

LIGHT

HOLY

THE NAARU

LIFE

DISORDER

NATURE

WILD GODS

SPIRIT

FIRE

THE BURNING LEGION

FEEL

EMERALD DREAM

WATER

REALITY

AIR

SHADOWLANDS

THE TITANS

EARTH

DECAY

UNDEAD

ARCANE

NECROMANTIC

ORDER

OLD GODS

DEATH

THE VOID LORDS

SHADOW (VOID)


SHADOW





## 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 . . .*



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.

zealous shivarra became the Legion's foremost mystics and advisors. They fostered a fanatical loyalty to Sargeras.

These wicked creatures, among many others, bolstered the might of the Burning Legion. Pleased with his burgeoning forces, Sargeras launched the demons into the Great Dark, renewing his Burning Crusade against creation.

In the ages to come, the Legion would scour countless other worlds and civilizations from existence.

## LOKEN'S BETRAYAL

Meanwhile, unbeknownst to Sargeras, the last embers of the Pantheon's power clung to life. Although Sargeras had destroyed the titans' physical forms, Norgannon's grand spellwork had preserved their souls. The disembodied titan spirits hurtled through the Great Dark toward the world of Azeroth and its keepers. There, the Pantheon hoped they could locate physical forms to inhabit. If they could not find such vessels, the titans feared their weakened spirits would soon fade into oblivion.

Upon reaching Azeroth, the depleted spirits slammed into the keepers, who had been crafted by the Pantheon's own hands. The keepers were immediately overwhelmed as the titans' powers flared in their minds. They witnessed fragmented memories of distant worlds, of lifetimes never lived and wonders never seen. But just as quickly as the influx of power had come, it dimmed.

The keepers, still retaining their original personalities, puzzled over the strange phenomenon. They knew they had been gifted with a portion of the Pantheon's power, but they were unaware that the last remnants of their beloved makers had been infused in their very bodies. The bewildered servants called out to the Pantheon for answers, but they received no reply. The deep silence troubled the keepers, and they sank into a long period of confusion and unease.

The Old God Yogg-Saron, imprisoned beneath Ulduar, sensed these fluctuating emotions. In the eons since the Ordering of Azeroth, a sharp awareness had begun to stir within the entity. Yogg-Saron had devised a plan to weaken its jailors and escape imprisonment. It would corrupt the Forge of Wills, tainting its creation matrix with a strange malady known as the curse of flesh. Any titan-forged created by the machine thereafter would fall victim to this affliction. Some would even spread it to previous generations of titan-forged. The curse of flesh would gradually transform many of these infected servants into mortal beings of flesh and blood—beings who the cunning Old God knew could be easily killed.

To implement this plan, Yogg-Saron turned to Keeper Loken. Out of Ulduar's guardians, Loken had been the most troubled by the Pantheon's silence. Yogg-Saron assailed the keeper through fevered dreams, stoking the cold fires of his despair. Yet even in his disturbed state, Loken resisted the whisperings in his mind. Ultimately, his downfall would come from a much subtler place.

As Loken drifted deeper and deeper into despair, he sought comfort from a vrykul named Sif, the mate of his brother, Keeper Thorim. Loken often met with Sif in private, telling her of his darkest fears. In time, a forbidden love blossomed between the two titan-forged.

Yogg-Saron latched onto Loken's love for Sif and twisted it into a dangerous obsession. The relationship quickly soured due to Loken's increasingly compulsive behavior. More and more, he






KEEPER THORIM DISCOVERS THE BODY OF HIS WIFE, SIF










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

For 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



*Mount Hyjal*

DARK TROLLS

*Well of Eternity*

ZANDALAR

*Zul'Farrak*

*Zuldazar*

*Abn'Diraj*

*Thundering  
Mountain*

*Uldum*

*Mogu'shan Vaults*

*Vale of Eternal Blossoms*

*Manti'vess*

*Ulduar*

*Azjol-Nerub*





● *Gundrak*

DRAKKARI

*Zul'Aman*

AMANI

*Uldaman*

GURUBASHI

● *Zul'Gurub*

