

# WORLD WARCRAFT

CHRONICLE



VOLUME I



## INTRODUCTION: COSMOLOGY

*Azeroth is but one small world in a vast universe, a realm filled with potent magics and mighty beings. Since the dawn of time, these forces have influenced Azeroth and the surrounding cosmos, setting the stars in motion and shaping the destiny of countless worlds and mortal civilizations . . .*



# THE COSMIC FORCES

## LIGHT AND SHADOW

Light and Shadow are the most fundamental forces in existence. Although contradictory by their very nature, they are bound together on a cosmic scale. One cannot exist without the other.

Pure Light and Shadow dwell in a realm outside the borders of reality, but shades of their presence are found in the physical universe. Light manifests as holy magic, while Shadow (also referred to as “the Void”) appears as shadow magic.

## LIFE AND DEATH

The forces of Life and Death hold sway over every living thing in the physical universe. The energies of Life, known commonly as nature magic, promote growth and renewal in all things. Death, in the form of necromantic magic, acts as a counterbalance to Life. It is an unavoidable force that breeds despair in mortal hearts and pushes everything toward a state of entropic decay and eventual oblivion.

## ORDER AND DISORDER

The forces of Order and Disorder govern the cosmic systems of the physical universe. Order is most commonly perceived in reality as arcane magic. This type of energy is innately volatile, and wielding it requires intense precision and concentration. Conversely, Disorder is manifested as highly destructive fel magic. This brutal and extremely addictive energy is fueled by drawing life from living beings.

## THE ELEMENTS

The elements of fire, air, earth, and water serve as the basic building blocks of all matter in the physical universe. Shamanic cultures have long sought to live in harmony with, or assert dominion over, the elements. To do so, they call upon the primordial forces of Spirit and Decay. Those who seek to bring balance to the elements rely on Spirit (sometimes referred to as the “fifth element” by shaman, or “chi” by monks). This life-giving force interconnects and binds all things in existence as one. Decay is the tool of shaman seeking to subjugate and weaponize the elements themselves.

LIGHT

HOLY

THE NAARU

LIFE

NATURE

WILD GODS

SPIRIT

FIRE

THE BURNING LEGION

DISORDER

FEL

EMERALD DREAM

WATER

REALITY

AIR

SHADOWLANDS

THE TITANS

EARTH

DECAY

UNDEAD

ARCANE

NECROMANTIC

ORDER

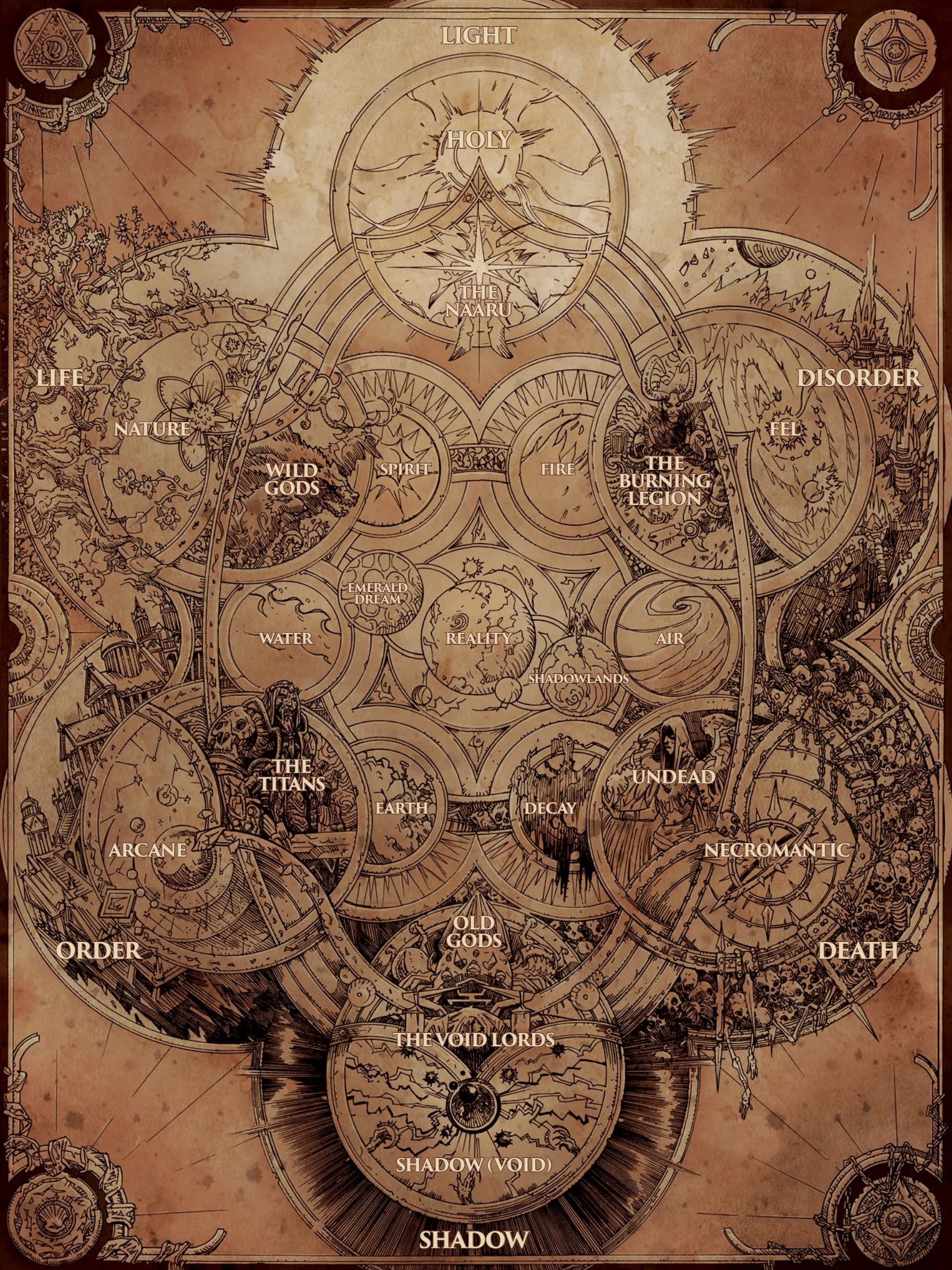
OLD GODS

DEATH

THE VOID LORDS


SHADOW (VOID)

SHADOW





CHAPTER II  
**PRIMORDIAL  
AZEROTH**



CHAPTER II

# PRIMORDIAL AZEROTH

## REIGN OF THE ELEMENTS

For many long ages, the Pantheon continued searching the cosmos for nascent titans, bringing order to countless worlds in the process. Yet despite their efforts, they did not find any more of their kin. At times, the titans of the Pantheon wondered if their search was in vain, but always they resolved to press on. They knew in their hearts that more world-souls existed, and this hope filled them with purpose.

Though the Pantheon did not know it, their intuition was correct. A miraculous new world was taking shape in an isolated corner of the Great Dark. Deep within this world's core, the spirit of a mighty and noble titan stirred to life.

One day, it would be known as Azeroth.

As the nascent titan developed, elemental spirits roamed across the world's surface. Over the ages, these beings became ever more erratic and destructive. The burgeoning world-soul was so vast that it had drawn in and consumed much of the fifth element, Spirit. Without this primordial force to create balance, Azeroth's elemental spirits descended into chaos.

Fire, earth, air, and water—these were the forces that lorded over the infant world. They reveled in unending strife, keeping the face of Azeroth in constant elemental flux. Four elemental lords, powerful beyond mortal comprehension, reigned supreme over innumerable lesser spirits.

Of the elemental lords, none could match the ruthless cunning of Al'Akir the Windlord. He often sent his elusive tempest minions to spy on his enemies and sow distrust among their ranks. Using feints and ruses, he would pit the other elementals against each other, only later to unleash the full fury of his servants on his weakened foes. The winds would howl and the skies would darken with storms at his approach. As lightning blasted the world's surface, Al'Akir's whirlwind elementals would come screaming from the heavens, enveloping his foes in monstrous cyclones.

Ragnaros the Firelord despised Al'Akir's cowardly ways. Compulsive and brash, the Firelord embraced brute force to annihilate his enemies. Wherever he went, volcanoes would burst through the world's crust, spewing forth rivers of fire and destruction. Ragnaros longed for nothing more than to boil the seas, reduce the mountains to slag, and choke the skies with ember and ash. The other elemental lords fostered a deep hatred of Ragnaros for his brazen and devastating assaults.

Therazane the Stonemother was the most reclusive elemental ruler. Ever protective of her children, she raised towering mountain ranges to ward off her enemies' assaults. Only after they

had worn themselves thin against her impenetrable fortifications would the Stonemother emerge, wrenching open giant chasms in the earth and swallowing entire elemental armies whole. Those who survived would meet oblivion at the fists of Therazane's most powerful servants: walking mountains of unforgiving crystal and stone.

The wise Neptulon the Tidehunter was careful not to fall for Al'Akir's schemes or to commit his minions to fruitless attacks against Therazane's citadels. As the armies of fire, air, and earth clashed across the face of Azeroth, the Tidehunter and his elementals would divide and conquer their rivals in brilliant routs. When his foes fled, Neptulon would crush them beneath tidal waves that dwarfed even Therazane's highest mountain holdings.

The apocalyptic battles between the elemental lords raged for untold millennia. Dominion over Azeroth constantly shifted between the factions, each one striving to remake the world in its own image. Yet for the elementals, victory was secondary to the conflict itself. To them, the world's calamitous state was sublime, and their only desire was to continue their endless cycle of chaos.

## COMING OF THE OLD GODS

The elemental lords reveled amid the primordial bedlam until a group of Old Gods plummeted down from the Great Dark. They slammed into Azeroth's surface, embedding themselves in different locations across the world. These Old Gods towered over the land, mountains of flesh, pockmarked with hundreds of gnashing maws and black, unfeeling eyes. A miasma of despair soon enveloped everything that lay in their writhing shadows.

Like gargantuan, cancerous pustules, the Old Gods spread their corruptive influence across the landscape. The lands around them seethed and withered, turning black and lifeless for leagues upon leagues. All the while, the tendrils of the Old Gods wormed into the world's crust, slithering deeper and deeper toward the defenseless heart of Azeroth.

Organic matter seeped from the Old Gods' blighted forms, giving rise to two distinct races. The first were the cunning and intelligent n'raqi, also known as the "faceless ones." The second were the aqir, insectoids of incredible resilience and strength. As the physical manifestations of the Old Gods' will, both of these races would serve their masters with fanatical loyalty.

Through their new servants, the Old Gods expanded the borders of their remote dominions. The n'raqi acted as ruthless taskmasters, employing the aqir as laborers to erect towering citadels and temple cities around their masters' colossal bulks. The greatest of these bastions was built around Y'Shaarj, the most powerful and wicked of the Old Gods. This burgeoning civilization was located near the center of Azeroth's largest continent. Y'Shaarj's holdings, along with the other Old God domains, would soon spread across the world and become known as the Black Empire.


The rise of the Black Empire did not go unnoticed by the elementals. Seeing the Old Gods as a challenge to their dominion, the elemental lords moved to excise the entities from their world. For the first time in Azeroth's history, the world's native spirits worked in unison against a common enemy.

Al'Akir's tempests joined with Ragnaros's fiery servants, creating monstrous cyclones of flame. These blistering firestorms raged over the world, reducing the Black Empire's citadels to ash. Elsewhere, Therazane raised jagged rock walls to corral her enemies and shatter their temple cities.




THE TITAN-FORGED BATTLE THE ELEMENTAL LORDS





CHAPTER III  
**ANCIENT  
KALIMDOR**



CHAPTER III  
**ANCIENT  
KALIMDOR**

**THE EMPIRE OF ZUL AND THE  
AWAKENING OF THE AQIR  
16,000 YEARS BEFORE THE DARK PORTAL**

**F**or generation after generation, life bloomed across the ordered world of Azeroth. Nowhere was this more evident than in the dense woodlands around the Well of Eternity. The fount of Azeroth's arcane lifeblood accelerated the cycles of growth and rebirth. Before long, sentient beings evolved from the land's primitive life-forms.

Among the first and most prolific were the trolls, a race of savage hunter-gatherers who flourished in Azeroth's jungles and forests. Though the trolls were of only average intelligence, they possessed incredible agility and strength. Their unique physiology also allowed them to recover from physical injuries at an astonishing rate, and they could even regenerate lost limbs over time.

The early trolls developed a wide array of superstitious customs. Some practiced cannibalism and devoted themselves to warfare. A rare few sought knowledge through mystic practices and meditation. Still others honed their ties to a dark and powerful form of magic known as voodoo. Yet no matter their individual customs, what all trolls shared was a common religion that revolved around Kalimdor's elusive Wild Gods. The trolls called these powerful beings "loa," and they worshipped them as deities.

Due to their reverence for the Wild Gods, the trolls gathered near a series of peaks and plateaus in southern Kalimdor. This was home to many of their honored loa. The trolls gave the holy mountain range the name Zandalar, and soon they built small encampments upon its slopes.

The most powerful group of trolls was called the Zandalar tribe. Its members claimed nearly all of Zandalar's tallest plateaus, believing them to be sacred ground. Atop the highest peaks they constructed a small cluster of crude shrines. In time, these grew into a bustling temple city known as Zuldazar.



THE ZANDALARI TROLL CAPITAL, ZULDAZAR

# AFTERMATH OF THE AQIR AND TROLL WAR



## TRIBES UNDER DRAKKARI CONTROL:

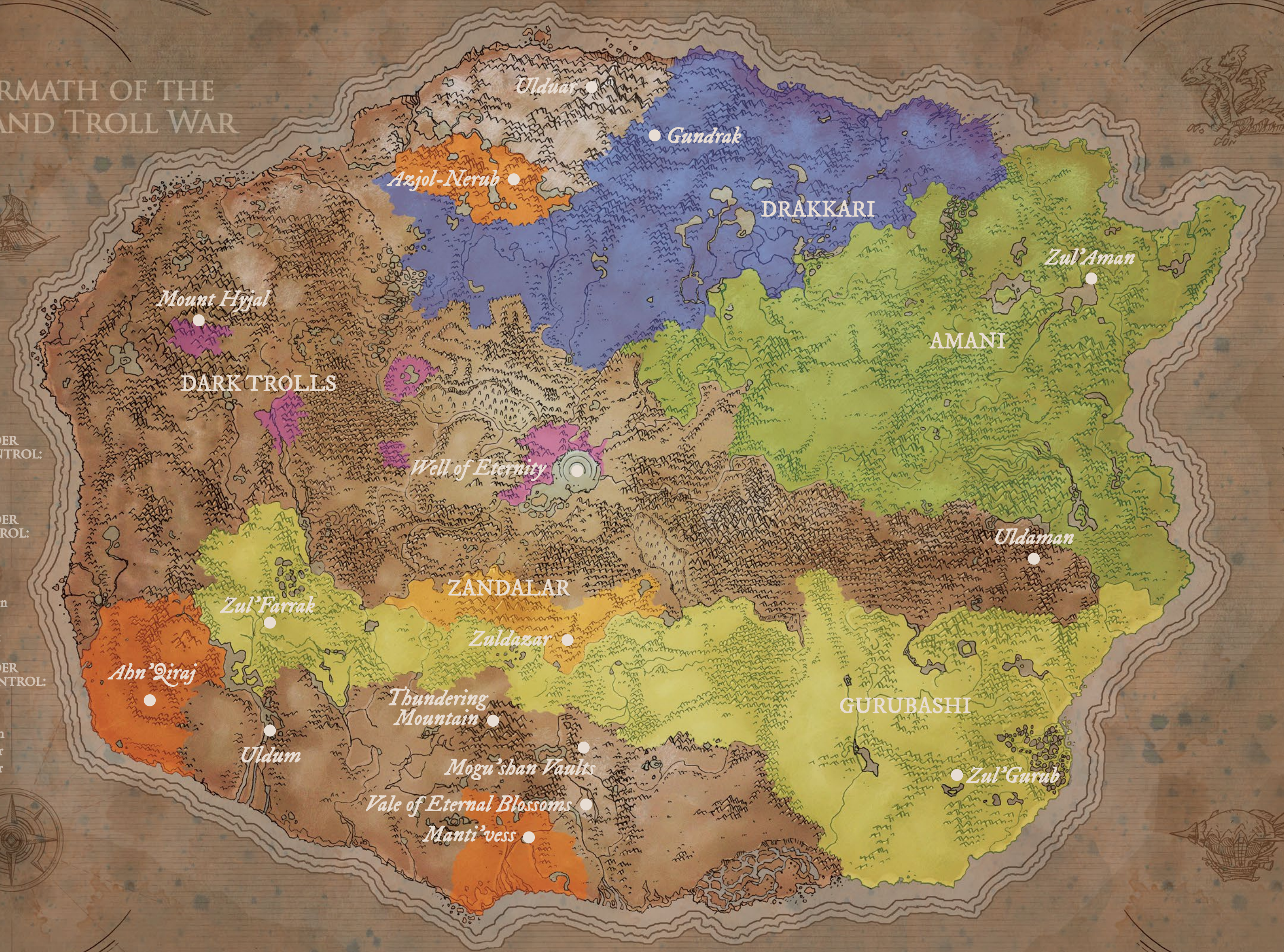
- Frostmane
- Winterax

## TRIBES UNDER AMANI CONTROL:

- Firetree
- Mossflayer
- Revantusk
- Smolderthorn
- Vilebranch
- Witherbark

## TRIBES UNDER GURUBASHI CONTROL:

- Bloodscalp
- Darkspear
- Razorbranch
- Shatterspear
- Skullsplitter



# ZANDALARI INVASION

## 11,900 YEARS BEFORE THE DARK PORTAL

The Zandalari had always maintained a distant relationship with the mogu following Lei Shen's death. Though the trolls found the mogu's knowledge of arcane magic useful, they loathed the constant intra-clan strife and tense political maneuvering. When it became clear that no mogu clan would establish total dominance, the Zandalari refrained from pledging their loyalties to any one faction in particular.

But they never forgot the promise Lei Shen had made to them: a large plot of land near the Vale of Eternal Blossoms would forever belong to the trolls. When at long last the mogu empire crumbled, the Zandalari saw an opportunity to take what they believed was rightfully theirs. They did not move immediately. Internal debate raged in the Zandalari capital of Zuldazar about whether the territory should be taken by diplomacy or force.

In the end, it was a descendant of the great high priest Zulathra who made the strongest case. His name was Mengazi, and he knew that the pandaren would be unlikely to honor the Zandalari's agreement with the mogu. The former slaves had also overthrown their masters, and as such, they could be strong enough to mount a fierce resistance against the trolls if given time to prepare. To succeed in claiming their land, the trolls would need to strike without warning and with enough force to shatter the pandaren's will.

To this end, the trolls marched south, intent on seizing a fertile region north of Kun-Lai Summit. The Zandalari stormed the main settlement in the area—a tranquil pandaren farming village. Imbued with mystic powers and riding atop colossal saurian war mounts, the trolls slaughtered almost every single resident of the settlement. The Zandalari ranks then pushed into the Jade Forest, a dense jungle that had become the heart of the newly established pandaren empire.

When word of the invasion reached other pandaren settlements, panic seized them. No standing army existed to thwart the trolls. In the decades since the slave revolution, few had seen the need to carry on the militaristic ways of the mogu, preferring instead to let all residents live in peace, without an overarching authority. The only real fighting force was an order of monks, charged by the pandaren emperor to patrol the Serpent's Spine and stand against the periodic mantid swarm.

Though the monks raced from the Serpent's Spine to defend their lands against the trolls, they found themselves hopelessly outnumbered and outmaneuvered. The trolls were employing a form of warfare none had ever seen, descending into battle on the backs of reptilian pterrorwings and giant bats. The pandaren had no means to counter these ferocious aerial attacks.

Ultimately, salvation came from a young pandaren named Jiang. When she was but a child, she had found a cloud serpent hatchling, alone and badly injured after a terrible storm had destroyed his nest. At the time, the pandaren regarded the flying cloud serpents as untamable and violent beasts, but Jiang nursed him back to health and befriended him. Those in her village often saw them flying the skies together.

As the monks fought a losing battle atop the cliffs of the Jade Forest, Jiang and her serpentine companion, Lo, swooped down from the clouds. Lo's fury and fire broke the Zandalari ranks, forcing them to retreat. News of the victory spread throughout the empire, and others followed in Jiang's footsteps. They tamed the powerful cloud serpents, and soon a small army arose to fly into battle at Jiang's side. These brave pandaren became known as the Order of the Cloud Serpent.

The tide of the war had turned. The trolls knew there was little they could do to win by conventional means, so Mengazi turned to a final tactic: resurrecting the Thunder King, Lei Shen.

Lei Shen had granted the Zandalari the secret to his revival, not trusting any of his mogu underlings to do it for him if he were ever killed. The trolls knew the Thunder King would have the power to purge the troublesome serpent riders and destroy any army on the ground. A pitched battle erupted near the Tomb of Conquerors, where Lei Shen's corpse was enshrined. Jiang sacrificed herself in a final, desperate attack, killing Mengazi. The other Zandalari soon broke ranks and fled back to their homeland in shame. Through her heroic act, Jiang had prevented the trolls from resurrecting the terrible Thunder King.

There was great celebration throughout the empire, but also mourning over the lives lost, especially Jiang's. For decades after the conflict, Lo was seen circling the skies above the Jade Forest, as though searching for his old friend and rider. The other serpent riders honored Jiang's memory by codifying her teachings. Within the Order of the Cloud Serpent, her tradition of training and befriending the majestic creatures would survive for millennia to come.

## THE WELL OF ETERNITY AND THE RISE OF THE NIGHT ELVES

### 15,000-10,000 YEARS BEFORE THE DARK PORTAL

Before their war with the aqir, the troll tribes claimed large swaths of Kalimdor. Many of these groups, such as the Gurubashi and the Amani, clashed with each other over hunting grounds and territory. Yet one tribe was unconcerned with these battles for land and power. Known as dark trolls, they lived in a network of deep caverns that stretched beneath Mount Hyjal. They abhorred daylight, only emerging from their underground burrows at night. The dark trolls' nocturnal habits changed them over time, turning their blue-hued skin into shades of gray.

The dark trolls cherished their independence from greater troll society, and they largely ignored the activities of other tribes. Unlike their Gurubashi and Amani cousins, they longed for a peaceful connection to the natural world. Dark troll mystics often sought ways to commune with the land and live in harmony with it. Many of these trolls gradually migrated toward the center of Kalimdor. They explored the labyrinthine groves at the heart of the continent, crossing paths with the elusive faerie dragons, chimaeras, and dryads. In time, the dark trolls also discovered an enormous lake of scintillating energies, a lake they would later know as the Well of Eternity.

Mesmerized by their discovery, the dark trolls settled along the Well of Eternity's shores. Over generations, the energies radiating from the lake suffused the trolls' flesh and bones, elevating their forms to match their graceful spirits. They transformed into highly intelligent and virtually immortal beings. These former trolls gradually abandoned their ancient heritage and traditions. The tribe's mystics began worshipping the moon goddess, Elune, who they believed was bound to the Well of Eternity itself. They claimed that the deity slumbered within the fount's depths during daylight hours.

The former trolls also discovered the name "Kalimdor" and other titan-forged words from communing with Elune and investigating strange artifacts scattered around the Well's periphery.



PANDAREN SERPENT RIDERS STRIKE AT THE ZANDALARI TROLLS



CHAPTER IV  
**A NEW  
WORLD**





CHAPTER IV  
A NEW  
WORLD

## MOUNT HYJAL AND THE WORLD TREE

### 10,000 YEARS BEFORE THE DARK PORTAL

The Sundering had left the world broken. The Well of Eternity was gone, and so, too, was the once-coveted source of the night elves' arcane power. Desperate for refuge, the surviving night elves fled northwest to Mount Hyjal, one of the few places on Azeroth untouched by the destruction.

En route to Hyjal, Malfurion Stormrage and the other night elves concluded that arcane magic was not safe. They agreed to prohibit its use to avoid another catastrophe like the War of the Ancients. Yet as they reached the summit of Hyjal, they were horrified to discover a second, smaller Well of Eternity. Equally shocking was the figure whom the night elves found standing at the fount's shores: Illidan.

Before the Sundering, Illidan had filled several vials with enchanted liquid from the original Well of Eternity. He had poured some of them into the lake atop Hyjal, transforming the idyllic waters into another fount of arcane power.

Violence erupted when a group of night elves confronted Illidan, and his brother Malfurion was forced to restrain him. Yet Illidan insisted that a new Well of Eternity was necessary. With it, the night elves would have the arcane power they needed to fight off the Burning Legion when—not *if*, but *when*—it returned.

Though some of the surviving Highborne agreed with Illidan, the majority of the night elves did not. They chastised him for his brash and selfish act, claiming that a new Well of Eternity could be used as a gateway for the Legion. Even then, Illidan remained unapologetic.

Seeing no other recourse, the night elves decided to deal with Illidan once and for all. Ultimately, the decision was made to imprison the sorcerer. Malfurion himself would see to enacting this punishment. With the help of Cenarius, he chained Illidan deep within a barrow prison. Malfurion then charged the priestess Maiev Shadowsong to stand guard over the wayward sorcerer. She would later take on the mantle of warden, founding an order of elite and secretive night elf jailors.

Upon learning of the second Well, three of the great Dragon Aspects converged on Hyjal. Like the night elves, they knew that so long as the fount of power existed, the Legion would have a means to invade Azeroth once again. Thus the Aspect of Life, Alexstrasza, used an enchanted seed to sprout a mighty tree over the Well of Eternity. The tree's boughs soon towered over the lake, scraping the belly of the heavens. Its roots grew deep into the earth, spreading life-giving energies across the war-torn world. Thereafter, the great tree would act as a seal over the new Well of Eternity, preventing the Legion or anyone else from abusing its powers.

Malfurion and the other night elves looked upon this colossal World Tree and named it *Nordrassil*, meaning "Crown of the Heavens." They vowed to keep it safe and protect the Well of Eternity at any cost.

To honor this decision, the Dragon Aspects agreed to bless the night elves so that they could perform their guardianship successfully. Alexstrasza infused Nordrassil with renewed strength and vitality, which would also extend to the night elves.

The Aspect of Dreams, Ysera, then blessed the tree, binding it and all night elf druids to the Emerald Dream. Prior to this, Malfurion and his followers had wandered Ysera's realm, but doing so required difficult meditation. The new enchantment placed on Nordrassil would allow these druids to journey into the Dream whenever they so wished.

Lastly, Nozdormu, the Aspect of Time, wove his energies through the boughs and roots of Nordrassil, assuring that as long as the colossal tree stood, the night elves would possess immortality.

With that, the Aspects ventured back to their hidden lairs. Due to their enchantments, the second Well of Eternity would no longer act as a beacon to demons, nor could the Legion easily use it as a gateway into Azeroth. It would become a symbol of the night elves' connection to the natural world, a sacred monument that empowered their race with immunity to sickness, disease, and aging.

## THE SENTINELS

### 9,400 YEARS BEFORE THE DARK PORTAL

As the centuries passed, the burgeoning night elf society expanded into the dense forests of Ashenvale, south of Mount Hyjal. Tyrande Whisperwind, high priestess of the Sisterhood of Elune, led the night elves in rebuilding their society. Her order was uniquely positioned to fill the power vacuum among the night elves, for it had emerged from the War of the Ancients relatively unscathed.

Tyrande deftly positioned the Sisterhood as the leaders of both the night elf government and the military. She also forged a new fighting force: the Sentinels. Composed of devout and highly trained warrior women, this order dedicated itself to protecting the emergent night elf society. The Sentinels set out to patrol their misty forest home, befriending the native creatures of the land and standing guard against any threat.

Meanwhile, Malfurion continued fostering a culture of druidism among his people. Having abandoned arcane magic, many former sorcerers embraced Malfurion's teachings and devoted themselves to living in harmony with nature. These early druids lacked the stringent militaristic codes and hierarchy of the Sentinels. Malfurion's followers were free to explore the depths of the Emerald Dream at will. They also experimented with the art of shapeshifting, taking on the forms



THE DRAGON ASPECTS BLESS THE WORLD TREE NORDRASSIL



THE TOWER OF KARAZHAN, FUTURE HOME OF THE GUARDIAN MEDIVH

THE OFFICIAL HISTORY OF AZEROTH!

# WORLD OF WARCRAFT

CHRONICLE



VOLUME 1

ON SALE MARCH 15!

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