

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.

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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.



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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 allies

and 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

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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 Cheliah. 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.





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

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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.



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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/×3) or spiked armor +13/+8 (1d6+5/×3)

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.

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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.

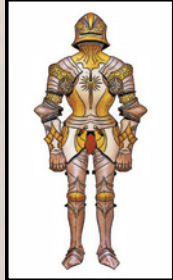


WRATH OF THE RIGHTEOUS

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.



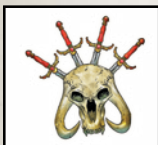
Righteous Medal of Command: This circular medal depicts a leering demon head before two crossed swords. It is awarded to a hero who redeems one of the enemy and convinces the redeemed character to join the crusade. This medal is associated with Charisma and grants a +2 sacred bonus on saves against emotion-based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