

AZAERSI

After the Goblinblood Wars, Azaersi forged an army to build an empire where others had failed. Her mind is as swift as her blade, picking out enemy weaknesses—whether physical, intellectual, spiritual, or tactical.

AZAERSI CR 19

XP 204,800

Female hobgoblin swashbuckler 20 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 175, *Pathfinder RPG Advanced Class Guide* 56)

LE Medium humanoid (goblinoid)

Init +11; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +25

DEFENSE

AC 37, touch 24, flat-footed 28 (+10 armor, +5 deflection, +4 Dex, +5 dodge, +3 shield)

hp 274 (20d10+160)

Fort +17, **Ref** +22, **Will** +16; +8 vs. mind-affecting spells and effects

Defensive Abilities charmed life 7/day, evasion, fortification 50%, improved uncanny dodge, nimble +5

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee *Truth* +33/+28/+23/+18 (1d8+14 + 20 precision/17–20/×4 plus 2d6 vs. chaotic and 1d6 electricity)

Ranged +1 *axiomatic returning dagger* +30/+25/+20/+15 (1d4+4 + 20 precision/17–20/×3 plus 2d6 vs. chaotic)

Special Attacks deeds (bleeding wound, cheat death, deadly stab, derring-do, dizzying defense, dodging panache, evasive, kip-up, menacing swordplay, opportune parry and riposte, perfect thrust, precise strike, stunning stab, subtle blade, superior feint, swashbuckler initiative, swashbuckler's edge, swashbuckler's grace, targeted strike), panache (7), swashbuckler weapon mastery, swashbuckler weapon training +4

TACTICS

Before Combat Azaersi benefits from daily castings of *mind blank* from Zanathura. If she hears intruders, she drinks a *potion of heroism* to gain a +2 bonus on all attack rolls, skill checks, and saving throws (not included in these statistics).

During Combat Azaersi activates her *boots of speed* (not included in these statistics), and early in combat she relies heavily on disarm and dirty trick maneuvers to blind and entangle others while her allies engage. Upon taking damage, she switches to deadly tactics, leaning on her opportune parry and riposte, perfect thrust, and deadly

stab deeds to whittle down opponents as quickly as possible. Her favorite tactic is to disarm her way through martial defenders and close with the spellcasters they protect—especially arcane casters.

Morale Azaersi's life has led to this pivotal moment. Once engaged, she fights to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 8, **Dex** 21, **Con** 22, **Int** 14, **Wis** 16, **Cha** 20

Base Atk +20; **CMB** +19 (+23 dirty trick, +21 disarm);

CMD 44 (46 vs. dirty trick or disarm)

Feats Alertness, Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (falcata), Extra Panache^{ACG}, Greater Dirty Trick^{APG}, Improved Dirty Trick^{APG}, Improved Disarm, Improved Initiative, Improved Iron Will, Iron Will, Slashing Grace^{ACG}, Toughness, Weapon Focus (falcata), Weapon Specialization (falcata)

Skills Acrobatics +26, Bluff +13, Diplomacy +13, Intimidate +23, Knowledge (history) +22, Perception +25, Profession (soldier) +26, Sense Motive +25, Stealth +7; **Racial**

Modifiers +4 Stealth

Languages Common, Dwarven, Goblin, Terran

SQ swashbuckler finesse

Combat Gear *potions of heroism* (3), *unfettered shirt*^{UE}, *smoke pellets*^{APG} (5); **Other Gear** +4 *elven chain*, +2 *moderate fortification buckler*, +1 *axiomatic returning dagger*, *Truth* (+3 *axiomatic shocking burst falcata*^{APG}), *belt of physical might* +4 (Dex, Con), *boots of speed*, *cloak of resistance* +5, *headband of mental superiority* +4, *ring of protection* +5, *swordmaster's flair* (blue scarf)^{ACG}

Aza came of age during the fiercest fighting of the Goblinblood Wars. Though bolder and more keen eyed than most, she was little more than a child when humans overran one of her people's last outposts in Iser and an Eagle Knight's spear pierced her gut. She awoke hours later in a mass grave—too stubborn to die—and limped away under cover of night while the humans celebrated. Once more among the living, she fled northward into Molthune, carrying with her a seething hatred for humanity.

Her travels in the Menador Mountains brought her into contact with other retreating hobgoblins—soldiers in need of a leader, and teachers who saw promise in the stubborn young woman. The Azaersi who emerged in Molthune years later was a very different woman than the Aza who died on that muddy battlefield.

In Molthune, Azaersi survived as a bandit in the Shrikewood. Though she never recovered her physical strength after her devastating injury, her experience honed her mind and reflexes into a vicious blade, and over time her magnetism attracted new warriors to her banner. Eventually, Molthune too took notice of the bandit-queen's success and dispatched a regiment of soldiers to end it. Even outnumbered and ill-equipped, Azaersi's Ironfangs nonetheless slaughtered the well-drilled Molthuni troops. In a pique, Molthuni commander Vetrigan Sebine offered the hobgoblin an accord: Molthune needed soldiers whose actions it could deny and would be happy to arm and train the Ironfangs and then turn them loose on Nirmathi targets. The Ironfang Legion was born, and now supplied with contacts and information as well as arms, Azaersi began to form a long-term plan in her head—one of domination and a homeland for her kind that was denied by the Goblinblood Wars.

Eventually discovering the *Onyx Key* and the arcane advisor Zanathura, Azaersi led an army of conquest into the Vault of the Onyx Citadel. To Molthune, it seemed as if the Ironfang Legion—and a dozen other monstrous regiments—had vanished overnight. All the while, the Legion first conquered, and then prepared for full-scale war out of sight of its targets.

Azaersi bears a very unhobgoblin-like willingness to trust arcane magic, born largely from the close relationship she has formed with the naga Zanathura. Each woman sees the other as a kindred spirit—wounded and cast aside, yet able to rise to glory by virtue of their own stubbornness and insight—and Azaersi has grown to trust Zanathura more than she trusts her fellow hobgoblins. This trust, however, would be shattered by the discovery of the naga's use of mind-influencing magic on the great general.

CAMPAIGN ROLE

General Azaersi is the ultimate challenge of the Ironfang Invasion Adventure Path. She is a cunning and insightful tactician, having learned a great deal from the failures of the Goblinblood Wars, her years as a bandit surviving by guerrilla raids, and her time spent as a disciplined Molthune soldier. Her mind quickly picked out the strongest tactics of each approach, and she has combined them into a heavily armed but rapid offensive strategy that has enabled the Ironfangs to roll through enemy positions with few losses—until the PCs' victory at Longshadow, she had begun to feel unassailable.

Accompanied by several of her most potent allies, the wily Azaersi pierced the trove that held the Onyx Citadel, despite its well-guarded position, and claimed it for her own. With the security of an otherworldly fortress, Azaersi cemented an immense tactical advantage over humanity.

Although destined to appear at the end of the Adventure Path as the final foil to the PCs, Azaersi can be introduced earlier in the campaign to taunt the heroes as they battle through the Ironfang Legion's rank and file. While an early encounter with Azaersi would make defeating her later more satisfying, remember that the hobgoblin swashbuckler could easily overpower a lower-level party that seeks her out prematurely.



AZLOWE

Azlowe serves as the head of the Ironfang Legion's faithful, answering to Azaersi herself—who he considers a sign from his god Hadregash. His fanatical devotion is tempered only by his suspicion of the naga Zanathura.

AZLOWE CR 17

XP 102,400

Male greater barghest warpriest of Hadregash 10 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 27, Pathfinder RPG Advanced Class Guide 60*)

LE Large outsider (evil, extraplanar, lawful, shapechanger)

Init +5; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., scent; Perception +29

DEFENSE

AC 32, touch 14, flat-footed 31 (+8 armor, +4 deflection, +1 Dex, +10 natural, -1 size)

hp 271 (19 HD; 10d8+9d10+179); regeneration 1

Fort +20, **Ref** +13, **Will** +21; +1 morale bonus vs. fear

Defensive Abilities sacred armor (+2, 10 minutes/day);

Immune bleed

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee bite +30 (1d8+14), 2 claws +31 (2d8+15/19-20)

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

Special Attacks blessings 8/day (Evil: battle companion, unholy strike, War: battle lust, war mind), channel negative energy 5/day (DC 21, 3d6), fervor 11/day (3d6), sacred weapon (1d10, +2, 10 rounds/day)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 9th; concentration +13)

At will—*blink*, *invisibility sphere*, *levitate*, *misdirection*
1/day—*charm monster* (DC 18), *crushing despair* (DC 18),
dimension door, *mass bull's strength*, *mass enlarge person* (DC 18)

Warpriest Spells Prepared (CL 10th; concentration +16)

4th—*order's wrath* (DC 20), *spell immunity*
3rd—*cure serious wounds*, *dispel magic* (2), *prayer*
2nd—*aid*, *resist energy*, *lesser restoration*, *shatter* (DC 18),
silence (DC 18), *spiritual weapon*
1st—*bless*, *command* (DC 17), *cure light wounds*, *divine favor*,
obscuring mist, *shield of faith* (2)
0 (at will)—*bleed* (DC 16), *detect magic*, *guidance*, *read magic*,
resistance

TACTICS

Before Combat Azlowe gorges himself each day on a *heroes' feast* prepared by his witcheater cultists. Before combat, he casts *aid*, *mass bull's strength*, *prayer*, and *shield of faith*.

During Combat Azlowe is lazy and relies on his witcheater cultists to engage foes in melee while he casts *order's wrath* and *dispel magic* from a distance. Once he closes, he activates his sacred armor (improving his AC by +2) and uses sacred weapon to grant his claws an additional +1 enhancement bonus and the *flaming* weapon special ability before tearing into enemies with his bare hands.

Morale Azlowe is ultimately a coward, and he flees using *dimension door* if his cultists are slain and he is reduced below 75 hit points.

Base Statistics Without his spells, Azlowe's statistics are

AC 28, touch 10, flat-footed 27; **hp** 256; **Fort** +19, **Ref** +12,

Will +19; **Melee** bite +26 (1d8+11), 2 claws +27

(2d8+11/19-20); **Str** 26; **CMB** +25, **CMD** 36; **Skills**

Acrobatics +10, Bluff +26, Climb +17, Diplomacy +16,

Intimidate +26, Knowledge (planes, religion) +23,

Perception +28, Sense Motive +28, Stealth +16,

Survival +18, Swim +17.

STATISTICS

Str 30, **Dex** 13, **Con** 24, **Int** 20, **Wis** 22, **Cha** 18

Base Atk +16; **CMB** +29; **CMD** 42 (46 vs. trip)

Feats Combat Casting, Combat Reflexes, Eldritch Claws^{APG},

Great Fortitude, Improved Critical (claw), Improved

Initiative, Improved Natural Armor, Improved Natural

Attack (claw), Lightning Reflexes, Rending Claws^{APG}, Stand

Still, Step Up, Toughness, Weapon Focus (claw)

Skills Acrobatics +11, Bluff +27, Climb +20, Diplomacy +17,

Intimidate +27, Knowledge (planes, religion) +24,

Perception +29, Sense Motive +29, Stealth +16,

Survival +19, Swim +20

Languages Common, Dwarven, Goblin, Infernal, Undercommon

SQ change shape (goblin or wolf; polymorph)

Combat Gear *longarm bracers*^{UE}; **Other Gear** +2 *glamered slick breastplate*, *amulet of mighty fists* +3, *ring of regeneration*, iron holy symbol of Hadregash

Azlowe achieved the dream of many barghests after a hobgoblin cleric of Hadregash conjured him from Hell as a guard beast many seasons ago. Stalking the wilds

for a year, he devoured enough explorers and traders to metamorphose into a greater barghest, and with his newfound power, Azlowe devoured his previous master, inheriting his writings, followers, and—as it turned out—some measure of his master's divine connection with the goblin hero-god. Azlowe's own cannibalistic tendencies mingled with hobgoblin superstitions, and over the course of 30 years, his tribe evolved into the Cult of the Witcheater, a sect of Hadregash worshipers focused on hunting down and devouring arcane spellcasters.

The cult's reputation throughout the Mindspin Mountains spread to Azaersi's ear as her plans first formed for growing a hobgoblin nation, and she entreated the barghest to meet with her on neutral ground. She presented the outsider with a Nirmathi sorcerer—trussed and stuffed with exotic drugs—along with the promise that many more such treasures awaited his palate if his cult threw in its lot with the Ironfang Legion. Azaersi's magnetism and candor quickly won him over, and Azlowe began to wonder if the woman's sudden appearance wasn't a sign from Hadregash, eventually leading to a fanatical devotion to her.

Now serving as one of Azaersi's three commanders of the Legion, Azlowe holds authority over not just his own witcheaters but all of the Legion's magical resources—save one. The dark naga Zanathura has shaken the barghest's faith in Azaersi's judgment. While Azaersi insists the “witch-worm” is a simple advisor, lending insight into unraveling the “elf magic” of their enemies, too many times Azlowe has caught the serpent tampering with the strange energies of the Onyx Citadel and swaying the minds of lesser soldiers. Thus far, only Azaersi's keen blades have stayed Azlowe's claws on the matter of Zanathura, and as a result, he and his most ardent cultists have grown increasingly withdrawn from Legion affairs.

In his goblin form, Azlowe is stooped and bent, but muscular. He prefers this humble form to his intimidating natural form, as it makes it easier to listen in on conversations easily halted by his towering true shape. In his greater barghest form, Azlowe's rags are revealed to be chains forged in Hell that thrum with divine power, and his razor fangs and teeth are larger than daggers.

CAMPAIGN ROLE

Azlowe's role in the campaign is to provide spiritual direction to the varied races of the Ironfang Legion and help the army counter arcane threats and influence among its soldiers. He trains and assigns the faithful of Hadregash, as well as other divine casters with lower rank in the Legion, such as druids, oracles, and a few outsiders. Most importantly, however, Azlowe maintains his Cult of the Witcheater—a cannibalistic sect of Hadregash fanatics who

specialize in assassinating wizards and sorcerers. During Azaersi's early campaigns, the barghest found himself at his general's side as she looked to him to interpret the portents that would help her army succeed in the coming battles. Unfortunately, when Zanathura arrived, his position of advisor grew increasingly irrelevant, as Azaersi heeded the naga's poisoned words over his sacred advice.

If the player characters let Azlowe live, he shares his suspicions regarding Zanathura's mental control of Azaersi before taking his leave and returning to Golarion; he does not want to follow a leader who is subject to another's domination. Once back on Golarion, Azlowe begins to muster the surrounding goblin tribes into a new witcheater cult, hoping to take advantage of the PCs' brief absence and the region's descent into chaos in the wake of the Legion's withdrawal. During this turmoil, Azlowe's forces raid several settlements within both Molthune and Nirmathas and amass as much wealth as they can so he can settle in for a comfortable “retirement” amid his goblin lackeys.



KRAELOS

Rarely seen without his vicious war yzobu, Kraelos is a legendary dragonslayer among the hobgoblins of Avistan, and his reputation is well earned. He commands the Legion's cavalry with unshakable discipline.

KRAELOS CR 16

XP 76,800

Hobgoblin cavalier (fell rider) 17 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 175, *Pathfinder RPG Advanced Player's Guide* 32, *Pathfinder RPG Advanced Race Guide* 122)

LE Medium humanoid (goblinoid)

Init +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +3

DEFENSE

AC 36, touch 13, flat-footed 35 (+12 armor, +2 deflection, +1 Dex, +5 natural, +6 shield)

hp 217 (17d10+119)

Fort +20, **Ref** +11, **Will** +13

Resist fire 20; **DR** 3/—

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.

Melee +2 vicious adamantine longsword +26/+21/+16/+11 (1d8+6/19–20 plus 2d6)

Ranged +20 mwk javelin (1d6+4)

Special Attacks challenge 6/day (+17 damage, allies gain +5 bonus on attack rolls), demanding challenge, master tactician 4/day (swift action, all teamwork feats)

TACTICS

Before Combat Kraelos quaffs his *potions of barkskin* and *heroism* before entering battle.

During Combat Kraelos fights from atop his yzobu mount, and he prefers to overrun and trample his enemies and then use his Terror ability and *maw of the red wyrm* to scatter groups. Kraelos targets the strongest-looking warrior present for his challenge or—on the off chance one is present—any dragons or dragon-like opponents.

Morale Kraelos fights to the death.

Base Statistics Without his potions, Kraelos's statistics are

AC 31, touch 13, flat-footed 30; **Fort** +18, **Ref** +9, **Will** +11;

Melee +2 vicious adamantine longsword +24/+19/+14/+9 (1d8+6/19–20 plus 2d6); **Ranged** +18 mwk javelin (1d6+4);

CMB +21, **CMD** 34; **Skills** Handle Animal +17, Intimidate +26, Perception +1, Profession (soldier) +9, Ride +22.

STATISTICS

Str 18, **Dex** 12, **Con** 20, **Int** 8, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 14

Base Atk +17; **CMB** +23; **CMD** 34

Feats Cleave, Dazzling Display, Furious Focus^{APG}, Iron Will, Mounted Combat, Outflank^{APG}, Power Attack, Ride-by Attack, Shatter Defenses, Shield Focus, Shield Wall^{APG}, Swap Places^{APG}, Toughness, Trample, Weapon Focus (longsword)

Skills Handle Animal +19, Intimidate +28, Profession (soldier) +11, Ride +22; **Racial Modifiers** +4 Stealth

Languages Common, Goblin

SQ act as one, aid allies, deadly rampage, dread rider, fell presence, mount (yzobu named Drakestomper), order of the dragon, rampage, strategy, terror

Combat Gear *maw of the red wyrm*^{UE}, *potions of barkskin* (2, CL 12), *potions of cure serious wounds* (3), *potions of heroism* (3); **Other Gear** +3 jousting adamantine full plate, +3 heavy steel shield, +2 vicious adamantine longsword, mwk javelins (5), *belt of mighty constitution* +4, *cloak of resistance* +3, *major ring of fire resistance*, *ring of protection* +2

DRAKESTOMPER CR —

Yzobu (*Pathfinder RPG Monster Codex* 124)

N Large animal

Init +7; **Senses** low-light vision, scent; Perception +24

Aura stench (30 ft., DC 20, 10 rounds)

DEFENSE

AC 33, touch 12, flat-footed 30 (+7 armor, +3 Dex, +14 natural, –1 size)

hp 119 (14d8+56)

Fort +12, **Ref** +12, **Will** +7; +4 vs. enchantments

Defensive Abilities evasion

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee gore +19/+14 (2d6+15)

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

Special Attacks stampede, trample (1d6+15, DC 27)

STATISTICS

Str 30, **Dex** 16, **Con** 16, **Int** 2, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 4

Base Atk +10; **CMB** +21; **CMD** 34 (38 vs. trip)

Feats Improved Initiative, Improved Natural Armor, Improved

Natural Attack (gore), Iron Will, Medium Armor Proficiency, Skill Focus (Perception), Toughness

Skills Perception +24

SQ devotion, multiattack, tricks (attack any target, combat riding, come, defend, down, guard, heel, seek, stay)

Gear +1 agile breastplate barding^{APG}, exotic military saddle

Born to the gladiatorial pits of the Lands of the Linnorm Kings, Kraelos grew to manhood amid the splash of blood and the roar of the crowd, and he never thought he'd know a life beyond killing for the entertainment of others. But when Kraelos's master purchased a new trainer for his gladiators—a strange, foreign hobgoblin captured while crossing the treacherous Crown of the World—the young warrior's life truly began. Lung Tag claimed to hail from a nation of hobgoblins on the far side of the globe, and he taught the eager youth the ways of honor, patience, and service—to be a leader and a warrior, rather than a mere killing machine. With Lung Tag's leadership, the gladiators rebelled against their master, putting the human's stable and his flesh to the torch before fleeing south. Soon, this ragtag band of escapees grew into a band of mounted raiders who tore a legend across the Storval Plateau.

Kraelos himself gained a reputation as a dragonslayer for besting drakes and dragons alike, and he continued to lead his riders back and forth between Ustalav, Lastwall, and Belkzen for years before his band drew Azaersi's attention. She desired both a fearless cavalry and the legend that came with Kraelos Dragonslayer. Kraelos recognized much of the confidence and poise of his old teacher in this young upstart and, after a brief duel, agreed to sign on with the Ironfang Legion.

Kraelos leans even further toward lawful than most hobgoblins, having learned the art of the warrior from a disciplined military veteran of one of the most powerful hobgoblin nations on Golarion. He obeys a strict sense of honor, valuing honesty and the strength that compels said honesty. He dispatches the weak quickly and cleanly. They are not at fault for their failings, but the wolf must prey on the rabbit; it is the way of the world.

CAMPAIGN ROLE

Kraelos's role in the campaign is to confront the PCs on the open fields of the Vault of the Onyx Citadel. This may be a short-lived encounter if the PCs rush to meet him in the field, or it could be a more protracted

affair if they choose to test the mounted warrior and fall back repeatedly, relying on guerrilla tactics. Kraelos has grown increasingly reckless as his duties as a commander keep him away from the field for longer and longer periods. He is eager to charge into combat again alongside his riders and feel the hot spray of blood on his face.



ZANATHURA

From vermin to renowned scholar to aspiring goddess, Zanathura takes incredible pride in all she has accomplished by cunning and research. Only the powerful kinship she feels with Azaersi keeps her ego in check.

ZANATHURA

CR 19

XP 204,800

Dark naga sorcerer 11 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 211)

LE Large aberration

Init +8; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., detect thoughts, tremorsense 30 ft.; Perception +27

DEFENSE

AC 38, touch 22, flat-footed 25 (+4 armor, +8 Dex, +1 dodge, +12 natural, +4 shield, -1 size)

hp 262 (21 HD; 11d6+10d8+179)

Fort +13, **Ref** +16, **Will** +21; +2 vs. charm effects

Defensive Abilities guarded thoughts; **Immune** poison

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.

Melee bite +12 (1d4+1), sting +12 (2d4+1)

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

Special Attacks crystal shard, poison, tremor

Sorcerer Spells Known (CL 18th; concentration +26)

9th (3/day)—*crushing hand*

8th (6/day)—*mind blank*, *polymorph any object* (DC 26)

7th (7/day)—*forcecage* (DC 25), *greater teleport*, *prismatic spray*, *simulacrum*, *spell turning*

6th (7/day)—*acid fog*, *analyze dweomer*, *forceful hand*

5th (7/day)—*baleful polymorph* (DC 23), *dominate person* (DC 23), *suffocation*, *spike stones* (DC 23), *telekinesis*

4th (8/day)—*acid pit*^{APG} (DC 22), *black tentacles*, *illusory wall* (DC 22), *shadow projection*^{APG}, *stoneskin*

3rd (8/day)—*dispel magic*, *displacement*, *elemental aura*^{APG} (DC 21), *shifting sand*^{APG} (DC 21), *vampiric touch*

2nd (8/day)—*acid arrow*, *darkvision*, *glitterdust* (DC 20), *resist energy*, *spider climb*, *web* (DC 20)

1st (8/day)—*expeditious excavation*^{APG}, *identify*, *mage armor*, *magic missile*, *silent image* (DC 19), *vanish*^{APG}

0 (at will)—*acid splash*, *detect magic*, *light*, *mage hand*, *mending*, *message*, *open/close* (DC 18), *prestidigitation*, *read magic*

Bloodline deep earth^{APG}

TACTICS

Before Combat Zanathura casts *mage armor* and *mind*

blank on herself each morning. Before combat, she casts *displacement*, *resist energy*, *elemental aura*, and *spell turning* on herself as well.

During Combat Like her duplicate (see page 60 of “Siege of Stone”), Zanathura loves to immobilize others for slow punishment, using *forceful hand*, *crushing hand*, and *forcecage* to trap victims and then subjecting them to *acid fog* and *prismatic spray*. If opponents close in, she switches to *polymorph any object* to transform attackers into harmless pets.

Morale Zanathura does not share the hobgoblins’ zealotry. If reduced below 50 hit points, she attempts to flee using *greater teleport*.

Base Statistics Without her spells, Zanathura’s statistics are **AC** 34, touch 22, flat-footed 21.

STATISTICS

Str 12, **Dex** 26, **Con** 24, **Int** 20, **Wis** 21, **Cha** 26

Base Atk +12; **CMB** +14; **CMD** 33 (can’t be tripped)

Feats Alertness, Arcane Shield^{APG}, Combat Casting, Deceitful, Dodge, Eschew Materials, Expanded Arcana^{APG}, Improved Natural Armor, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Mobility, Nimble Moves, Toughness

Skills Acrobatics +8 (+12 when jumping), Appraise +13, Bluff +30, Climb +14, Disguise +10, Escape Artist +26, Knowledge (arcana) +28, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +23, Perception +27 (+29 to notice unusual stonework), Sense Motive +24, Spellcraft +29, Stealth +22, Swim +14, Use Magic Device +22

Languages Common, Dwarven, Goblin, Infernal, Terran, Undercommon

Combat Gear *potions of shield of faith* +4 (3), *scroll of banishment*, *scroll of chain lightning*, *scroll of flesh to stone*, *scrolls of simulacrum* (3), *scroll of greater teleport*, and *scroll of wall of iron*; **Other Gear** *amulet of natural armor* +4, *belt of physical might* +4 (Dex, Con), *headband of mental prowess* +4 (Wis, Cha)

The so-called “witch-worm” of the Ironfang Legion began her life as little more than a worm, serving far more

powerful neothelids and seugathi in the alien depths of the Darklands. Enslaved as a guardian for the neothelids' extensive libraries, the dark naga alleviated her boredom reading ancient dwarven tomes and learning of the vast empires the subterranean people once commanded. She began launching clandestine expeditions into dwarven ruins. There, she encountered lesser beings—kobolds, darkfolk, and drooling morlocks—who regarded her with much the same fear she paid to the neothelids who guided her destiny. The heady mix of deference and discovery drove Zanathura to escape her life of servitude and gather a clan of morlocks, delving first downward into the Vaults of Orv, and then following in the footsteps of clan Kraggodan's Quest for Sky to the surface, where she and her band of mutants settled in nearby ruins. Zanathura found the title of high priestess fitting for a time, but soon she came to prefer "goddess."

The dark naga ruled her clan as a petty tyrant for a time, scouring the long-abandoned Valley of Aloi in Nirmathas for dwarven relics and tomes and studying the dwarven people's magic, but the toil of leadership began to bore her, and she once again felt the urge to travel and explore. Her reputation as a scholar and antiquarian had spread through Nirmathas's criminal networks and eventually brought the ambitious hobgoblin Azaersi to her lair. Having grown tired of her lordship over her assembly of morlocks, Zanathura eagerly joined the Ironfang Legion's expedition to Kraggodan to recover the *Onyx Key*, which she had long suspected the dwarves protected. With access to the power and magic of those beings who first shaped the Vaults of Orv so long ago—the Vault Builders—Zanathura hoped she could ascend beyond the fictitious title of "goddess" and instead become a true deity.

Rather than ascension, however, Zanathura found a friendship and support she never knew before in a woman whose ambitions, cunning, and vision challenge her constantly and drive her to better herself. Now at Azaersi's side, Zanathura has heavily influenced the general's thoughts and plans, but so too has the hobgoblin shaped her own worldview, and the pair together have become a devastating double threat. Azaersi understands tactics and the mortal mind, while Zanathura understands the world unseen and the wants of the spirit.

Zanathura usually maintains a guise around the Onyx Citadel as a spindly, violet-hued hobgoblin woman, keeping the troops somewhat at ease by hiding her serpentine form. Only Azaersi, her commanders, and a select handful of their subordinates know Zanathura for what she truly is—a revelation that could easily ignite riots and desertion among the more superstitious hobgoblin troops.

CAMPAIGN ROLE

Zanathura is egomaniacal and insatiably curious, wielding incredible arcane power with little discretion, honor, or respect. While her years with Azaersi have curbed her worst tendencies, she remains prone to destructive tantrums when her arcane and historical projects are left unfulfilled. Her most recent episode ended in a poorly timed *dominate person* spell compelling servitude from General Azaersi—an action that now fills Zanathura with an uncharacteristic regret. More than anything, though, Zanathura needs to know that she is every bit as clever as the Vault Builders, betraying a shred of self-loathing that has haunted her since childhood.

