

STAR LOG.EM-042

STALWART DEFENDER



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STALWART DEFENDER

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~ Alexander Augunas

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ACCESSING ARCHIVES

QUERY: STALWART DEFENDER

Hello, and thank you for purchasing *STAR LOG.EM042: STALWART DEFENDER*! Long have their been stalwart defenders in the Xa-Osoro System and beyond, but the role these champions of defense played in their respective systems has changed drastically with shifts in technology and warfare. In ancient times, stalwart defenders were literal walls against enemy attackers, an unflinching bulwark upon which enemies crashed against like waves before an unwaivering mountain. Today, being a stalwart defender requires more flexibility and mobility, as the raw firepower of modern weaponry has the potential to reduce even the mountain to rubble.

Stalwart defenders rarely gain fame for their heroics. Instead, they normally serve important, renowned individuals with the credits to purchase their services. Although sometimes stalwart defenders are trained specifically to serve a particular individual—such is the case with the Radiant Emperor's Radiant Guard or a gnoll prajah's bouxa—they're more generally trained and must learn to adapt that training to the needs of the client. While most stalwart defenders protect famous business people or important political figures, it isn't uncommon for a particularly well-off icon to hire a stalwart defender or two, and a growing trend among the oligarchical elite of the Xa-Osoro System is to hire full-time stalwart defenders for their family members, making stalwart defenders increasingly common in ritzy schools and workplaces.



STALWART DEFENDER (ARCHETYPE)

Corporations, icons, and high-profile individuals are always in need of competent bodyguards to protect them and their belongings, and the most skilled of these individuals are stalwart defenders. A stalwart defender can come from nearly any walk of life—they might be bouncers at a wealthy casino, personal agents hired out to a president or CEO, or simply hired muscle at a local cantina. Regardless of where they work, stalwart defenders are united in their single-minded obsession with defending other persons, items, or locations, and are exceptionally good at protecting themselves from harm to ensure that their objective remains uncompromised.

An overwhelming number of stalwart defenders are soldiers, as military discipline is a virtue amongst these highly-trained defenders. Yet despite this, stalwart defenders come from all walks of life depending upon the need and the niche, and it isn't rare for solarians and mechanics sporting an exocortex to take to this lifestyle.

In the Xa-Osoro System, an overwhelming number of stalwart defenders are hired out by the system's wealthiest corporations, especially the likes of XLG and the Dragonheir Concordance. They're also commonly found protecting major government leaders, such as the Radiant Emperor or a gnoll prajah.

ALTERNATE CLASS FEATURES

The stalwart defender archetype grants alternate class features at varying levels depending on your preferences. You can gain defender's objective at 2nd-, 4th-, or 6th-level (your choice). If you gain defender's objective at 2nd-level, you gain stalwart powers at 4th-level. If you gain defender's objective at 4th-level, you gain stalwart powers at 6th level. If you gain defender's objective at 6th-level, you gain stalwart powers at 9th-level.

DEFENDER'S OBJECTIVE (EX); 2ND-LEVEL, 4TH-LEVEL, OR 6TH-LEVEL

You can choose one character, item, or location as a standard action and establish them as your objective. Whenever you're within 30 feet of your defender's objective (or within it, in the case of a location or vehicle) and either fight defensively or use the total defense action, you can choose to accept a -5 ft. penalty to your speed with all movement types to increase the AC bonus you gain from fighting defensively by +1 or the AC bonus you gain from using the total defense action by +2. This ability doesn't stack with other effects that increase the AC bonus that you gain from fighting defensively or using the total defense action.

Once you use this ability to establish a defender's objective, you cannot establish a new objective until you spend 1 Resolve Point as part of a 10-minute rest to regain Stamina Points. You can only have one defender's objective at a time and establishing a new defender's objective ends any defender's objective you previously established. If you move more than 30 feet from your objective, the benefits of this ability are suppressed until you are once again within range of your objective.

Any defender's objective you establish remains active until

you move more than 30 feet away from it for 1 minute or longer, or until you establish a new defender's objective. You cannot change a defender's objective once established.

The following summarizes all guidelines and restrictions when you use this ability to establish a character, an item, or a location as your defender's objective.

- » **Character:** You can choose any PC or NPC other than yourself to be your defender's objective. A character must be willing or unconscious to be your defender's objective.
- » **Item:** You can choose any item to be your defender's objective. The defender's objective ends if the item is destroyed or it the item is moved. (This doesn't apply to mobile items or vehicles, such as a spy drone or a hoverbike.)
- » **Location:** You can choose any one location to be your defender's objective. The location's area cannot exceed more than 1 square mile per level you possess in the class you added the stalwart defender archetype to.

STALWART POWERS; 4TH-LEVEL OR 6TH-LEVEL

You can gain one stalwart power (see below) of your choice as an alternate class feature at 4th, 6th, 9th, 12th, and 18th-levels, as if the stalwart power were granted by this archetype. You must meet the stalwart power's prerequisites, if any, and you cannot choose a stalwart power more than once unless specifically noted otherwise. Note that you don't have to gain a stalwart power at any of these levels if you don't want to.

STALWART POWERS

You learn a stalwart power whenever you trade one of your class's features as part of the stalwart defender archetype. Stalwart powers require you to have a minimum level in the class that you added the stalwart defender archetype to, and are organized accordingly. Some require you to meet additional prerequisites, such as having other feats or abilities.

4TH-LEVEL

You must be at least 4th-level to learn the following stalwart powers.

BONUS FEAT

You gain one of the following feats as a bonus feat: Antagonize, Bodyguard, Deflect Projectiles, Enhanced Resistance, Improved Maneuver, Stand Still, Toughness, or any feat that lists any of these feats as a prerequisite. You must meet the feat's prerequisites, if any. You can gain this stalwart power multiple times.

ENVY IMPROVISATION

You gain one of the following envy improvisations. You must meet the envy improvisation's minimum envy level in order to learn any of the following envy improvisations, using your level in the class that you added the stalwart defender archetype – 2 as your effective envy level for the purpose of meeting prerequisites. For determining their effects, use your full level in the class that you're adding the stalwart defender archetype to as your effective envy

level. The envoy improvisations available to a stalwart defender are: desperate defense, don't quit, draw fire, focus, get'em, hurry, improved get'em, improved hurry, inspiring boost, look alive, situational awareness, sustained determination, watch out, or watch your step. You can only use envoy improvisations while within 30 feet of your defender's objective unless you added this archetype to the envoy class, in which case you can use them whenever you want. You can gain this stalwart power multiple times.

HALTING STRIKE (Ex)

Whenever you use the Stand Still feat while within 30 feet of your defender's objective, you gain a +2 insight bonus to attack rolls made with the Stand Still feat. In addition, if your attack roll total is greater than your opponent's KAC + 13, you also deal damage to your opponent as if you had hit them with a weapon attack using your weapon in addition to the feat's usual effects. You must have the Stand Still feat to learn this stalwart power.

IMMOVABLE (Ex)

Whenever you fight defensively or use the total defense action while within 30 feet of your defender's objective, you add the AC bonus from fighting defensively or using the total defense action to the Acrobatics DC for any opponent to tumble through your threatened area. In addition, your bonus to AC from fighting defensively or using the total defense action is doubled against bull rush, reposition, and trip combat maneuvers.

UNSHAKABLE (Ex)

Whenever you fight defensively or use the total defense action while within 30 feet of your defender's objective, you add the AC bonus from fighting defensively or using the total defense action to the DC for any opponent to feint or demoralize you. In addition, you add any bonus from fighting defensively or using the total defense action to Will saves you attempt against fear effects.

SHRUG OFF THE PAIN (Ex)

Whenever you fight defensively or use the total defense action while within 30 feet of your defender's objective, you gain DR/— equal to the AC bonus you gain from fighting defensively or using the total defense action. Alternatively, you can gain energy resistance against one type of energy (acid, cold, fire, electricity, or sonic) equal to twice this bonus. This decision is made each time you fight defensively or use the total defense action, and can be changed from round to round.

9TH-LEVEL

You must be at least 9th-level to learn the following stalwart powers.

RAPID DEFENSE (Ex)

You can establish a defender's objective as a move action. In addition, you can spend 1 Resolve Point to establish a new defender's objective after previously establishing one without having to take 10 minutes to regain Stamina Points. This ability doesn't allow you to have more than one defender's objective at a time.

STALWART RESILIENCE (Ex)

Whenever you fight defensively or use the total defense action while within 30 feet of your defender's objective, you gain a fortification ability similar to that of a force field armor upgrade. The chance that your fortification ability treats a critical hit as a normal attack is equal to $3\% \times \text{your level}$ in the class that you added the stalwart defender archetype to. When using the total defense action, this chance increases to $5\% \times \text{your level}$ in the class that you added the stalwart defender archetype to.

NEW COMBAT FEATS

The following combat feats are available to all characters who meet their prerequisites.

BRACE YOURSELF (COMBAT)

You can prepare for a potentially devastating attack at a moment's notice.

Prerequisites: Dex 13, base attack bonus +4.

Benefit: You can use the total defense as a reaction. After using this ability, you are staggered until the end of your next turn. If you are immune to the staggered condition, you cannot use this ability. Once you use this ability, you cannot use it again until after you take a 10-minute rest and spend 1 Resolve Point to regain Stamina Points.

FINAL STAND

You're able to keep on fighting long after death would have otherwise claimed you.

Prerequisites: Diehard, Iron Will, Toughness.

Benefit: Whenever you are reduced to 0 Hit Points and you have at least 1/4 of your total number of Resolve Points remaining, you can spend all of your remaining Resolve Points to make a final stand that lasts a number of rounds equal to $2 + \text{your base Will save bonus}$. Making a final stand requires no action.

Upon making your final stand, you immediately heal 1 Hit Point and regain a number of Stamina Points equal to $\text{your level} \times \text{the number of Resolve Points spent}$. During your final stand, you gain a +1 bonus to all d20 rolls and checks as well as the undead immunities universal creature rule, but cannot use skills or abilities that require patience or concentration (such as spellcasting). When your final stand ends or all of your Stamina Points are depleted, you die and cannot be returned to life by a *mystic cure* spell of any spell level. Other spells that resurrect the dead, such as *raise dead*, work normally, but you gain 1 additional negative level when returned from the dead in this manner.

STALWART BODYGUARD

You display extra vigilance when protecting your ward from harm.

Prerequisites: Bodyguard.

Benefit: Whenever you use the Bodyguard feat to grant an ally a bonus to AC, that bonus lasts until the start of your next turn.

Normal: Bodyguard's bonus applies only against the triggering attack.

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