THE VENERABLE GALEVIUS		MAJOR ARTIFACT
SLOT neck	CL 20th	WEIGHT 1 lb.
AURA overwhelming transmutation		

This brittle human jawbone is all that remains of the legendary Chelish diplomat Galevius. A simple cord allows the relic to be worn as a necklace. The jawbone represents all of Galevius's substantial powers of negotiation. The power of the artifact is not in the jaw, but in the 16 teeth socketed into the bone. Upon donning the jawbone, the wearer understands all of its powers and limitations. As a standard action, the wearer may remove a tooth from the jawbone and crush it in an open hand to activate its powers. The jawbone does not function for an evil character; an evil wearer finds the teeth rooted too firmly in the bone to remove.

When the Jawbone of the Venerable Galevius is first found, it contains a full set of 16 teeth. When a tooth is removed and crushed by the wearer, it provides the following effect for 1 hour, although an effect immediately ends if the wearer removes the jawbone or crushes another tooth.

Incisors (4 teeth): These teeth are used for cutting; in a negotiation, an incisor represents an attack on an opponent's position. Crushing an incisor grants a +4 sacred bonus on Intimidate checks and attack rolls.

Canines (2 teeth): Canines are used for tearing; in a negotiation, a canine represents a final, decisive strike in an argument. Crushing a canine grants a +4 sacred bonus on Diplomacy checks. In addition, whenever the user improves a creature's attitude with the Diplomacy skill, the creature's attitude automatically improves by an additional step (but does not exceed helpful).

Premolars (4 teeth): Premolars can perform multiple functions; in a negotiation, a premolar represents a careful shift of position. When crushed, a premolar grants a +4 sacred bonus on Bluff checks. In addition, the user does not provoke attacks of opportunity when moving.

Molars (6 teeth): These teeth are used for determined grinding; in a negotiation, a molar represents reasoned tenacity and persistence. Crushing a molar provides a +4 sacred bonus on Sense Motive checks and immunity to fatigue and exhaustion.

Despite the brittleness of the teeth socketed into the jawbone, the jawbone itself cannot be broken. Once all 16 teeth have been used, the empty jawbone immediately disappears, reappearing elsewhere in the world where a new

owner is likely to encounter it. A prospective owner must be good-aligned and ideally has several ranks in Diplomacy.

DESTRUCTION

If an evil user (that is capable of speech) wears the jawbone for a full year and does not speak a single word or utter a sound during that time, the jawbone crumbles to dust and is permanently destroyed.

History

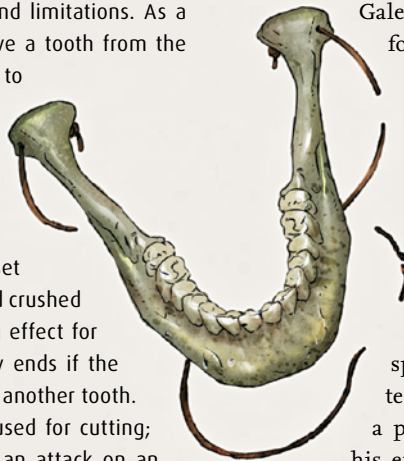
The years following Aroden's death in 4606 AR left the god's worshipers fractured and aimless. The First Crusade, organized by the emerging church of Iomedae, provided a renewed purpose. A key figure in revitalizing Aroden's followers was the tireless Chelish diplomat Galevius.

Already an old man at the time of Aroden's death, Galevius enjoyed a well-established reputation for promoting peace, particularly between Chelixa and its many fractious holdings. Galevius had retired to Westcrown in 4602 AR, but infighting and chaos in the church of Aroden after the god's disappearance compelled him to come out of retirement in order to help restructure the faltering church. Those who swore allegiance to Iomedae, Aroden's herald and successor, argued against those who speculated that Aroden's silence was only a test of faith. Galevius delicately negotiated a peace between the two rival factions. For his efforts, the clergy of Aroden and Iomedae named the elderly diplomat the Venerable Galevius.

Although the Venerable Galevius placated the rival factions, he knew the faithful needed a unifying cause to preserve the alliance. Thus, he exhorted the faithful to reclaim the fallen nation of Sarkoris. The crusaders' ranks swelled thanks to his urgent call, and the First Crusade launched in 4622 AR.

Galevius did not live to see the First Crusade begin—he succumbed to his advanced age in late 4621 AR and was lauded in a joint funeral held by the clergy of Iomedae and the remaining followers of Aroden. During the funeral, the negotiator's body was wreathed in a warm aura of light and drawn upward, leaving behind only his jawbone, which slowly faded from view.

The *Jawbone of the Venerable Galevius* is not something the PCs are likely to quest to find. Instead, the jawbone comes to them, appearing where a good-aligned PC—preferably, but not necessarily, one with several ranks in Diplomacy—will come across it. The jawbone might be found on a shelf the PC is searching or hanging on a hook in a PC's room at dawn; it could even manifest near a PC in a flash of warm light like that which claimed the Venerable Galevius' body at his funeral.



WRATH OF THE RIGHTEOUS

The Lymirin Discourses

The pages of this thick book are handwritten in a neat, flowing script. A symbol of a sword and sunburst adorns the book's cover.

THE LYMIRIN DISCOURSES		PRICE 15,000 GP
SLOT none	CL 12th	WEIGHT 3 lbs.
AURA strong transmutation		

This tome contains an extensive series of moral instructions based on the 11 heroic deeds performed by Iomedae before her ascension to divinity, known as the 11 Acts of Iomedae. These instructions are metaphysical but with a decidedly martial focus. A reader who studies and meditates over one of the acts set forth in the *Lymirin Discourses* for 1 hour gains a benefit that lasts for the next 12 hours. Only one reader can benefit from the *Lymirin Discourses* in any 24-hour period. The *Lymirin Discourses* cannot provide the same benefit twice in a row.

First Act: Iomedae recovered her allies from the gullets of the beast Nakorshor'mond. Study of this act grants the reader +2 sacred bonus to CMD when resisting a grapple attempt and a +2 sacred bonus on concentration checks to cast a spell or use a spell-like ability when grappled.

Second Act: Iomedae defeated a coven of witches. Study of this act grants the reader a +1 sacred bonus on caster level checks to overcome SR and a +1 sacred bonus on Will saves.

Third Act: Iomedae battled Segruchen the Iron Gargoyle in midair. Study of this act grants the reader a +1 sacred bonus on damage rolls with longswords. This bonus increases to +2 when the reader is not standing on the ground.

Fourth Act: Iomedae inspired a regiment of wounded knights to fight on. Study of this act grants the reader +1 bonus to caster level for the purpose of casting *cure* spells.

Fifth Act: Iomedae smote Erum-Hel, Lord of the Morghs. Study of this act grants the reader a +4 sacred bonus on attack rolls made to confirm critical hits with longswords.

Sixth Act: Iomedae reformed her shattered sword with a prayer and an oath. Study of this act grants the reader a +2 sacred bonus to CMD to resist sunder or disarm attempts.

Seventh Act: Iomedae appeared as an image to heal the virtuous and burn the wicked. If the reader has the channel positive energy ability, study of this act increases the amount of damage dealt or healed by positive energy channeled by the reader by 2.

Eighth Act: Iomedae redeemed a graveknight known as the Black Prince. Study of this act grants the reader a +2 sacred bonus to the DC of the reader's positive channeled energy.

Ninth Act: Iomedae provided nine drops of blood to free her righteous allies from a vampire mage. Study of this act

allows the reader to shield his allies. As a swift action up to nine times within the next 12 hours, the reader may take 1d4 points of nonlethal damage in order to add a +2 sacred bonus to an adjacent ally's AC.

Tenth Act: Iomedae defended and ruled the besieged city of Kantaria for a year and a day. Study of this act grants the reader a +4 sacred bonus to AC against attacks from opponents that flank him.

Eleventh Act: Iomedae cast her cloak across the gap to the *Starstone* to create a firm bridge. Study of this act allows the reader to jump as if he always had a running start.

CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS	COST 7,500 GP
Create Wondrous Item, <i>divine power</i> , creator must have 12 ranks in Knowledge (religion)	

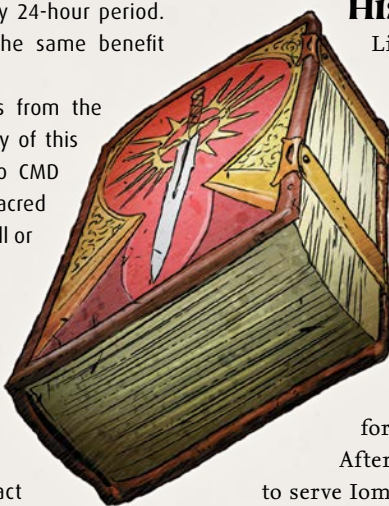
HISTORY

Like many of Iomedae's divine servants, Saint Lymirin was once a mortal follower of the Inheritor. In life, Lymirin served Iomedae as a warrior-priestess and scholar, ministering to soldiers and Mendev's citizens alike. She spent years devoutly studying the 11 Acts of Iomedae. Although many treatises analyzing Iomedae's Acts exist, Lymirin concentrated her studies on the Acts' overtly martial ramifications, a focus of study suitable for a crusading cleric.

After Lymirin passed from life and ascended to serve Iomedae, Lymirin's fellow scholars collected her handwritten essays and compiled them in a book, stitching and binding it with Lymirin's hair and crafting a cover worked from her plate mail. This sizable book, the *Lymirin Discourses*, has since been carried to many battlefronts and warrens of evil by generations of warrior-priests in service to the Inheritor.

The *Lymirin Discourses* was recently carried away to safety after a disastrous rescue mission to Undarin by a young halfling squire named Fenton Bootblack. Badly wounded and dying, Fenton's master pressed the book into his hands and commanded Fenton to get the book—and himself—out of the Worldwound and to safety. Fenton now hides out along the river north of the city, too shaken to traverse the blighted landscape alone. If the PCs discover Fenton, he offers the book and requests an escort back to safer lands. Furthermore, Fenton would make a devoted squire for a knightly PC (for more information on squires see *Pathfinder Player Companion: Knights of the Inner Sea* 20).

Rumors hold that early scholars created multiple copies of the *Lymirin Discourses*, but that these other copies now rest in the celestial libraries of Heaven.



Lost Relics of the Crusades

Pauper's Thighbone

This ornate ivory rod with golden runes rattles faintly as though some smaller item were contained within, but bears no seam or hinge to access the interior.

PAUPER'S THIGHBONE		MAJOR ARTIFACT
SLOT none	CL 20th	WEIGHT 4 lbs.
AURA overwhelming transmutation		

This ivory rod marked with nine special golden runes is an ornamental container for the true treasure sealed within—the broken thighbone of the unfailingly selfless Saint Argil. The rod cannot be opened except as part of the process to destroy it, as described below. When the *Pauper's Thighbone* is picked up, the new wielder immediately understands all of the powers and limitations of the artifact.

When held like a rod, the *Pauper's Thighbone* can be used to enhance a spell with a metamagic feat the wielder already knows. The wielder can apply any one of her metamagic feats to a spell she casts without increasing the spell's casting time or the spell slot required. Enhancing a spell this way expends a number of the golden runes adorning the rod equal to the level increase of the spell normally required by the metamagic feat (for example, maximizing a spell with the Maximize Spell feat expends three golden runes). Enhancing a spell does not require an action and is performed as part of the casting time of the spell. Expended runes fade from bright gold to dull silver. Silver runes cannot be used to enhance spells, but they regain their golden color, and can be used again, at dawn each day.

As the *Pauper's Thighbone* bears nine runes, it can be used to apply up to nine spell levels of increases daily. At the GM's discretion, if the artifact's owner intentionally ignores an opportunity to perform a selfless or generous act, one of the rod's runes flickers and permanently disappears, reflecting the paucity of the owner's soul. Inversely, if the owner of the *Pauper's Thighbone* performs a particularly generous act (such as giving away a large percentage of her wealth to the needy), an additional special rune might permanently appear on the rod.

When possessed by an evil creature, the *Pauper's Thighbone* instead burdens its owner with the weight of his sins. In this case, the *Pauper's Thighbone* grants none of its powers and acts as a *stone of weight*. The rod can only be removed from an evil owner's possession if the owner dies or if the owner willingly gives the rod to a nonevil creature, and the nonevil creature willingly accepts it.

DESTRUCTION

If a nonevil owner is so consistently selfish as to cause all the runes of the *Pauper's Thighbone* to permanently disappear, the rod can be broken open with a successful DC 35 Strength

check. This liberates the shard of bone within but destroys the artifact.

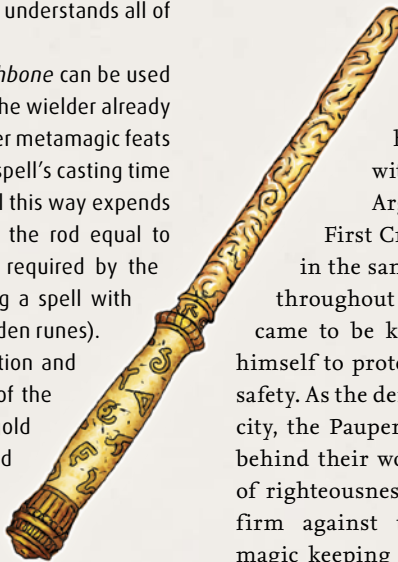
History

In 4638 AR, demonic armies streamed from the Worldwound and overwhelmed the crusader fortress-city of Drezen. A few small groups of crusaders made a fighting retreat, protecting the common citizens as they escaped. One of the populace's most stalwart protectors during this terrifying time was the sorcerer Argil.

Growing up an orphan on the streets of Drezen, Argil was raised and educated by the church of Iomedae and he grew up to become a righteous young man. As he grew into a teenager, he refused to take up space in the orphanage and instead chose to live on the streets of Drezen. Despite being homeless and poor, young Argil always shared what little he had with others and was always cheerful with everyone he encountered.

Argil had sworn a vow of poverty during the First Crusade, and the scrawny man always clad in the same tattered tunic became a known figure throughout Drezen. When Drezen fell, Argil—who came to be known as the Pauper Sorcerer—devoted himself to protecting the refugees fleeing southwest to safety. As the demons began to overwhelm the struggling city, the Pauper Sorcerer exhorted the citizens to leave behind their worldly possessions and trust in the gods of righteousness to safeguard their flight. Argil stood firm against the demonic onslaught, his celestial magic keeping howling beast-men and demons at bay. Witnesses saw the Pauper Sorcerer shine as though clad in garments of gold, his selflessness revealed in physical form. As Argil was overborne, his body erupted in a flash of holy fire, incinerating enemies within a hundred yards and leaving behind only Argil's shattered bones. Enterprising charlatans occasionally offer a shattered piece of bone as a relic of the martyred Saint Argil, although the only true relic spontaneously manifested as an ivory container that was a physical reflection of Argil's spiritual riches.

In any desolate area in the Worldwound, the PCs might be approached by a simpering babau demon carrying the *Pauper's Thighbone*. The demon picked up the rod while rummaging in an old battlefield outside of the fallen city and now can't rid itself of the artifact. The demon approaches peaceably, offering the relic in trade for anything it feels it can obtain from the PCs (or, if the PCs are hesitant, even offering the rod to the PCs for free). Cautious PCs are likely to suspect some treachery in the demon's unusual offer, but the babau simply wants to be rid of the artifact's curse.



Wrath of the Righteous



Wages of Sin

We of the faithful know the destiny of these poor souls you see before you. And we sorrow only that such taint is so hard to expunge, yet we try. No soul so vile shall be allowed to slip into shadow. We can do no less for those who once could have been our brothers and sisters. Truly, no mortal should be our enemy in our struggle against the Pit. It is only through the connivance and contrivance of our Enemy that our comrades are deceived. How else could they give of their own flesh to wear the damnable corruption of the Abyss? Friends, we do this for your own good, for your eternal salvation.

—Eboni Lancaster, Iomedaeen inquisitor of Kenabres, Mendev

Wages of Sin

Reborn in the Abyss, the tormented souls of the damned are made monstrous in their eternal suffering, filled with rage and hate for all living things. In life, they made mockery of all that was just and good, and in death, their sin-stained souls now reflect their appalling perfidy in all its unrestrained and unforgivable corruption.

Tools of Sin

Creatures of the Abyss have many ways to turn mortals toward greater sins. They whisper in mortals' ears, corrupting listeners' thoughts with the insidious babble of the Abyss. They may offer a finer body to mortals—one that is stronger, more agile, or more durable. Other agents of the Abyss breed sin within weak mortals by offering their power and magic. In some cases, they even bestow the flesh of demons to mortals, granting unholy powers.

This article presents a number of special rules to enhance the ability of other creatures to call, summon, or otherwise engage the services of the ravaging hordes of the Abyss. Some servants of the Abyssal powers are dabblers, learning minor rituals, indulging in masked rites ranging from bloody to orgiastic, or engaging in faux divinations and making cryptic vows they don't intend to keep. Others, however, are deadly serious about their pacts with the fiendish powers; they use true magic to learn these powers' dread will, and are utterly without conscience or reservation in carrying out whatever acts of anarchy and ruination their masters demand.

Most demon-worshippers are NPCs, as few characters devoted to such dark powers take up the heroic adventuring life. While these rules are thus generally intended for adversaries of the PCs, GMs may choose to run an evil campaign or offer dangerous opportunities for otherwise heroic PCs who might wander far into the gray areas of what they are willing to do to claim victory.

The drugs, feats, and spells herein might be discovered in a villain's lair, or their secrets could be revealed in an obscure blasphemous tome or through the whisperings of individuals tainted by Abyssal contact. More dangerous to discover and acquire are demonic implants—these engraftments are as painful as they are dangerous, and with each willing deformity taken on, a mortal can taste the power of the Abyss growing within.

DEMONIC DRUGS

Through demonic instruction, some mortals have distilled substances that are far more dangerous than mundane drugs. Demons delight in pushing these foul substances on new users, because each new addict is a soul more deeply ensnared in their fiendish embrace. For more information on drugs and addiction, see *Pathfinder RPG GameMastery Guide* 236.

Demonologist

The following feat is often the first step on the path to the sinister study of demons.

Demonologist

You have immersed yourself deeply in studies of the nature of the Abyss and its inhabitants.

Prerequisite: Knowledge (planes) 3 ranks.

Benefit: You gain a +2 bonus on all Knowledge checks related to the Abyss or to demons, and you may take 10 on Knowledge checks made to identify demons.

CHAOS STRINGS

Type ingested; **Addiction** moderate, Fortitude DC 16

Price 40 gp

Effect 2d4 minutes; the user's internal organs undulate and writhe away from forceful blows, negating 25% of critical hits or other sneak attack or precision-based damage effects. This does not stack with fortification armor.

Effect after 2d4 minutes, sickened for 1 minute and becomes fatigued

Damage 1d2 Con damage

Special If the user consumes a second dose of *chaos strings* while the first is active, the chance to negate critical hits increases to 50% but the duration is halved, and when the effect expires, the user becomes nauseated for 1 minute and then exhausted.

DEMON DUST

Type inhaled; **Addiction** major, Fortitude DC 20

Price 150 gp

Effects 3d20 minutes; +1d4 Str, +1d4 Dex, +1d4 Con; immunity to fear effects

Effect 1d4 hours; hallucinations and erratic behavior impose a –4 penalty on all Wisdom- and Charisma-based skill checks, and the user cannot take 10 or take 20 on checks. In stressful situations (such as in combat), the user must succeed at a Will save (DC 15 the first round, increasing by 1 every round thereafter; the DC resets to 15 once the stressful situation has ended) at the beginning of its turn each round or become confused for 1 round. The user has no memory of actions taken while using demon dust.

Damage 1d3 Con and 1d3 Wis damage

LUU DROPS

Type contact, injury (dropped or injected in the eyes);

Addiction medium, Fortitude DC 17

Price 70 gp

Effect 2d6 minutes; dazzled, but can use *see invisibility* and gains a +2 alchemical bonus on saves against patterns and

Wrath of the Righteous

other illusions that depend on sight; -2 penalty on saving throws against blindness

Effects after 2d6 minutes; Fortitude save or blinded for 1d4 hours

Damage 1d2 Wis damage

ZHUG MUSHROOMS

Type ingested; **Addiction** minor, Fortitude DC 14

Price 20 gp

Effect 1d6 minutes; immunity to ingested or inhaled diseases or poisons, immunity to the nauseated and sickened conditions.

Effect After 1d6 minutes; Fortitude save or vomit up mushroom residue in your square. This residue is acidic and deals 1d4 points of acid damage to any creature that touches it. This residue evaporates after 1 minute.

Damage 1 Con damage

DEMONIC IMPLANTS

Transformation into a demon awaits particularly sinful mortals after death, but some choose not to wait for this change and instead actively seek to be physically closer to demonkind. The primary method in this foul quest is accepting demonic implants.

Demonic implants are living tissue grafts that replace part of a creature's natural physiology. Demonic implants are treated as wondrous items for the purposes of their construction and use. All demonic implants require a willing host to attach them to—attempts to attach a demonic implant to an unwilling host automatically fail. Successfully attached demonic implants impart a negative level to a lawful or good recipient—the number of negative levels imparted stacks with each new implant. These negative levels remain as long as the implant remains attached or (in the case of *demon blood*) until the effects wear off. They never become permanent, but cannot be overcome in any way while the implant is in effect.

Implants must be physically excised to be removed. Removal deals 1d6 points of Constitution damage, and could have other effects as well (such as deafness or blindness), as determined by the GM. Other demonic implants than the ones listed below (such as *demon blood*, *demon senses*, and *demon talons*) can be found in *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Lords of Chaos, Book of the Damned, Vol. 2*.

BALEFUL EYE		PRICE 7,000 GP
SLOT none	CL 5th	WEIGHT 1 lb.
AURA faint transmutation [evil]		

This engorged, discolored orb can only be implanted after plucking out the recipient's own eye, causing blindness and making the recipient permanently dazzled until the *baleful eye* is implanted. While engrafted, the recipient can use the *baleful eye* to cast *charm person* (DC 11), *doom* (DC 11), and *see invisibility* once per day each as spell-like abilities. In addition,

the grafted creature gains a +2 bonus on saving throws against effects that cause blindness or dazzling, or against illusions that depend on sight.

CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS	COST 3,500 GP
Craft Wondrous Item, <i>blindness/deafness</i> , <i>charm person</i> , <i>doom</i> , <i>see invisibility</i>	

BRAZEN HOOVES		PRICE 15,000 GP
SLOT none	CL 15th	WEIGHT 4 lbs.
AURA strong transmutation [evil]		

These hooves cast from Abyssal bronze can be affixed to the stump of a creature's severed leg or foot, causing the leg to regrow (or transform) into a shaggy, black-furred goat leg ending in a cloven hoof of burning brass. If the leg or foot is not already severed, it can be hacked off, dealing 1d6 points of Constitution damage and 1d6 points of bleed damage. Applying the still-glowing bronze hoof, hot from the forge-fire, cauterizes the stump and ends the bleed damage, and the transformation of the leg takes 1 minute. Once complete, the recipient can make one hoof attack per round as a secondary natural attack that deals 1d4 points of damage if it's a Medium creature or 1d3 points of damage if it's a Small creature, plus 1d6 points of fire damage. The brazen hoof leaves a scorch mark whenever the recipient walks on any surface with hardness 5 or less, but it does not set surfaces on fire.

If a creature has a pair of brazen hooves grafted, it gains the trample special attack, dealing 1d6 points of fire damage in addition to normal trample damage.

CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS	COST 7,500 GP
Craft Wondrous Item, <i>bull's strength</i> , <i>wall of fire</i>	

CROWN OF HORNS		PRICE 20,000 GP
SLOT none	CL 15th	WEIGHT 5 lbs.
AURA strong transmutation [chaotic, evil]		

These curled, spiral, or hooked horns must be affixed to holes drilled into the bare skull of the recipient, who must be not only shaved but also scalped to allow the *crown of horns* to take root—this deals 1d4 points each of Charisma and Intelligence damage to the recipient. Once the crown has been implanted, the recipient gains a gore attack as a secondary natural attack that deals 1d4 points of damage if it's a Medium creature, or 1d3 if it's a Small creature. This gore attack deals double damage on a charge attack. The *crown of horns* is considered a chaotic and evil weapon for the purpose of overcoming damage reduction. In addition, when the recipient confirms a critical hit against a good-aligned target with the *crown of horns*, that creature is infused with the disruptive power of chaos; until the end of its next turn, whenever the target would roll a d20, it must roll twice and take the less favorable result.

CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS	COST 10,000 GP
Craft Wondrous Item, <i>beast shape II</i> , <i>protection from law</i>	

Wages of Sin

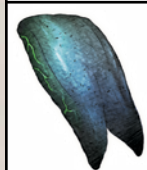
DEMON HEART		PRICE 6,000 GP
SLOT none	CL 13th	WEIGHT 1 lb.
AURA strong abjuration [chaotic, evil]		

This pulsating lump of reddish-black muscle can be implanted only if the recipient's own heart is first removed—removing the recipient's heart deals 2d4 points of Constitution damage and 1 point of Constitution bleed to the recipient, and at the beginning of its next turn the recipient is reduced to -1 hit points and begins dying. Implanting the *demon heart* requires a successful DC 20 Heal check made as a full-round action, and causes it to graft itself into the recipient's chest and halt the Constitution bleed. Once in place, the *demon heart* pumps with unrighteous might—the recipient gains a +4 profane bonus on saving throws against fear effects. In addition, if the recipient is suffering a bleed effect, as a full-round action it can cause the *demon heart* to flood its bloodstream with tainted ichor, ending the bleed effect but causing it to become nauseated for 1 round.

CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS	COST 3,000 GP
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Craft Wondrous Item, *remove fear*, *stabilize*

DEMON TONGUE		PRICE 10,000 GP
SLOT none	CL 10th	WEIGHT —
AURA moderate transmutation [chaotic, evil]		



This puckered black tongue replaces the recipient's original tongue, which must be cut out beforehand. Removing the recipient's tongue deals 2d6 points of damage to the recipient and prevents it from speaking until the demon tongue is implanted. Once

attached, a *demon tongue* grants the recipient a +4 profane bonus on Bluff checks used to verbally lie or deceive. A *demon tongue* also grants its recipient a portion of a demon's immunity to poison. A creature with a *demon tongue* implanted gains a +4 bonus on saving throws made to resist an ingested poison. In addition, the creature can detect the presence of an ingested poison in anything it eats or drinks as the *detect poison* spell.

CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS	COST 5,000 GP
----------------------------------	----------------------

Craft Wondrous Item, *detect poison*, *eagle's splendor*

DEMONHIDE		PRICE 20,000 GP
SLOT none	CL 10th	WEIGHT 10 lbs.
AURA moderate transmutation [evil]		

This rough, leathery hide is peeled from the body of a demon in strips—it may be scaly, warty, scabrous, or even covered in rank, greasy fur or feathers. To be grafted with *demonhide*, the recipient must first have its own skin flayed off, taking 1d4 points each of Dexterity, Constitution, and Charisma damage in the process. Once grafted, *demonhide* grants the wearer a +1 natural armor bonus to Armor Class and resistance 5 to electricity. In addition, the recipient is immune to contact poison and gains

New Feat

The demonic implants on this page can be created with the Craft Wondrous Item feat, but demonologists creating these foul grafts have a greater understanding of their form and function and often take the following feat to further improve their abilities.

Demon Grafter (Item Creation)

Your studies into demonic anatomy and physiology allow you to graft their immortal tissues onto mortal flesh.

Prerequisites: Demonologist, Heal 5 ranks, Knowledge (planes) 5 ranks, Spellcraft 5 ranks.

Benefit: You gain a +2 bonus on Heal checks regarding evil outsiders or creatures that already have a demonic graft. In addition, you can create demonic implants (see page 12) as if you had the Craft Wondrous Item feat, using your ranks in Heal as your caster level. The DC to create the item still increases for any necessary spell requirements (see the magic item creation rules in Chapter 15 of the *Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook*).

a +4 bonus on saving throws against poisons delivered by injury (including those delivered by a touch attacks).

CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS	COST 10,000 GP
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Craft Wondrous Item, *barkskin*, *delay poison*, *resist energy*

SPLINTERED MIND		PRICE 16,000 GP
SLOT none	CL 10th	WEIGHT 3 lbs.
AURA moderate abjuration [chaotic, evil]		

This lumpy gray and green slurry, made from the pureed brains of a dozen dretches, must be consumed as a full-round action in order to take effect, as this demonic cocktail invades and infuses the recipient's central nervous system, forming a mantle around every lobe, chiasm, and node of the recipient's brain. This mantle splinters the recipient's consciousness into dissociated and disorganized fragments linked only by this cortical mantle, making it more difficult for the recipient's mind to be compromised by outside influences.

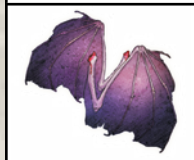
The *splintered mind* grants the recipient a +4 profane bonus on saving throws against mind-affecting effects. Also, if the recipient is affected by any effect that is neither instantaneous nor permanent, it can attempt a new saving throw each round at the end of its turn to end the effect. The splintering of the recipient's mind is not without risk, nor is it a universal protection, as its benefits do not apply against effects that cause confusion or insanity. In addition, the recipient's disorganized thoughts impose a -2 penalty on initiative checks.

CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS	COST 8,000 GP
----------------------------------	----------------------

Craft Wondrous Item, *confusion*, *misdirection*

Wrath of the Righteous

WICKED WINGS		PRICE 55,000 GP
SLOT none	CL 7th	WEIGHT 3 lbs.
AURA moderate transmutation [evil]		



These ragged wings may be birdlike with moldy feathers, or tattered and membranous like the wings of a bat. The recipient's shoulder blades and collarbones must be broken in order

to attach the *wicked wings*—breaking them deals 2d4 points of Strength and Dexterity damage to the recipient and renders both arms useless until the ability damage heals. The recipient gains a fly speed equal to its normal land speed with average maneuverability. In addition, when not flying a creature with *wicked wings* is considered to have Deflect Arrows as a bonus feat.

CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS	COST 27,500 GP
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Craft Wondrous Item, *beast shape I*

DEMONIC SPELLS

Magic is a powerful force in the world, and demons use its lure of power to tempt mortals into sinful behavior. Many demonologists and demonic cultists have developed spells to call demons to their aid, transform themselves to be more like demons, or assault their foes with the power of the Abyss.

APPARENT TREACHERY

School enchantment (compulsion) [mind-affecting]; **Level** bard 3, inquisitor 3, sorcerer/wizard 4

Casting Time 1 standard action

Components V, S

Range close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)

Targets one creature/level, no two of which can be more than 30 ft. apart

Duration 1 round/level (D)

Saving Throw Will negates; **Spell Resistance** yes

You shroud a number of creatures in an aura of suspicion and fill them with extreme paranoia regarding their allies. Affected targets believe their companions are behaving erratically, nervously, and seemingly with an eye towards betrayal.

Creatures under the effect of *apparent treachery* do not have allies and are not considered to be an ally to any other creature, including other creatures affected by this spell. They cannot move freely through their allies' spaces, flank creatures with them, cooperate with them using teamwork feats, or give or receive benefits from the aid another action or any spells or effect that affects only allies. If creatures affected by this spell are able to take attacks of opportunity, they always do so against provoking opponents, including those who were their allies before being affected by this spell.

A creature not under the effects of the spell who is trying to cast a spell against an affected target must succeed at an attack roll to touch the target, even if the spell is harmless,

though the affected creature is not forced to attempt saving throws against harmless effects.

FILM OF FILTH

School transmutation [poison]; **Level** cleric 4, druid 4, ranger 3, sorcerer/wizard 4

Casting Time 1 standard action

Components V, S

Range touch

Target creature touched

Duration 1 round/level (D)

Saving Throw Fortitude negates; **Spell Resistance** yes

You cause the target's flesh to exude a layer of putrescent slime so foul that the target is sickened (Fortitude negates) for the duration of the spell and for 1d4 rounds thereafter. All creatures within 20 feet also become sickened (Fortitude negates), and remain sickened for as long as they remain within 20 feet of the target and for 1d4 rounds thereafter. A creature that strikes the target with a bite attack must succeed at an additional save or become nauseated for 1d4 rounds. Creatures immune to poison are unaffected.

LIGHTNING LASH

School evocation [electricity]; **Level** cleric 3, inquisitor 3, ranger 2, witch 3

Casting Time 1 standard action

Components V, S

Range personal

Area 20-foot-radius spread

Duration 1 round/level (D)

Saving Throw Fortitude negates (harmless); **Spell Resistance** yes

You create a crackling lash of unholy lightning that flickers and flashes in your hand like a whip, shifting color in response to your mood and will. Once per round, you can make a melee touch attack with the *lightning lash* against a target within 15 feet. If the attack is successful, it deals 1d6 points of electricity damage and 1d6 points of damage from divine power (similar to *flame strike*), and allows you to attempt a trip combat maneuver check as a free action against your target (using your caster level as your CMB).

MAW OF CHAOS

School conjuration (teleportation) [chaotic]; **Level** cleric 8, sorcerer/wizard 8

Casting Time 1 standard action

Components V, S, F/DF (a gold-plated, cold iron ring that was forged in the Abyss)

Range close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)

Area 5-foot-radius spread

Duration concentration (maximum 1 round/level)

Saving Throw see text; **Spell Resistance** yes; see text

This spell creates a rip in reality that plunges into the interspatial vortices that constantly churn with the raw

Wages of Sin

destructive chaos of the Abyss. Each round at the beginning of your turn, the *maw of chaos* attempts a drag combat maneuver check against every creature within 40 feet, using your caster level plus your primary spellcasting ability modifier in place of a CMB. If a creature is dragged into a *maw of chaos*, the area erupts in a surge of chaotic energy and the creature takes 1d6 points of damage per caster level. Only one such eruption can occur per round.

Creatures dragged adjacent to the *maw of chaos* become entangled by the frayed strands of reality being torn apart at the rim of the *maw of chaos*. Escape requires a successful Escape Artist check or grapple check against a DC equal to 10 plus the spell's save DC. Every creature without the chaotic subtype that ends its turn adjacent to a *maw of chaos* takes 2 points of damage to each ability score. Creatures with the lawful subtype take double this amount of damage; creatures with the chaotic subtype take no damage.

Calling, summoning, and teleportation effects used within 30 feet of the *maw of chaos* or that cause a creature to appear within 30 feet of a *maw of chaos* are redirected, causing the creature to arrive adjacent to the *maw of chaos* rather than at its intended destination. Unattended objects (including dead bodies) adjacent to the *maw of chaos* are drawn into it and affected as by *disintegrate* at the beginning of the caster's next turn.

SUMMON GREATER DEMON

School conjuration (summoning)

[chaotic, evil]; **Level** cleric 9, sorcerer/wizard 9, witch 9

This spell functions like *summon monster*, except it allows you to summon a single coloxus (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 3 72), an omox demon (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 2 79), or 1d3 kalavakus demons (*Bestiary* 2 78).

SUMMON LESSER DEMON

School conjuration (summoning) [chaotic, evil]; **Level** cleric 5, sorcerer/wizard 5, summoner 4, witch 5

This spell functions like *summon monster*, except it allows you to summon a single brimorak (*Lords of Chaos* 56), one incubus (*Bestiary* 3 73), one thoxel demon (see page 86), 1d3 schir demons (*Bestiary* 3 74), or 1d4+1 vermlek demons (*Lords of Chaos* 54).

UNLEASH PANDEMONIUM

School conjuration [chaotic]; **Level** cleric 5, summoner 5, witch 5

Casting Time 1 standard action

Components V, S

Range close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)

Area 30-foot-radius spread

Duration concentration (maximum 1 round/level) +1 round (D)

Saving Throw Will partial; see text; **Spell Resistance** no

You call upon the wild winds of the Abyssal atmosphere, howling with the screams of damned and demented souls in torment. The area is filled with winds of windstorm strength (*Core Rulebook* 439), blowing in a random direction each round. Creatures within the area of effect are deafened as long as they remain within the area and for 1d4 rounds thereafter; however, they continue to hear the sounds of screams in their minds with painful intensity, causing them to become shaken for as long as they remain deafened.

A successful Will save negates the shaken condition but not the deafness.

VERMICIOUS ASSUMPTION

School conjuration (calling) [chaotic, evil]; **Level** cleric 6, summoner 6

Casting Time 10 minutes

Components V, S, M (a handful of worms)

Range touch

Target one Medium humanoid corpse

Duration instantaneous

Saving Throw none; **Spell Resistance** no

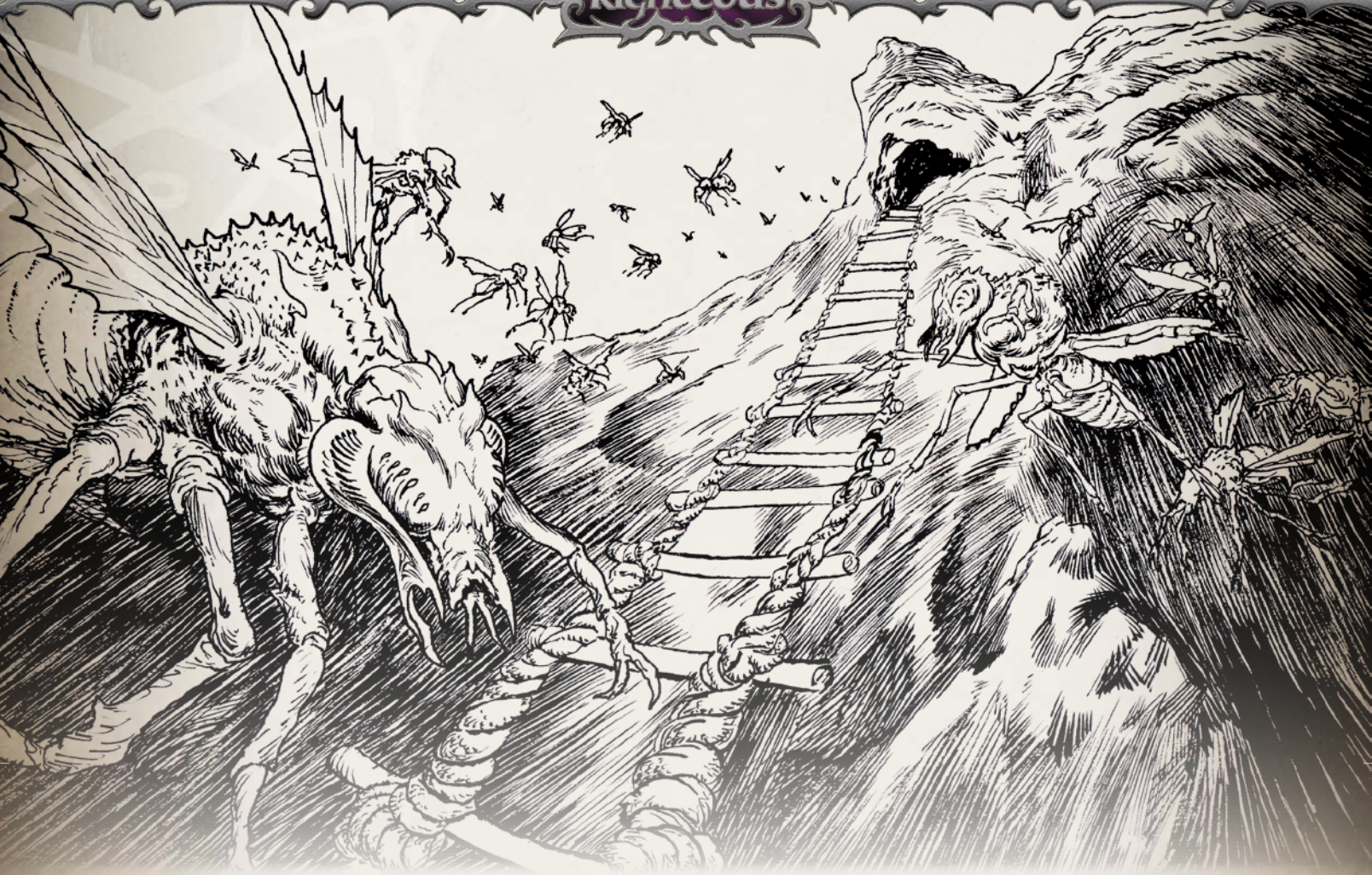
You call a single vermlek demon (*Lords of Chaos* 54) to invade and inhabit the body of the target corpse, taking on its likeness. The vermlek can remain on the Material Plane indefinitely as long as it has a body to inhabit; however, if it remains outside of a host for more than 1 minute, it's banished back to the Abyss. The vermlek's initial attitude

CORRUPTED MERCENARY

towards you is friendly, but you must succeed at an opposed Charisma check to convince it to obey your commands, similar to a charmed creature. You gain a +2 circumstance bonus on this Charisma check if you offer it a fresh humanoid corpse to inhabit.



WRATH OF THE RIGHTEOUS



The Prize

PATHFINDER'S JOURNAL: SWEET ICHOR 2 OF 6

Letter received by Venture-Captain Zhanneal of Razmiran,
5 Gozran

My Dearest Lord Zhanneal,

Much has transpired since last I folded a missive into the copper claws of my raven token Foreflyer. Lest I hold you in suspense, let me tell you that our plan has progressed precisely as you envisioned it—with a modicum of improvisation on my part, naturally, to take into account destiny's random whims.

First I spent a time recuperating from the injuries sustained in my encounter with the demon brandy-seller of Aaramor. The burns from its acidic touch yielded themselves to potent healing draughts. Gad and Vitta insisted on my compensating them for replacement

potions. Though churlish on its face, this requirement suggests that we have achieved the necessary trust to proceed. Were thieves of such reputation to offer expensive philters for nothing, I would know that they intend to lure me into a trap.

The toxic brew I quaffed at the demon's shop, however, took a greater toll on me. Gad and Vitta went together into Aaramor to find an apothecary. "I know a little about alchemy," said Gad, "but not enough to formulate antidotes." From their expressions as they returned, I assumed that they had cozened said apothecary out of one. It is regrettable that a third party should be harmed by them, but we cannot allow ourselves to bear the blame for that. When we deliver the comeuppance you have planned, the potion-maker will be avenged, even if he does not know it.

The Prize

During my recovery, Gad and Vitta asked me again and again for the story behind the Bile of Abraxas. One must thank the goddess, then, that this part of the tale is essentially true, and thus easy to remember and keep consistent from one telling to the next. To give you a flavor of these many exchanges I shall telescope them into one. Gad sat always close by the fire as he listened, still and intent. Embers flew around him but never seemed to alight. Instead, they landed on my cloak, no matter where I chose to settle. Vitta paced behind him, her mind clicking like a lock's tumblers beneath her elaborately arranged and piled hair. This she kept in place with a curlicued copper structure. To call it a tiara would convey a delicacy unknown to this clumsy device, which she must have fashioned herself. Vitta asked the bulk of the questions, with Gad interrupting only to seize upon, worry, and defeat any out-of-place thread I might happen to weave into my story.

"So who is it who has this great artifact?" Vitta asked.

"The name is hard to say and, I grant, harder to remember. Ylyda Svyn."

"And she is an alchemist, you say, and a crusader against demons?"

"The first she puts in the service of the second."

"And as a crusader, she headquarters herself in the Worldwound?"

"Where better to strike at them than deep within their territory?"

The halfling furrowed her brow at me. "You expect us to believe that she built a fortress there?"

"What you believe is of course your prerogative, but I am assured that it is true."

"Assured by who?"

(Here I shall not bore you with a list of your own informants. Be assured that I revealed only what was necessary to stoke Gad's interest.)

Vitta paced an ever-tighter circle. "How is it that a fortress inside the Worldwound isn't overwhelmed by demons? Was not, in fact, overwhelmed the instant they started to build it?"

"Through some mighty discovery, one that arouses much hope among her fellow crusaders."

"Connected to this thing you'd have us steal?"

"Possibly."

"Yet," said Gad, "for some reason she hasn't shared it with them."

"Or cannot," I said. "The matter is not clear."

"And your plan for getting the Bile of Abraxas away from Ylyda Svyn?" he asked.

I bit into an apple. "I don't have one."

He flashed an unhappy smile at me.

"The plan," I said, "falls to you. That's why I sought you out. We'll get there, gain a welcome, you'll see which way the wind blows, and you'll figure it out."

"I will, will I?"

"In exchange for half the proceeds. Still a considerable sum, even when split three ways."

"Half for you, and half for the three of us?"

"That is what I propose." I chewed the last chunk of apple flesh and threw the core into the woods, where it bounced against the trunk of a pine tree.

"The three of us," Gad echoed, "being me, Vitta, and Calliard."

"You'll do the clever talking and the thinking. If I understand your reputation correctly, that's your forte. Surely there will be locks and defenses to overcome, so that'll be Vitta's sphere of influence. And as for Calliard, if we're to plunge into the Worldwound, which crawls with demons from the depths of its valleys to the peaks of its hills, we'll need a man well able to combat them. A quality he possesses in near-alarming measure."

"And why do we need you?"

"For the muscle. When have you ever stolen anything without a scrap or two along the way?"

"You can fight?" Vitta asked. "That demon in the brandy shop made short work of you."

"That, halfling, was no fight."

"One more question." Gad rose. "Why don't we take your tip, recruit our own arm man, and go to the fortress of Ylyda Svyn without you?"

"Do you know where it is?"

"Fair enough. And you'll give us the time we need with the Bile, to use it to cure Calliard?"

"Within reason, yes. If he wishes the treatment, that is. Honesty compels me to say it: your friend did not strike me as having wearied of his vice."

Gad's features hardened. "If this artifact of yours does cure the demonblood curse, he'll take it whether he likes it or not."

The antidote spared me pain but left me dizzy and unable to stand for more than a few minutes at a time. This sudden loss of my body's hard-won power infected me with a dangerous despair. Though neither Gad nor Vitta could be mistaken for a healing priestess of Sarenrae, in my helpless state I clung to what scant ministrations they did offer. To be truthful, I needed only time, food, drink, and protection against the elements and beasts of the Numerian wild. Those they gave me—Vitta brusquely, Gad with a jaunty assurance. By showing strength when I was weak, they bound me to them, creating a dependence I could but partially resist. I reminded myself of the mission, of the ultimate loyalty I owe to you, of the end we have scheduled for him. I feared myself ill equipped for the mental gyrations required of a true mountebank. To win their trust, I had to seem to trust them. Yet by increments my opinion of these criminals slipped into genuine

WRATH OF THE RIGHTEOUS

affection and gratitude. On the one hand, this aided me in constructing the illusion so crucial to our aim. On the other, I will have to be wary, and harden myself against them, so I can, when the time arrives, deliver without flinch or hesitation their just comeuppances. When I awakened in darkest night, sweating in my bedroll, I could not dismiss the thought that my dizziness was not just one of my physical frame, but of the spirit.

During this period, Gad or Vitta would sometimes disappear from the camp. Though they felt no duty to inform me of their comings and goings, I presumed that they were acquiring provisions, and perhaps seeking Calliard. Would they speak to others of the Bile of Abraxas,

or of Ylyda Sryn's fortress? I had to rely on the discretion of thieves.

On the morning of the fourth day I judged myself well, and told them so. Together the three of us journeyed the short distance back to Aaramor. They had not, I gathered, progressed far in their hunt for Calliard. As the fortress loomed, I dared broach the subject of their friend, and why they had lost him. "If you don't mind me asking—"

"That phrase never precedes a question I want to hear," Vitta said.

Undeterred, I pressed on. "You've been asking after Calliard, have you not?"

Although I asked the question of Gad, it was Vitta who replied. "What of it?"

"If he wanted to, wouldn't he would find you?"

"If he wanted to be found, we wouldn't be looking for him. So that's less a question than a statement of the obvious." Vitta pulled her cloak tighter around her shoulders. A chill, reeking gust bore down from the north, where the demons dwelt.

"Don't mistake me. I'm happy you seek him."

"It suits your aims, you mean."

"Yes, yes." I took leather gloves from my pack and put them on. "It does suit my aims. It also suits me, if we are to embark on a quest together, to understand the history between the three of you. My life may come to depend on it."

Gad had moved several paces ahead of us. "Fair enough," he decreed.

"Why, then, do you seek a man who does not wish to be found, and to cure him when he does not wish to be cured?"

Vitta sighed. "He was cured of his malady, then caught it again, for us. On a previous gaffle, in the Worldwound."

"Who did you find to swindle in the land of demons?"

She waved the question away. "Never mind that part of it. Just know that you, and everyone in that city there," she pointed to Aaramor, "and everyone in Numeria, and Mendev, and Ustalav and beyond—everyone who doesn't have a demon currently snacking on his soul—owes Calliard a debt. He let himself sup on demonblood, direct from a shadow demon's veins, because that's what the job required. So it's not just us who owe him a debt. It's half the Inner Sea."

"And you're the ones who know that," I ventured.

"We're his friends," said Gad, and a note of finality distinctly rung.

By this time we were within a quarter mile of the city's gates. On a plain outside the walls, a crowd had gathered around a curious contraption standing near to fifteen feet high. A globe of riveted bronze, big enough to encircle a horse, sat atop a quartet of spear-like, articulated legs. Atop the globe, like a learned man's cap, perched a turret festooned with glowing glass bubbles. Several feet away from it stood a woman of lissome elven proportions, clad



"Gad's confidence is astounding."

The Prize

in a leather smock worn over unflattering workman's garb. Similarly attired men and women of various races stood in a ring around her, watching her manipulate a steel wand. By casting it through the air, or twisting and extending the rod, she commanded the object to move. First it rose higher, the globe spinning slowly as the turret moved at a different rate and in the opposite direction. Then the legs activated, so that the globe stalked across the graveled ground, its gait awkward and unbalanced. Within moments the thing toppled over, sending the spectators racing away from it. The globe hit the ground with a crash of broken glass and shredded metal. It came apart, spraying metal components in all directions.

A gear rolled into our path. Vitta, a cloth already in hand, ducked down to pick it up. She inspected it briefly as it cooled in her hand, then stuffed it in her pack.

"Technic League," she explained. "You never know what their stuff might do." She snorted. "And neither do they, for that matter."

As we neared the gates, I watched Gad, to a purpose I could not fathom, transform his posture. Confidence drained away from it, replaced by a fidgeting anxiety. He looked right and left, as if afraid of apprehension, but in a way that only drew attention. Seeing him approach the guards with all-too-evident shiftiness, I could scarcely credit him as the vaunted sharper you described to me, Zhanneal. Had his setback with his friend Calliard broken him?

I tensed as the sentinels at the gate, who had earlier admitted me without a second look, took notice of his rattled condition. One broke away from the others to bar our way. Vitta and I stood several steps back, just out of earshot, as the guard braced him. The guard puffed himself to his full height and pointed to Gad's pack, demanding to inspect it. Over the course of the exchange, the body language of the two men altered. Gad palmed something into the guard's hand. Coins? A small gemstone? The sentinel returned the pack, the rest of its contents unexamined. He dropped his shoulders, becoming the supplicant to Gad's patron. They exchanged further words. The guard pointed into the depths of the city, giving directions. Gad waved for us to follow him. In parting, the sentinel gave him a happy mock salute. The other guards regarded their comrade with grumbling disdain.

Once we were well clear of them and down one of Aaramor's narrower laneways, I asked, "What was that all about?"

Gad rewarded himself with a grin. "You want to know what's up in a city, find a bent sentinel."

"That's why you looked suspicious. To attract whichever of them was most avid for a bribe."

He nodded.

"What if you'd instead called yourself to the attention of a hard case?"

"Then I'd have nothing to hide."

"Which," said Vitta, "in this case, we do not."

The Worldwound Gambit

While Ba-El Racid may never have met Gad, Vitta, and Calliard before, this is not their first appearance on Golarion's stage. In the Pathfinder Tales novel *The Worldwound Gambit*, also by Robin D. Laws, the three scoundrels team up with even more criminals and con artists to pull the daring heist of a lifetime—stealing a dangerous artifact from a new demonic fortress in the Worldwound known as the Tower of Yath!

I marveled at the ease of the interchange. Gad had taken a bet on a stranger's disposition and been proven right. Life, it dawned on me, could be perceived as a simple series of tricks. A layer of true, unspoken rules undergirding the regulations binding ordinary folk. The master of them takes short cuts through the barriers of society, to always place himself two steps ahead. Barriers we consent to, yet might set aside, if only we allowed ourselves the boldness. That is what separates honest men like us from the professional deceivers. In Gad's casual manipulation of the guard lay a temptation far more intoxicating than demon blood—a world in which others are nothing but obstacles for the overcoming.

"He gave you information?" I moved to avoid collision with a distracted man wearing a strange metal sleeve. Like the woman with the contraption outside the city, bits of it glowed and beeped.

"I asked where a chancer, new in town, might find persons of like-minded disposition," Gad said.

"Calliard might have taken up lodgings in the city, but more likely has holed himself up nearby," Vitta explained. "Either way, he found someone to help him with his practical needs, to minimize his exposure doing whatever it is he's doing."

"Hunting demons," I offered.

"As I said, whatever. So who would he trust?"

I ducked to avoid the contents of a chamber pot being flung out a second-story window into the reeking alley. "One he already knows?"

"Folks move from place to place in our line of work," Vitta said. "Go to the right tavern, and you'll spot a familiar face or two."

Thus Vitta laid out the folly behind my attempt to shadow Calliard directly. Better to find a weaker link, and tug on it. Not that I would be able to tell a friend of the poet's from a foe, or even guess at which tavern served an underworld clientele.

We made our way to a drinking hole improbably named the Broken Axle. On the outside it looked as one with the rest of stoic, battle-hardened Aaramor. Inside, it presented the same dingy familiarity as any dive. I watched as Gad, and to

WRATH OF THE RIGHTEOUS

a lesser degree Vitta, again altered their postures, damping down their natural notability by minimizing gestures, moving neither slowly nor quickly and looking away from the center of the room. Without visible consultation they selected the same out-of-the-way table and within moments had descended on it. I was caught out, the gazes of slouched and sozzled patrons all upon me. I looked to Gad for a cue; with a taut head twitch he directed me to an opposite exit. By the time I reached it, they were already in motion again, zeroing in on a table occupied by two scarred dwarves and a gawky, shovel-faced human.

The human, seeing them coming, turned and bolted, tripping over his chair and falling to the grimy floor. He pulled at his hip for a knife, unsheathing it in time for Gad to kick it out of his hand. Gad let his victim get to his feet, and the man used the opportunity to run for the exit I barred. I grabbed him and pulled him through the doorway, into a narrow service corridor stacked with trash and empty barrels. He struggled for freedom; I clasped him tightly until he wore himself out.

Gad eased himself through the door, followed by Vitta. She posted herself by the threshold, in case the man had friends who might come through to defend him.

"Hello, Teson," Gad said.

Teson commenced a second round of fruitless wriggling as Gad came close. "My debt to you is canceled," he sputtered.

"How so?" Gad moved closer, pinning him between us.

"I've been helping Calliard, I swear it, and he said—"

"You informed on both of us, Teson. What you do for him erases nothing for me."

Tears ran down Teson's face. "Please, that was so long ago, and I tell you, I'm helping Calliard."

Gad pushed his face right up to Teson's. "You'll excuse me if I don't take your word for it."

"He'll tell you, he'll tell you, I swear."

"Then you'd better tell me where he is."

We stood at the grassy lip of a sand cliff. Prior scouting from the opposite direction had revealed the mouth of a man-made cave dug into the cliff side, which from our present angle we could not see. We spotted two wooden pegs driven into the dirt, from which hung a rope ladder.

"I'd better go first." Vitta withdrew from her pack the gear she'd scavenged earlier in the day. With a deftness surprising for her shape, she arranged herself on the rope ladder and shimmied out of sight.

A loud clashing sound rang across the valley. I started in alarm, but Gad placed a calming hand on my forearm. He got onto the ladder and disappeared, leaving me no choice but to follow.

I watched as he ducked into the sand cave's mouth. On reaching the end of the rope ladder, I swung on it until the momentum took me inside, then let go. A net covered with

rocks and bits of scrap metal lay across the inner surface of the cavern. After a moment's confusion, I identified it as the remains of a trap, which Vitta had sprung before entering. She picked up the gear, which I imagined she had thrown to trigger the drop trap.

Calliard crouched at the back of the cavern, lantern light casting his sharp-planed features into a sinister mask. He swigged from a wineskin, leaving a trail of black demon blood running down his chin. "You aren't welcome here," he said.

Gad took a step his way. "I don't have to hold my hands up, do I?"

Calliard wouldn't look at him. "No. But leave me be."

"We need your help."

Calliard pointed the wineskin at me. "Who's this?"

Gad ran hands over his close-cropped hair. "You don't recognize him?"

Calliard took a step my way. "Should I? Let him speak for himself."

Words lodged in my throat. Finally I managed, "When we met, you were distracted."

He peered at me. "Oh, yes. The demon had you."

Here, I admit, I allowed anger to veer me from my purpose. "You left me to die."

Dark squiggles swam in the whites of Calliard's eyes. "But you didn't. And now you're here. Your predicament at the brandy shop, then—it was no coincidence. You sought its proprietor because you were following me." Suddenly he held a thin dagger in his hand, its tip pointed at my neck. I angled myself toward Gad, as if to ask if he meant to intervene. Evidently, he did not. I would be required to prove myself.

"Yes, I came here looking for you. Don't think I'll let you stick me with that thing."

The blade didn't waver. The rest of him shook, but not the knife hand. "Shall we see who's faster?"

"Perhaps you'd rather have your questions answered."

"My question is: why shouldn't I stab you?"

"A cure. I have a cure for you."

"What makes you think I want it?"

Vitta folded her arms in disgust. "Surely you don't want this. Calliard, have you looked in a mirror lately?"

"It's up to him," Gad interrupted, "to take Ba-El's offer. Or not."

Calliard lowered the dagger—from my throat to my kidneys. "Offer?"

In bursts, I told him the story I'd laid out for Gad and Vitta—the Bile of Abraxas, Ylyda Svyn, her fortress, the prospect that it might reverse his blood habit. Of course, I explained the profit in it for me, and for his friends.

He sheathed his dagger and addressed Gad. "And you want to do this?"

"It's my responsibility. I led that mission. I made the plan. I got you into this."

The Prize

He downed another swig. “The Calliard you want to save is gone. I can’t imagine becoming that man again. I’m a hunter now. My veins tremble with the song of the Abyss.”

“That doesn’t sound good,” Vitta said.

The poet nearly smiled. “It’s my fate. What I did, I did willingly. And it was worth the price. I absolve you, my friends. Now go.”

A trickle of sand fell from the cavern roof above his head.

Vitta came toward him. “If you were in our shoes—”

With a gesture, Calliard silenced her. The shower of sand grew thicker. Beneath us, the cavern floor shifted. Calliard reached behind him to grab his magical dart, the one he had used to such effect against the leathery demon at the brandy shop. Gad drew his sword; Vitta, a warhammer scaled to her halfling frame. Scimitar ready, I ducked to avoid a cascade of falling sand.

From the cavern roof and up through its floor surged monstrous shapes. A humanoid demon unfolded batlike wings. Its pinprick eyes flashed, tearing at my soul. Misshapen, insect-faced figures clacked at us with pincer claws. A pair of snapping jaws, winged and disembodied, swooped toward me. I slashed at it, sending its shattered teeth spraying through the collapsing cave. The others, already well into a fighting retreat, stood behind me. The bat-winged demon raked me with its claws, then sank rows of razor teeth into my neck. I hacked at it, opening the cordlike vein running up its shoulder to its throat. Black blood gushed down its scaly torso.

“Ignore the others!” Calliard shouted, his rapier pointed at my opponent. “That one’s the danger!” Vitta bulled past the ineffectual swipe of another insectile thing to engage my foe from its right flank. Calliard came in from the left, allowing Gad to circle behind it. He drove his blade between the distracted creature’s wings as its malformed allies nipped and snapped at us. It divided its slashes and bites between us as we landed synchronized blows. Finally it reared to the side, and we fled, fighting off the minor demons on the way.

Vitta, the first to reach the cavern mouth, reached for the rope ladder. It jerked and shimmied; she looked up and saw a wasp demon sawing at it with its mandibles. She pushed herself over the lip to free-climb down, creating handholds by driving her fingers into the hard-packed sand. The flying jaw demon harried her, until Calliard drew his bow and peppered it with arrows. When it was my turn to climb, I tumbled from the cliff, but the sand heaped below broke my fall, leaving me conscious, if rattled to the bone.

Two natural exits led from the valley, one to the south, the other to the north and west. A crawling carpet of demons filled the first of these, leaving only one direction for our flight.

“We don’t want to go that way,” Vitta said.

“No choice,” said Calliard.

“Does this happen to you often?” Gad asked him.

“If I stay in one place too long.” Calliard watched the demon horde advance. “They’re indifferent hunters. I can outwit them.”

He turned and led us through the valley, to the north and west. Fewer members of the demon horde waited there. Ill-coordinated, they offered feckless resistance to our charge. When they barred our way, we cut them down or drove them off.

We climbed through a bramble, and over the top of a rise. Demons scuttled behind us, barking and chortling. They had herded us where they wanted us. Ahead, a disturbingly animate mist rose through the twilight gloom. We followed Calliard into the Worldwound.



“No one can deny Vitta’s abilities.”

Wrath of the Righteous



Bestiary

As we stumbled through the ruined lands of the worldwound, we came across a lone soldier—a crusader separated from his unit. He was lethargic and badly beaten, but stable. In his condition, he wasn't much use to us as a combatant, but we couldn't leave him and there was no way we were going to backtrack to bring him back to civilization. As we traveled, he moved slower, sometimes trailing back almost a hundred yards. He complained constantly about the food, the march, his wounds, and his duties at camp. Then, during an argument one morning, his form shimmered and dropped, revealing the demon that had traveled with us for nearly two weeks!"

—sergeant Thalina Decartani of the Radiant Plume Company

Bestiary

This volume of the Wrath of the Righteous Adventure Path features a host of foul creatures from the Abyss. A template to make normally docile animals into bloodthirsty killers, a demon that focuses on destroying soldiers' trust and morale, an Abyssal hive queen, and the demon lord Shax all find their way onto the pages of this bestiary.

More Malicious Encounters

The random encounter table presented here features a number of typical threats the PCs could encounter while making their way through the Worldwound to the fallen city of Drezen. During the course of the adventure, the PCs have a 45% chance of a random encounter every hour they spend traversing the tainted waste. Since this adventure spans a range of levels, some of the results might be too simple or too difficult for the PCs, depending on where they are in the course of the adventure. If the result rolled is outside the challenge rating range appropriate for the PCs, roll again or choose a more appropriate encounter.

GMs who wish to learn more about the region the PCs will be traveling in or those looking for other encounter ideas or hazards during the course of this adventure should check out *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: The Worldwound*. To find out more about some of the demons mentioned in these encounters or to find new and variant rules for them, see *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Demons Revisited*.

Beast Wranglers (CR 7): Tromping through the broken landscape, the cultists Jelra and Teoske (use the statistics for border guard rangers on page 129 of *Pathfinder RPG NPC Codex*) reluctantly lead a pair of man-eating aurochs (see page 88) to the Worldwound's border with the intention of releasing the creatures across the West Sellen River to rampage across Mendev. The rangers are frankly tired of traveling with these sinister beasts, and Jelra is afraid that the creatures will double-cross them before they reach their destination. The aurochs do indeed plan to eat their escorts once they reach the river, but for now they are content to feed on any living creatures they find along the way. When engaging in combat, the rangers command the aurochs to attack, then hang back and fire on enemies with their bows.

Bodak Stalker (CR 8): After seeping up from an Abyssal rift, this horrific creature has been staggering through the Worldwound in search of life to extinguish. Originally, this creature was a mortal paladin sent into the Worldwound to fight the demonic hordes, but he was captured and dragged to a rift where he was tortured to death. Instead of transforming him into a larva, the foul energies of the Abyss warped his soul and body into the form of a bodak. Now the bodak roams the lands killing cultists and crusaders alike. If not stopped, the bodak could create hundreds of its kind with its death gaze.

DREZEN ENVIRONS ENCOUNTERS

d%	Result	Avg. CR	Source
01–08	1d8 dretches	6	<i>Bestiary</i> 60
09–13	2d6 ghouls	6	<i>Bestiary</i> 146
14–20	1 half-fiend minotaur	6	<i>Bestiary</i> 171
21–24	1d4 schirs	6	<i>Bestiary</i> 3 74
25–27	1d6 shadows	6	<i>Bestiary</i> 245
28–33	Beast wranglers (2 border guards and 2 man-eating aurochs)	7	<i>NPC Codex</i> 129 and see page 88
34–40	1d4 brimoraks	7	<i>Lords of Chaos</i> 56
41–45	1d8 giant rot grubs	7	<i>Bestiary</i> 3 215
46–50	1d4 babaus	8	<i>Bestiary</i> 57
51–55	Bodak stalker	8	<i>Bestiary</i> 2 48
56–60	1d4 grimslakes	8	<i>Worldwound</i> 55
61–67	Howler masters (8 tieflings and 4 howlers)	8	<i>Bestiary</i> 264 and <i>Bestiary</i> 2 159
68–72	1 nabasu	8	<i>Bestiary</i> 64
73–77	Paladin rider (see text)	8	<i>Bestiary</i> 67 and <i>NPC Codex</i> 114
78–84	1 urannag	8	<i>Worldwound</i> 60
85–87	1 kithangian	9	<i>Worldwound</i> 47
88–91	1d4 spectres	9	<i>Bestiary</i> 256
92–95	1d8 thoxels	9	See page 86
96–98	1 tick swarm	9	<i>Bestiary</i> 2 265
99–100	1 vrock	9	<i>Bestiary</i> 69

Howler Masters (CR 8): This band of eight tieflings, based out of a series of camps northeast of Yathscar, keeps four howlers and uses them as hunting animals. Two tieflings hold the chains of each Abyssal beast and all of the tieflings take a –1 penalty to Wisdom from the howlers' curse, a condition that reduces their Perception and Sense Motive checks by 1 and their Will saves by 1. When they encounter other creatures, especially soldiers and adventurers from beyond the Worldwound's borders, the tieflings command the howlers to howl before releasing their hold on the chains.

Paladin Rider (CR 8): Many demons delight in slaughter and destruction, but shadow demons are far more subtle and sinister. Finding a respected crusader who seemed like an ideal target, the shadow demon Zlathin slipped into the holy archer paladin (*NPC Codex* 114) as she slept and possessed her. Knowing it would only be a matter of time before the other paladins in the camp noticed his presence, Zlathin fled in his new form just before dawn. He is currently making his way to Drezen within the paladin, attacking any other Mendevian forces he encounters along the way. He hopes that delivering a paladin to his superiors will earn him an endless selection of mortal bodies to possess so he can have a solid, fleshy form forever.

WRATH OF THE
RIGHTEOUS**Demon Lord, Shax**

This stork-headed, winged humanoid is spattered with blood and wields a pair of gory, razor-sharp daggers in his dripping hands.

DEMON LORD, SHAX**CR 28****XP 4,915,200**

CE Medium outsider (chaotic, demon, evil, extraplanar)

Init +18; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., detect good, detect law, true seeing; Perception +54**Aura** bleeding wounds (30 ft.), frightful presence (120 ft., DC 36), unholy aura (DC 28)**DEFENSE****AC** 46, touch 38, flat-footed 32 (+14 Dex, +8 natural, +14 profane)**hp** 676 (33d10+495); regeneration 30 (deific or mythic)**Fort** +26, **Ref** +32, **Will** +28**Defensive Abilities** absorb blood, Abyssal resurrection, freedom of movement; **DR** 20/cold iron, epic, and good;**Immune** ability damage and drain, bleed, charm and compulsion effects, death effects, electricity, energy drain, poison, petrification; **Resist** acid 30, cold 30, fire 30; **SR** 39**OFFENSE****Speed** 50 ft.**Melee** +5 unholy dagger +46/+41/+36/+31 (1d4+15/17-20), +5 unholy dagger +46/+41/+36/+31 (1d4+15/17-20), bite +38 (1d6+5)**Ranged** thrown surgical tool +47/+42/+37/+32 (1d6+10)**Special Attacks** command blood, frightful weapon prowess, painful cuts, sneak attack +5d6**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 28th; concentration +38)

Constant—detect good, detect law, freedom of movement, true seeing, unholy aura

At will—astral projection, blasphemy (DC 27), blood biography^{APG} (DC 23), desecrate, greater dispel magic, greater teleport, telekinesis (DC 25), shapechange, spiritual weapon, unhallow, unholy blight (DC 24)

3/day—blade barrier (DC 26), mage's sword, summon demons, symbol of pain (DC 25)

1/day—finger of death (DC 27), time stop, weird (DC 29)

STATISTICS**Str** 30, **Dex** 39, **Con** 40, **Int** 30, **Wis** 31, **Cha** 31**Base Atk** +33; **CMB** +43 (+47 disarm); **CMD** 81**Feats** Blinding Critical, Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes, Craft Magic Arms and Armor, Critical Focus, Double Slice, Greater Disarm, Greater Two-Weapon Fighting, Improved Critical (dagger), Improved Disarm, Improved Initiative, Improved Two-Weapon Fighting, Improvised Weapon Mastery, Quick Draw, Throw Anything, Two-Weapon Fighting, Two-Weapon Rend**Skills** Acrobatics +50, Bluff +46, Craft (alchemy) +46, Disable Device +50, Fly +47, Heal +43, Intimidate +46, Knowledge (arcana) +43, Knowledge (engineering) +21, Knowledge (planes) +46, Knowledge (religion) +43, Perception +54, Sense Motive +46, Sleight of Hand +47, Spellcraft +43,Stealth +50, Use Magic Device +46; **Racial Modifiers** +8 Perception**Languages** Abyssal, Celestial, Common, Draconic; telepathy 300 ft.**SQ** master of lies**ECOLOGY****Environment** any (Abyss)**Organization** solitary (unique)**Treasure** triple (2 +5 unholy daggers, other treasure)**SPECIAL ABILITIES****Absorb Blood (Su)** If a creature dies while under the effects of Shax's ability to command blood, all of the victim's blood slithers out of its body and moves at a speed of 60 feet toward Shax. If the slithering blood reaches Shax, it flows up onto his body and is absorbed, affecting Shax as a *heal* spell (CL 28th). A slithering pool of blood can be destroyed by any amount of fire damage applied to it before it reaches its goal, or by the application of an effect that transmutes liquid to something other than blood.**Aura of Bleeding Wounds (Su)** Whenever a creature takes piercing or slashing damage within 30 feet of Shax, it takes an additional 1d6 points of bleed damage. This bleed damage stacks with itself, up to a maximum of 10d6 points. As a free action, Shax may designate any number of creatures within the aura to be exempt from this effect.**Command Blood (Su)** As a swift action, Shax can command the blood of any creature that is currently suffering from bleed damage to do his bidding. The target must be within 60 feet of Shax for him to use this ability. The target can resist this ability with a successful DC 36 Fortitude save. If the target fails the save, Shax can command the victim's blood to behave in one of the manners listed below. Once commanded, the blood continues to function in this way for as long as the victim continues to bleed. Shax can change the effect in a subsequent round by using this ability again, but no more than one of the following effects can be in effect at any one time. The save DC is Charisma-based.**Blinding Blood:** The victim's blood runs up into its eyes and blinds it at the start of its turn unless the victim takes a move action to wipe away the blood. Once a victim is blinded in this way, it remains blinded as long as the bleed effect continues.**Bloody Mess:** The victim's blood spreads out across its body, making it slippery. This grants a +10 circumstance bonus on Escape Artist checks and all attempts to resist being grappled, but the victim must succeed at a DC 36 Reflex save at the start of each round or drop objects it holds. These effects last as long as the bleed effect continues.**Choking Blood:** The target's blood runs up into its nostrils and mouth unless the creature uses a free hand to pinch its nose shut and holds its breath. If the target doesn't do so, the blood runs into its lungs and the creature must succeed at a Constitution check each round or it begins to drown.

Bestiary

Once a victim begins to drown, it continues to do so as long as the bleed effect persists.

Gruesome Tendrils: This effect automatically ends any bleed effects the victim is currently suffering as it causes the blood coating the victim to solidify into thin, whiplike tendrils that lash out at any creature within 5 feet. Any creature that begins its turn in this area automatically takes 1d6 points of slashing damage and 1d6 points of bleed damage; a successful DC 36 Reflex save prevents this damage.

Frightful Weapon Prowess (Ex) When an opponent observes Shax's attacks, the frightening display of the demon lord's grace makes the victim take additional damage from those attacks, as if simply imagining the damage were enough to cause injury. Shax gains a profane bonus equal to his Charisma modifier on damage rolls (+10 damage) with all weapon attacks and ranged attacks made against a victim who can observe him. This damage is negated if the victim closes its eyes, but doing so puts the opponent in greater danger from Shax's sneak attacks. This is a visual fear effect.

Master of Lies (Ex) Shax is immune to any magical effect that discerns lies or forces him to speak the truth.

Painful Cuts (Ex) Whenever Shax threatens a critical hit with a slashing weapon, the victim must succeed at a DC 36 Fortitude save or be staggered by the pain for 1 round. If the hit was a critical hit, the staggered effect lasts for 1d4 rounds on a failed saving throw. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Shax is the demon lord of envy, lies, and—above all else—murder. He rules an Abyssal realm known as Charnelhome, an immense mansion the size of a city perched atop a slanted bluff surrounded by a bog of thorny, blood-drinking plants. He is fond of inviting his captured enemies as well as his greatest worshipers into the chambers of this building, for those who survive his deathtraps often serve as lessons as to how he can improve his methods of mayhem.

Shax is particularly skilled at blinding foes with critical hits—when he does so, he likes to pluck the eyes from his victim's face as part of the attack and swiftly gobble them down whole. He can hurl the countless surgical tools he carries on his body as deadly weapons, but prefers to slaughter foes in melee.

SHAX'S CULT

Babaus, chokers, derros, drow, evil nobles, serial killers, and torturers worship Shax by inflicting grisly torments on other conscious and living souls. The subjects of these tortures aren't always unwilling or innocent victims, although his cultists prefer tormenting enemies of the faith over allies or members. The cult's holy places are narrow alleyways in violent parts of large cities, hidden rooms in grand estates, and secret dungeons filled with deathtraps

and torture chambers. These unholy temples are often guarded by fiendish animals (particularly large, predatory birds) and shadow demons, but are usually watched over by a number of babau demons as well. Enhanced versions of these demons, called the Sons of Shax, and can be found serving his greatest cults (*Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Demons Revisited* 7).

Shax's unholy symbol is a curved white feather sitting in a pool of blood. His favored weapon is the dagger. He grants access to the domains of Chaos, Destruction, Evil, and Nobility, and to the subdomains of Demon, Leadership, Martyr, and Rage. For more rules about demon lords, including the full rules of Shax's Abyssal resurrection and summon demons abilities, see *Pathfinder Adventure Path* #73 page 81 or *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 4.



WRATH OF THE RIGHTEOUS

Demon, Thoxel

Dead white scars and raw red flesh crisscross this creature's scorched and sallow skin as though it has been flogged and branded a thousand times.

THOXEL

CR 5



XP 1,600

CE Medium outsider (chaotic, demon, evil, extraplanar)

Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +13

Aura insolence (5 ft., DC 15)

DEFENSE

AC 20, touch 12, flat-footed 18 (+6 armor, +2 Dex, +2 natural)

hp 51 (6d10+18)

Fort +8, **Ref** +7, **Will** +2

Immune electricity, poison; **Resist** acid 10, cold 10, fire 10

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.

Melee mwk two-bladed sword +10/+10/+7 (1d8+6/19-20)

Ranged composite longbow +8/+3 (1d8+4/x3)

Special Attacks betrayer's blade, disrupt coordination

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 6th; concentration +8)

At will—*alter self*, *greater teleport* (self plus 50 pounds of objects only), *lesser confusion* (DC 13)

3/day—*murderous command*^{UM} (DC 13)

STATISTICS

Str 19, **Dex** 15, **Con** 17, **Int** 8, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 14

Base Atk +6; **CMB** +10; **CMD** 22

Feats Double Slice, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Focus (two-bladed sword)

Skills Bluff +11, Craft (weapons) +4, Craft (armor) +4, Disguise +8, Intimidate +8, Perception +13, Profession (soldier) +9; **Racial Modifiers** +8 Perception

Languages Abyssal, Celestial, Common, Draconic; telepathy 100 ft.

ECOLOGY

Environment any (Abyss)

Organization solitary, pair, squad (3-6), or platoon (7-12)

Treasure standard (chainmail, composite longbow, mwk two-bladed sword, other treasure)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Aura of Insolence (Su) Any creature adjacent to a thoxel demon must succeed at a DC 15 Will save or become insolent and uncooperative with its allies. Creatures affected by this aura stop functioning as allies to other creatures. An affected creature can't provide flanking, can't serve as an ally for teamwork feats or aid another actions, and doesn't allow its allies to move through its space. Any spell or effect that requires a willing target fails if it is used on an affected creature, and even harmless effects require an attack roll (if applicable) and require the insolent creature to attempt a saving throw against them. An affected creature remains insolent as long as it is adjacent to a thoxel demon and for 1d4 rounds thereafter. A creature that successfully saves is not subject to the same thoxel's aura for 24 hours. Thoxel demons are immune to this effect. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Betrayer's Blade (Su) If a thoxel demon hits a creature with both ends of its two-bladed sword in the same round, the target is compelled to attack its leader. The target can negate this effect with a successful DC 15 Will save. A creature affected by this effect turns on its leader or commander and attacks as if it were dominated for 1d6 rounds. An animal companion, cohort, or familiar must attack its master, and a called, charmed, dominated, or summoned creature must attack the creature controlling it. If a creature has no leader, it instead attacks a random ally. This is a mind-affecting compulsion effect, and the save DC is Charisma-based.

Disrupt Coordination (Su) Whenever a creature threatened by a thoxel demon uses the aid another action, the thoxel can, as an immediate action, attempt



Bestiary

to interrupt and negate that action. The thoxel demon must make an attack roll. The attack roll of the creature performing the aid another action must equal or exceed the thoxel demon's attack roll; otherwise, the aid another action is negated.

Able to take the shape of rank-and-file soldiers and infect military ranks like a cancer, thoxels—also known as insubordination demons—spend every drop of their malice to break down the cooperative spirit of those who fight together. Among mortal soldiers, thoxels whisper disparaging words about commanders, talk in hushed tones about the danger of upcoming battles, or belittle other soldiers' accomplishments. Many great battles are said to have been lost because of the presence of these subtle but murderous demons within an army's ranks. They represent a passion to kill as they please without caring about order, control, or their allies. Despite their skill at martial exploits, thoxels are lazy and untrustworthy creatures. Thoxel demons are 6 feet tall and weigh 200 pounds.

ECOLOGY

Thoxel demons form from the souls of deserters and traitors, those who abandoned their posts and their erstwhile allies to their fates while they sought glory elsewhere on the battlefield, or safety far from it. These cowardly demons delight in breaking the spirits of those they hide among, disguised as typical soldiers. Their defining sin is the ruin, pain, and death they brought to others by failing to follow orders, keep discipline, and stand firm in face of adversity. It is not just that they failed private tests of character, but also that their moral disintegration led to great suffering in others who trusted them and depended on them. Those betrayers who sought to expiate their guilt through reconciliation and reparations to those they abandoned still earned their shame but preserved their eternal souls, but the unrepentant souls who callously disregarded the tragedies left in their wake, hewing to their own path again and again despite the havoc they left behind, often find their way to the Abyss.

Thoxel demons are lazy in the extreme, prone to shirking labor and sleeping whenever they have the chance—despite not needing to do so. Thoxels usually have to be herded into work details and closely supervised by more powerful demons. When closely directed, they can perform impressively in battlefield maneuvers and move with tight precision, coordinating their attacks between one another in order to bring down lone prey too strong for a single thoxel to defeat on its own. Once their prey is taken or the enemy's resolve is broken, their temporary alliances fracture quickly and they resort

to squabbling and fighting among themselves over the spoils, with the strongest taking the lion's share and the rest settling for scraps.

HABITAT & SOCIETY

Thoxel demons are instruments of spiritual torture, in that they represent the advent of hope followed by its shattering destruction. They appear to be strong and steadfast warriors who march in precise formation and keep their armaments perpetually polished to a parade ground shine, yet at precisely the wrong moment they break and run, or disrupt careful formations with sudden and unexpected maneuvers aimed at self-aggrandizement or self-preservation. They corrode discipline and morale, turning troops against commanders and allies against friends. Thoxels are agents of dissension and disruption, whether working alone or using magical or mundane disguises to infiltrate existing units.

Thoxels are reborn into bodies very much like the ones they possessed in life, though they are scarred and physically tormented for their cowardice and treachery in life before being reborn into an eternity of spreading their sin to others. They are formed up into squads and platoons and set to patrol the endless realms of the Abyss when not sent to break armies on the Material Plane. These groups of thoxels form fluid ranks, gathering together for short periods of time interspersed with long periods of lazy rest.

Though thoxels willingly fight for any demons more powerful than themselves, they are common within the Abyssal realm of Charnelhome, where the psychic implements of Shax dissect and dismember soul and spirit as surely as they do flesh and bone. There, thoxels spar continuously with the babaus and chokers who lurk in every shadowy corner of Charnelhome, fighting a guerrilla war to show who are the fittest servants of the Blood Marquis.

Thoxel demons are skilled artisans, able to forge and maintain weapons and armor of excellent quality, and they take a certain pride in ensuring their personal armaments are always sharp and in good repair. When closely supervised, thoxel demons can be tasked with forge duty, turning out weapons for demonic legions in great numbers. However, their selfishness and laziness impairs their usefulness as foundry smiths for demon armies, as they frequently take shortcuts to get through their quotas and care little for the fate of demonic soldiers whose weapons shatter in battle or whose armor is ill-fitting or missing key fasteners. Anyone who relies on an insubordination demon's craftsmanship takes a great risk, for thoxels rarely put much care and attention to detail into the armor or weapons that are intended for anyone but themselves.

WRATH OF THE
RIGHTEOUS

Man-Eating Animal

No ordinary bovine, this hulking beast has bloodstained horns and sharpened teeth. Its eyes show a malign intelligence.

MAN-EATING AUROCHS**CR 3****XP 800**

CE Large magical beast

Init +0; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, scent; Perception +11**DEFENSE****AC** 15, touch 9, flat-footed 15 (+6 natural, -1 size)**hp** 31 (3d10+15)**Fort** +8, **Ref** +3, **Will** +3**Defensive Abilities** natural cunning; **DR** 5/slashing**OFFENSE****Speed** 40 ft.**Melee** bite +8 (1d8+6), gore +8 (1d8+6)**Space** 10 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.**Special Attacks** stampede, trample (2d6+9, DC 17)**STATISTICS****Str** 23, **Dex** 10, **Con** 21, **Int** 4, **Wis** 15, **Cha** 8**Base Atk** +3; **CMB** +10; **CMD** 20 (24 vs. trip)**Feats** Endurance, Skill Focus (Perception)**Skills** Perception +11, Survival +0 (+4 when following tracks);**Racial Modifiers**

+4 Survival to follow tracks

Languages Abyssal, Common (can't speak)**ECOLOGY****Environment** temperate plains**Organization** solitary, pair, or herd (3–30)**Treasure** none**SPECIAL ABILITIES**

Stampede (Ex) A stampede occurs when three or more creatures with stampede make a trample attack while remaining adjacent to each other. While stampeding, the creatures can trample foes of their size or smaller, and the trample's save DC increases by 2.

Scholars will explain that though many animals fight to defend their territory and their young, only a few apex predators hunt humanoids for food. Yet any villager across the Inner Sea region can recount tales about man-eating beasts that once lurked in the local wilderness (and might still). Any sort of animal can become a man-eater, from known predators to seemingly harmless herbivores. Though the creatures and locations may change, certain elements remain the same in tales of man-eating animals. Having tasted human flesh, these animals can't be sated by any other type of food. Man-eaters have terrible bites, and hunters' arrows bounce off their hides. Man-eaters are unusually bold, no longer frightened by human presence like their kin. Yet they are also canny, employing tactics no mere animal could conceive. Man-eaters appear able to understand human speech, and some of the more fanciful stories even claim the animals can speak.

A man-eating animal can be distinguished from its common relatives by its carnivorous teeth, enlarged jaws, and the glint of intelligence in its eyes.

ECOLOGY

Most tales of man-eating animals are sparked by rabid or starving (but otherwise normal) animals, but true man-eaters do exist. Such abominations are the result of a fiendish spirit fusing with that of a mundane animal. Though not wholly fiendish in nature, the beast gains limited sentience, increased resilience, and unnatural appetites. Despite popular belief, eating humanoid flesh isn't enough to turn an animal into a man-eater. The creature must be exposed to chaotic and evil influences, whether from a planar gate, demonic altar, or transformative elixir (such as the *blood of Baphomet*). Man-eating animals can also result from botched summonings and incomplete exorcisms. A fiendish spark set loose might inhabit an



Bestiary

animal's form so that the foul spirit can continue to spread suffering.

Man-eating animals are no longer part of the natural ecology. They hunt almost ceaselessly, preferring intelligent prey above all else. They rarely die of natural causes, almost always meeting their ends in bloody conflict. These creatures can and do mate with members of their original species. In cases of multiple births, only one of the litter inherits this corruption, and it soon devours its siblings.

HABITAT & SOCIETY

Individual man-eaters might be found anywhere—the freak results of black magic and vicious natures—but they're encountered in numbers only where fiendish influence is strong. Man-eating animals are most common in the blasted landscape of the Worldwound, where they nearly outnumber their natural counterparts. In Kyonin, man-eaters have been born to otherwise normal animals, a sign to the elves that Tanglebriar's corruption is expanding.

Man-eating animals, especially large bovines such as aurochs and bison, are sacred to the followers of Baphomet, demon lord of beasts. Away from civilized lands, cults of Baphomet raise small herds of these carnivorous cattle, feeding them on corpses when live victims are unavailable. Man-eating animals serve as guards and pets for dark cultists and the demons they worship. Though too intelligent and willful to be trained like normal animals, man-eaters gladly serve those who encourage their bloodlust. A dissatisfied man-eater, however, is likely to turn on its so-called master the second its master displays a moment of weakness.

With their rudimentary intelligence, man-eating animals are able to understand the guttural tongue of the Abyss, and to learn common words in the language of those they hunt. Many take advantage of hunters who assume they are dumb animals.

Man-eaters' combination of animal instinct and demonic cunning allows them to more easily hunt their preferred prey: humanoids. Man-eating animals are known to track victims over long distances, their enhanced senses and great endurance allowing them to continue the chase long after their prey becomes fatigued. An innate sense of direction sometimes allows a man-eater to anticipate (or overhear) its victim's destination and reach it before the creature. Even latched gates and animal traps prove ineffective against the man-eater's cunning.

CREATING A MAN-EATING ANIMAL

"Man-Eating" is an inherited or acquired template that can be added to a creature of the animal type. A man-eating animal uses all the base creature's statistics and special abilities except as noted here.

CR: HD 4 or fewer, as base creature + 1; HD 5 to 10, as base creature + 2; HD 11 or more, as base creature + 3.

Alignment: Chaotic evil.

Type: A man-eating animal's type changes to magical beast. It retains any subtypes except for alignment subtypes.

Armor Class: A man-eating animal's natural armor improves by +2.

Hit Dice: A man-eating animal's racial HD change to d10s.

Defenses/Qualities: A man-eating animal gains darkvision 60 feet, and DR 5/slashing (if HD 11 or fewer) or 10/slashing (if HD 12 or more).

Melee: A man-eating animal gains a bite attack. Damage from the bite attack depends on the creature's size (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 301–302). If the base creature already has a bite attack, it gains Improved Natural Attack (bite) and Improved Critical (bite) as bonus feats. It also adds 1-1/2 times its Str bonus to the damage (or twice its Str bonus if a bite is its only natural attack).

Abilities: Con +4, Int +2, Wis +4, Cha +4.

BAB: A man-eating animal's base attack bonus is equal to its Hit Dice.

Skills: A man-eating animal gains a +4 racial bonus on Survival checks to follow tracks.

Languages: A man-eating animal understands Abyssal and Common, but cannot speak.

BLOOD OF BAPHOMET

The demon lord of beasts grants dedicated followers the means to turn ordinary animals into man-eaters by means of a magical elixir. Called the *blood of Baphomet*, this ichorous fluid is purported to contain the distilled essence of animal savagery. A cleric of Baphomet can gain access to the required spells from her domains: *beast shape III* from the Animal domain or Fur subdomain and *rage* from the Demon or Ferocity subdomain.

BLOOD OF BAPHOMET		PRICE 2,250 GP
SLOT none	CL 9th	WEIGHT —
AURA moderate transmutation		



This red elixir is always the temperature of freshly spilled blood. A creature can consume a gobbet of flesh and drink this liquid as a single standard action.

If the drinker is an animal, it is stunned for 1 round, and must succeed at a DC 17 Will save or permanently acquire the man-eating animal template. If the *blood of Baphomet* is consumed with humanoid flesh, the animal receives no saving throw.

If the drinker is not an animal, it enters a frenzy, as the *rage* spell. The drinker must succeed at a DC 17 Will save or be confused for as long as it rages. If the *blood of Baphomet* is consumed with humanoid flesh (a chaotic evil act), the drinker receives no saving throw.

CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS	COST 1,125 GP
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Craft Wondrous Item, *beast shape III*, *rage*

WRATH OF THE RIGHTEOUS

Vescavor Queen

With a black carapace that has a sheen reminiscent of watery oil, this verminlike creature has membranous wings the shade of obsidian. Its sharp teeth drip with acid.

VESCAVOR QUEEN

CR 9



XP 6,400

CE Large outsider (chaotic, evil, extraplanar)

Init +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +17**Aura** chaos (10 ft.), gibber (15 ft., DC 20)

DEFENSE

AC 22, touch 13, flat-footed 18 (+3 Dex, +1 dodge, +9 natural, -1 size)**hp** 114 (12d10+48); fast healing 2**Fort** +8, **Ref** +11, **Will** +10**Immune** acid, poison; **Resist** electricity 10, fire 10; **SR** 20

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft., fly 50 ft. (good)**Melee** bite +15 (1d8+3 plus 3d6 acid), 2 claws +14 (1d6+3)**Ranged** spit acid +14 ranged touch (5d6 acid)**Space** 10 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.**Special Attacks** spit acid

STATISTICS

Str 17, **Dex** 16, **Con** 18, **Int** 11, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 13**Base Atk** +12; **CMB** +16; **CMD** 30**Feats** Blind-Fight, Dodge, Flyby Attack, Hover, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (bite)**Skills** Acrobatics +12, Climb +12, Fly +20, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +10, Knowledge (planes) +10, Perception +17, Stealth +14, Survival +15**Languages** Abyssal**SQ** compression, swarm mother

ECOLOGY

Environment any (the Abyss)**Organization** solitary or hive (1 vescavor queen and 2–20 vescavor swarms)**Treasure** none

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Chaos Aura (Su) A vescavor queen is an embodiment of chaos.

Its aura is a font of anarchic energy that grants fast healing 2 to the vescavor queen, as well as to any vescavor swarm within 10 feet of the queen. A vescavor queen can activate or suppress this ability as a free action.

Gibber (Su) Like their broods, vescavor queens yammer the endless chorus of the Abyss. Any creature within 15 feet of a vescavor queen must succeed at a DC 20 Will save or be confused for 1 round. A creature that successfully saves can't be affected by the same vescavor queen's gibbering for 24 hours. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Spit Acid (Ex) As a standard action, a vescavor queen can spit acid at a foe within 30 feet. With a successful ranged touch attack, the target is hit with a glob of acid and takes 5d6 points of acid damage. In addition, the spit of a vescavor

queen contains some of its pheromones. Any target that takes damage from this attack acts as a beacon for any vescavor swarms; the damaged creature takes a -8 penalty on Stealth checks against the vescavor queen and swarms it controls, and likely becomes the swarm's next target.

Swarm Mother (Su) A vescavor queen can mentally control up to 20 Hit Dice of vescavor swarms through a combination of supernatural pheromones and magical manipulation. To control a vescavor swarm, the vescavor queen must be able to see it and must be within 120 feet of it. Attempting to control a vescavor swarm is a standard action, and the swarm can attempt to resist this attempt with a DC 17 Will save. If the swarm fails this save, the vescavor queen can issue a simple mental command as a swift action, like "fight," "come here," "go there," or "stay still." Vescavor swarms affected by this ability act normally unless a vescavor queen is actively controlling them, but never attack the vescavor queen. The save DC is Charisma-based. In addition, a vescavor queen is immune to a vescavor swarm's swarm attacks and supernatural special abilities. A vescavor queen can release a vescavor swarm from its control as a free action. If a vescavor queen is killed, any vescavor swarms under its control disperse.

Appearing as an amalgam of frightening vermin, a vescavor queen is a hideous sight to behold, with its insectile wings and bloated body being the most innocuous aspects. Not only is a queen's bite stronger than that of its spawn, the queen can also spit the acid in its mouth at opponents. Its arms don't end in hands, but in scything claws poised to rend through flesh and armor. A vescavor queen is roughly 10 feet from head to tail, and weighs nearly 500 pounds—more when carrying a brood.

ECOLOGY

Vescavor queens are creatures of the Abyss through and through; no lesser vescavor embodies the chaotic nature of the plane as thoroughly. Even after passing through the threshold between planes, a vescavor queen retains this infusion of pure chaos, exuding anarchic energies from within and using this attunement to invigorate itself and its kin. And just like its spawn, a vescavor queen trills a mind-muddling song of the Abyss—an incomprehensible and nonsensical mashing of notes and sounds that befuddles those who hear it.

Though queens by name, vescavors are genderless creatures that got their name simply for their ability to birth vescavor swarms. With no desires beyond the base instincts of devouring and destroying, vescavor queens start out as the last remaining members of their swarms, having eaten more than any others in the group—and having devoured other members of the swarm—in blind hunger. It is unknown what causes vescavors to grow

Bestiary

within the queen, but some scholars believe that the way the creatures are born from the remnants of the vescalvors and other materials is a biological representation of how the Abyss constantly consumes and recycles itself.

Aside from the obvious offensive benefits a vescalvor queen's acid gland imparts to it, this gland is thought to be a way for the vescalvor queen to break down more durable materials for consumption. Vescalvor queens also develop abilities that allow them to control their brood swarms and ignore the swarms' constant gibbering and biting. Vescalvor swarms are birthed from a leathery, cocoon-like egg sac that the young vescalvors eat through in order to break into the world.

HABITAT & SOCIETY

Vescalvors are native to the darkest corners of the deepest reaches of the Abyss. However, with the opening of the Worldwound, they are no longer relegated to the dark and twisted recesses of that realm. Even so, once through the rift between planes, many vescalvors don't travel very far, instead setting up their hives in the Worldwound. To date, no vescalvors have been reported more than 100 miles from the border of the Worldwound, though nothing stops their spread like the *wardstones* do the demons. It is their own complacency and desire for familiar surroundings that keep them in this region and prevent them from spreading far and wide.

A single queen presides over a region or nest, with all the swarms in the area falling into its brood, whether or not it actually birthed them. Becoming a vescalvor queen relies not on ambition or work—such concepts are alien to vescalvors' nature—but on instinct and chance. When a queen dies, vescalvors notice the sudden lack of a source of chaos and then disperse. Some nearby swarms move in to feed on the remnants of the queen. The vescalvor that consumes the most material from the queen's corpse takes over the mantle as queen, growing into its new size and developing its enhanced abilities within a week.

Whether queen for a day or a decade, the vescalvor queen is never challenged by vescalvor swarms. As long as there is something to eat (which for a vescalvor swarm means anything but adamantine), vescalvors are content engines of destruction. A vescalvor queen's ability to heal other vescalvors solidifies its unshakable rule.

Being creatures of the Abyss, vescalvors can live in nearly any environment, though they often choose areas



that are environmentally similar to their natural habitat if they find themselves on the Material Plane. As such, they often make their homes underground or in natural caves, where the darkness suits them. They might even burrow their own tunnels and caves underground if nothing natural suits their preferences. As with the chaos they embody, there is no rhyme or reason to the designs of their self-made lairs—they follow wherever their mouths lead them.

A vescalvor queen holds off producing new swarms until it has a proper nest. The standard gestation period for a new swarm is roughly 3 weeks, at the end of which the queen lays an egg sac. Though vescalvors don't strictly need to eat to survive, their ravenous desire to consume, as well as how readily available and abundant a food source is, can alter the gestation period. Scarce resources can delay hatching from 3 to 4 weeks, or vast quantities of food can hasten the birthing process to a single week between hatchings. Vescalvor queens remaining in the Abyss spawn new vescalvors at different and completely random intervals, independent of location or availability of edible material.

Next Month

DEMON'S HERESY

By Jim Groves

The Wrath of the Righteous Adventure Path continues with "Demon's Heresy," by Jim Groves. The heroes have reclaimed the city of Drezen and the lost sacred banner known as the *Sword of Valor*, and in doing so have established a significant foothold behind enemy lines. With the demon armies still concentrating their attacks to the south, the heroes must now set off into the heart of the Worldwound to seek out powerful new allies (including a succubus who may have been redeemed by Desna, the goddess of dreams) and strike a mortal blow against the Templars of the Ivory Labyrinth—only to discover along the way a disturbing truth about the crystalline sources of mythic power the demons are using against the crusaders.

ECOLOGY OF THE WORM THAT WALKS

By Amanda Hamon

Discover the wriggling horror of these powerful evil spellcasters. Find out what powers the continuation of their foul life and learn of the variations of this grotesque form.

GREEN FAITH

By Sean K Reynolds

Find out more about the ancient Green Faith and those who follow its path. Learn how its followers derive power from the natural world and preserve nature at all costs.

AND MORE!

In the Pathfinder's Journal by Robin D. Laws, Gad and his allies venture to the besieged outpost of Fort Clearwater deep within the Worldwound, in pursuit of the magical Bile of Abraxas! Plus foul demons, warped monsters, and another demon lord inhabit the Pathfinder Bestiary.

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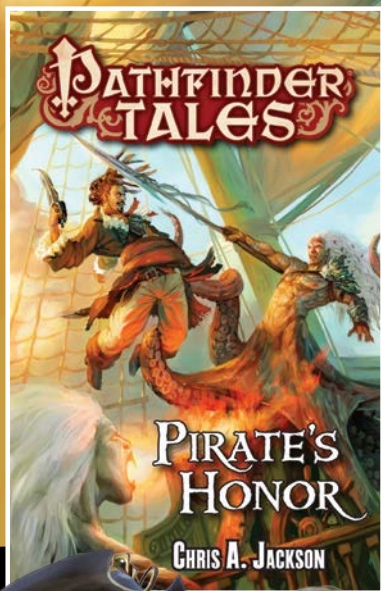
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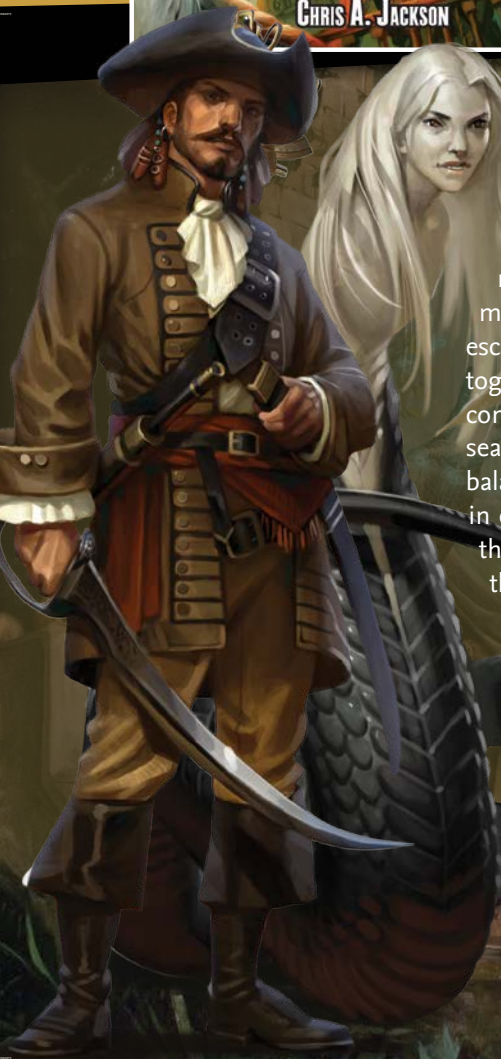
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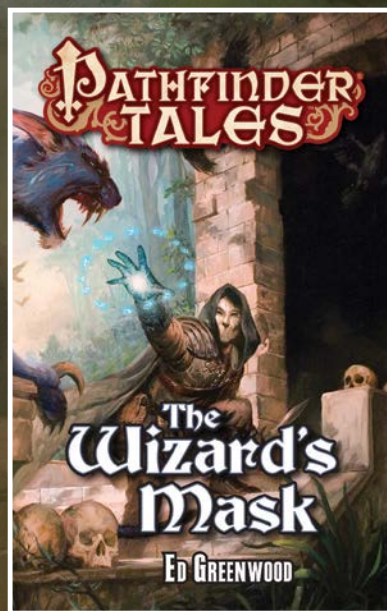
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Khorramzadeh
Demonic Ruler of Iz

After his great victory during the assault on Kenabres, Storm King Khorramzadeh shifts his attentions south toward Nerosyan. More interested creating a prolonged, demoralizing conflict than in swift victory, he and his armies lay siege to several southern cities on the border.



Areelu vorlesh
Architect of the Worldwound

When her attack on the heroes in the previous adventure backfires, Areelu is critically wounded by a blast of energy from the dying *Wardstones*. She spends this adventure in hiding in a secret lair on the Abyss, slowly recovering from these nearly fatal wounds.

Nurah Dendiwhar
Deceitful Worldwound Historian

None would deny that Nurah's skill at bolstering morale is invaluable, or that her knowledge of Sarkorian history is critical, yet the truth is that Nurah is an agent of the Worldwound, and her infiltration of the crusade is about to place the heroes of Kenabres in grave danger.



Staunton Vhane
Traitorous Warden of Drezen

After Irabeth exposed Staunton Vhane for the black-hearted villain he is, the dwarven antipaladin fled back to the city he helped destroy 75 years ago—Drezen. When that city's marilith ruler leaves to join the war front, she places Staunton in charge of Drezen's defense.



Xanchir vang
Master of the Blackfire Adepts

The worm that walks, leader of the Worldwound's Blackfire Adepts, spends the first part of this adventure in the south, aiding in several devastating surgical strikes against crusaders and providing key demons with doses of potent and rare *Nahyndrian elixirs* to bolster their mythic power.



Minacho
Demonic Ruler of Raliscrad

Minacho knows she's in danger when she fails to protect the *wardstones*, so she goes into hiding. The lilitu demon spends this adventure posing as a low-ranking tiefling mercenary serving in the south as she desperately plots a way to regain Baphomet's favor.

Hepzamirah
Daughter of Baphomet

Unconcerned with the war effort on the Material Plane, Hepzamirah continues to mine for the rare *Nahyndrian crystals* found under the islands of the Abyss's Midnight Isles, while simultaneously working to keep her operation hidden from agents of Nocticula, that realm's ruler.



Deskari
Lord of the Locust Host

While the backlash that disrupts his armies' first assault on the border angers the demon lord, Deskari views that development as a blessing in disguise. With the *wardstones* gone, his demons are better poised to claim a long and splendidly horrific victory over Mendev.



Reclaim Former Glory!

The Wrath of the Righteous Adventure Path continues with “Sword of Valor,” by RPG Superstar Neil Spicer. The PCs, now invested with righteous mythic power, are poised to become the greatest heroes of this seemingly endless war against the demons of the Worldwound... provided they can succeed at their first mission. The citadel city of Drezen was once a symbol of the First Crusade’s triumph against the Worldwound, yet when a larger horde of demons attacked, they shattered Drezen’s defenses and captured both the citadel and the crusaders’ symbol of power. Can the PCs help lead an army north to reclaim Drezen and recover this potent relic, or are they marching their comrades and followers to a gruesome demise?

This volume of Pathfinder Adventure Path continues the Wrath of the Righteous Adventure Path and includes:

- “Sword of Valor,” a Pathfinder RPG adventure for 6th-level characters with 1 mythic tier, by Neil Spicer.
- An exploration of the ways cultists stitch themselves to demonkind, by Jason Nelson.
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