

Reviving the Council of Tirisfal is Azeroth's only hope against the evil of the Twilight's Hammer. Yet the nearly three-thousand-year-old ritual that created this sacred group was conducted by magi—individuals now threatened by Malygos's efforts to sap all arcane energy from the world. With the magi weakened and distracted, can a new council formed of a shaman, druid, priest, and paladin have the same success?

Walter Simonson (*Thor*) and Louise Simonson (*DEATH OF SUPERMAN*) spin a tale of allies joined in the fight against great evil, with artists Mike Bowden and Tony Washington. Then, Mike Costa (*G.I. Joe*) and Pop Mhan (*BATGIRL*) begin a tale which will have lasting effects on the WORLD OF WARCRAFT!



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WORLD OF WARCRAFT

BOOK FOUR

SIMONSON • COSTA • MHAN

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WORLD OF WARCRAFT

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AHN'QIRAJ,
THE RUINED CITY
OF ANCIENT
HORROR...
...ALIVE
AGAIN AFTER A
MILLENNIUM...

WHISPERS

I WANT THE BOY THE BOY THE BOY

HEAR ME AND
TREMBLE! FOR I HEAR
OUR MASTER'S **COMMANDS**
AND **SPEAK** TO YOU WITH
ITS VOICE!

EVEN NOW,
IT CALLS TO **THE**
PROPHESED
ONE...

...**TWISTING** THE
BOY...**FASHIONING** HIM
INTO AN **INSTRUMENT**
THAT WILL **SERVE**
THE MASTER...

...AS DO WE ALL!

CHO'GALL GROWS MORE MONSTROUS BY THE MOMENT!

DA MASTER HAS TRANSFORMED HIM!

AND THROUGH HIM, OUR MASTER SHOWS THE TWILIGHT'S HAMMER WITH BLESSINGS!

THEY SAID CHO'GALL DIED ON THE BROKEN ISLES, BUT HE RETURNED!

HE IS THE RIGHT HAND OF THE OLD ONE AND CANNOT DIE!

HE WILL LIVE FOREVER IN POWER AND GLORY!





THE MASTER TELLS ME THAT OUR TIME OF VICTORY DRAWS NEAR!

GO TO THERAMORE KEEP! BRING ME THE BOY! BRING ME THE CHOSEN ONE!



BUT, CHO'GALL... THEY DEFEATED STASIA'S RAIDERS! THEY PROVE OFF THE LICH KING'S NECROPOLIS! HOW WILL WE--?



DO NOT DOUBT ME! THE LICH KING IS INSIGNIFICANT TO THE POWER MY MASTER WIELDS!



SHRAKK

IMPOSSIBLE THOUGH IT SEEMS, I MUST FREE MYSELF FROM THAT MONSTER'S SPELL... AND FIND A WAY TO PROTECT MY SON!



THE MORE KEEP

THE LIGHT PERVADES EVERYTHING. SHINES THROUGH EVERYTHING. RESONATES WITHIN ALL THINGS.

A PRIEST OR PALADIN MUST ABNEGATE HIMSELF THROUGH MEDITATION AND BECOME A CONDUIT FOR THE LIGHT.

HE CAN THEN CHANNEL IT AS A FORCE FOR GOOD--FOR HEALING AND THE VANQUISHING OF EVIL. THE LIGHT REACTS TO EMOTION--



IT'S BACK... IN MY HEAD AGAIN.

**WEAK
HELPLESS
FRIENDLESS
WORTH NOTHING**

THE VOICE IS ATTACKING HIM AGAIN. MARAAD--DO SOMETHING!

FIRST, VALEERA, LET US SEE WHAT HE CAN DO FOR HIMSELF.

BREATHE DEEPLY, MED'AN. DON'T LET YOUR FEAR BE YOUR MASTER. YOU CAN CONTROL IT.

THAT IS THE VOICE OF THE OLD ONES. BUT REMEMBER THAT THE LIGHT PERVADES ALL AND WILL AID YOU, IF YOU ASK IN THE RIGHT SPIRIT.



THAT... THAT'S BETTER...

...A BIT...



**SERVE ME
JOIN ME
BECOME ONE WITH ME
I AM YOUR STRENGTH**

NOW, REACH OUT FOR THE HOLY LIGHT AND LET IT ENVELOP AND SHIELD YOU.



GOOD. I WILL ADD MY STRENGTH TO YOURS.



THERE! THAT WAS A GOOD BEGINNING. BETTER THAN ANY NOVICE I'VE SEEN. YOU HAVE THE AFFINITY.

IT'S A LITTLE LIKE SHAMANIC MAGIC... BUT DIFFERENT, TOO. IT... WRAPS ITSELF AROUND YOU... LIKE A WARM BLANKET.



YOU CAN TRY AGAIN LATER. THE KIND OF *FINE CONTROL* YOU'LL NEED TAKES ENERGY. AND *PRACTICE*. FOR NOW YOU SHOULD *REST*.



IT'S HARD TO BELIEVE THAT THAT BOY--THAT *MED'AN*--IS MY *GRANDSON*!

HOW IS IT POSSIBLE THAT, AFTER THE *HARM* I'VE CAUSED, I SHOULD BE SO *BLESSED*...?

SHOULD I TELL HIM WHO HIS *FATHER* IS... AND WHAT HE IS TO *ME*? WHAT WOULD BE *BEST* FOR HIM?

IT WAS MY *ARROGANCE* THAT COST MY SON HIS *TRUE LIFE* AND BROUGHT *DISASTER* ON AZEROTH.

IF ONLY... BUT *NO!* THIS... *UNCERTAINTY* ISN'T LIKE ME. BUT *MED'AN* IS *TOO IMPORTANT!* I CAN'T LET MY SELFISH WISHES BLIGHT HIS FUTURE.



THERE IS SOME VAST *EVIL* STIRRING, JAINA, AND... *GARONA'S SON* IS ITS FOCUS.

IF THERE IS A *PROPHECY* CONCERNING HIM, IT WILL BE VITAL TO LEARN ITS *EXACT WORDING*.

AND TO *KNOW MORE* ABOUT THE POWERS ARRAYED AGAINST HIM.

WE ARE *AGREED* ABOUT THAT, AEGWYNN, AND ABOUT THE NEED TO RE-FORM THE *COUNCIL OF TIRISFAL*.



BOTH AEGWYNN AND I KNOW THE *RITUAL*...



"... WHICH WAS CREATED NEARLY THREE THOUSAND YEARS AGO TO FIGHT THE BURNING LEGION.

"IT WAS COMPOSED OF DALARAN'S STRONGEST *MAGI*, WHO FUNNELED THEIR POWER THROUGH THEIR CHAMPION, THE *GUARDIAN*.

"THE VERY FIRST DEMON OUR ORIGINAL *GUARDIAN*, *ALODI*, FOUGHT... AND BANISHED... WAS THE DREADLORD *KATHRA'NATIR*."

BUT **DALARAN** IS FIGHTING ITS OWN BATTLE NOW AGAINST THE **LICH KING**.

AND THERE IS A... PROBLEM INVOLVING THE **BLUE DRAGON** ASPECT, **MALYGOS THE SPELL-WEAVER**.

WHATEVER **MALYGOS** IS DOING, WE **MAGI** HAVE ALL **FELT** THE EFFECTS. OUR **POWERS** ARE **DIMINISHING**.

INDEED. I WAS NEARLY **WORTHLESS** AFTER THE **TELEPORT** TO **AHN'QIRAJ**, AND IT TOOK ME **TOO LONG** TO RECOVER FROM **CHO'GALL'S** ATTACK.

UNTIL **DALARAN** DEALS WITH THE PROBLEM, IT WILL AFFECT **ALL MAGI**.

BUT NOT THE PRACTITIONERS OF **NATURE MAGIC** AND **DIVINE MAGIC**.

IF WE ARE TO SUCCEED, IT WILL BE ESSENTIAL TO ESTABLISH A FAR **DIFFERENT COUNCIL** THAT INCLUDES PRACTITIONERS OF **OTHER MAGICAL DISCIPLINES**.

WE'LL NEED TO INCLUDE **SHAMAN** AND **DRUID**, **PRIEST** AND **PALADIN**...

YOU WERE EVER THE **ICONOCLAST**.

SHE'S **RIGHT**, **MERYL**. BUT WITH SO MANY OF **AZAROTH'S** BEST ARRAYED AGAINST THE **LICH KING**, WE WILL NEED TO **EXPAND** OUR CHOICES BEYOND **MAGI**.

I'LL ASK **MARAAD** IF HE WILL JOIN THE **COUNCIL**. AND I'LL ASK HIM TO GO TO **OUTLAND** TO INVITE **KHADGAR**.

KHADGAR IS VERY INVOLVED WITH DISCIPLES OF **DIVINE MAGIC** THERE.

THE **DRUID BROLL** WOULD BE A PERFECT CANDIDATE, BUT **DARNASSUS** HAS ITS OWN PROBLEMS, AND I DOUBT THEY CAN SPARE HIM.

I'LL ASK **THRALL**, OF COURSE...



HIGH PRIEST ROHAN IN IRONFORGE IS A POWERFUL PRIEST.

I KNOW HIM. HE WOULD BE A GOOD CHOICE.

WILL YOU TRAVEL THERE AND ASK HIM TO JOIN US?

I WILL. IT WILL BE GOOD TO SEE HIM AGAIN.



I WONDER IF OLD THINKER AXELJINK IS STILL ALIVE?



AXELJINK, AEGWYNN? A GNOME?



BRILLIANT, POWERFUL, AND QUITE THE INVENTOR.

HE'D BE VERY OLD NOW.



THINKER DIED FIGHTING TROGGS IN GNOMEREGAN, BUT HIS SON KRANK LIVES IN KHAZ MODAN. WHEN I VISIT ROHAN I COULD CONTACT HIM, AS WELL.

KRANK IS EVEN MORE ECCENTRIC THAN OLD THINKER...AGGRESSIVE AND CANTANKEROUS FOR A GNOME, PERHAPS IT'S THE DWARVEN INFLUENCE.

BUT HE'S BRILLIANT AND AS POWERFUL AS HIS FATHER. THE TRICK WILL BE TO PULL HIM AWAY FROM HIS EXPERIMENTS.

PERFECT. THEN, I'M OFF TO RAZOR HILL TO MEET WITH THRALL.

DON'T WORRY IF I'M GONE FOR SEVERAL HOURS. IT MAY TAKE A WHILE FOR HIM TO ARRIVE...



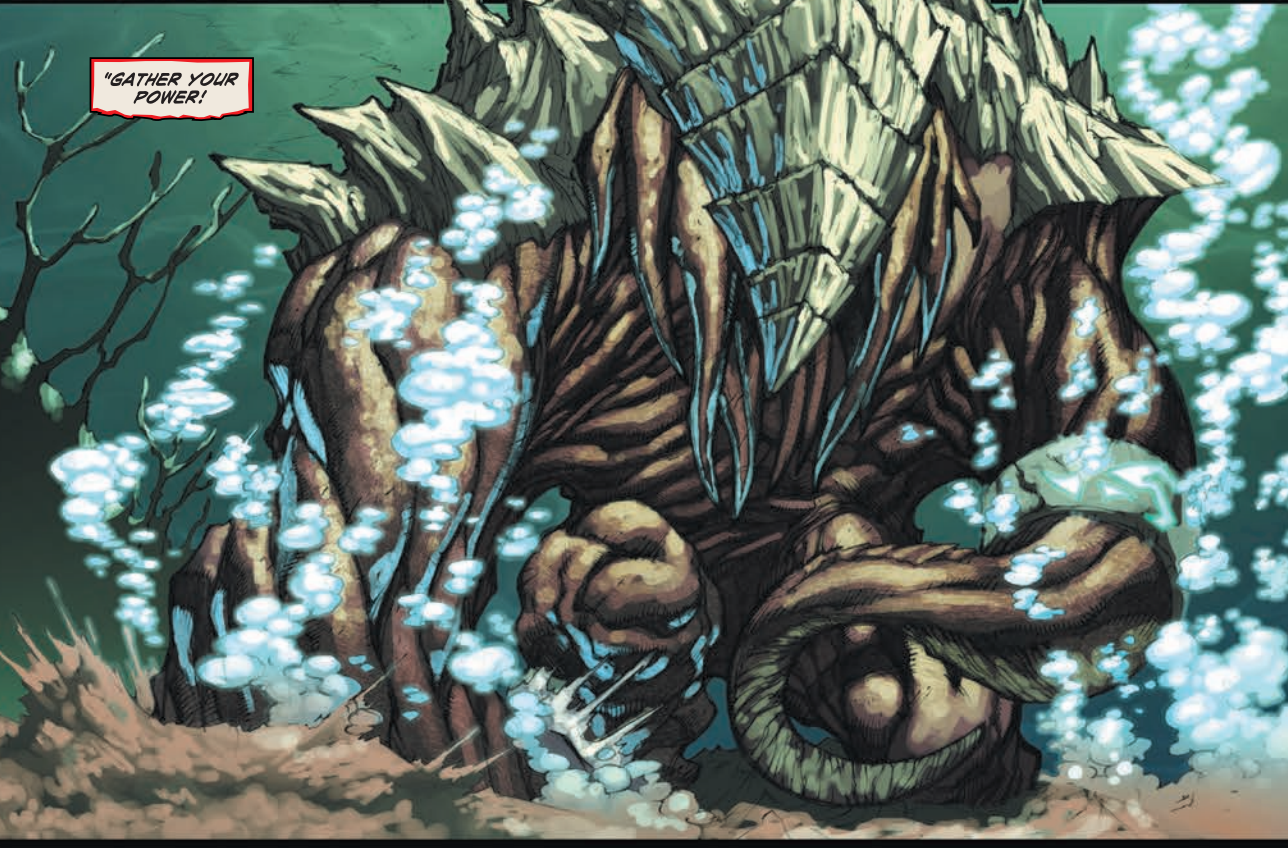
W HILE IN THE RUINS OF AHN'QIRAJ...

DOUBT NOT, YOU ELITE OF THE TWILIGHT'S HAMMER! OUR MASTER HAS BID ME CALL UPON ONE WHO WILL AID YOU!

GO AFTER THE BOY!

THROUGH THE POWER OF OUR MASTER, YOUR WAY TO MED'AN WILL BE MADE CLEAR!

THROUGH THE AUTHORITY GRANTED TO ME BY OUR MASTER-- I BID YOU-- RISE!



"GATHER YOUR POWER!"



"FOR SOON, YOU WILL UNLEASH IT UPON THERAMORE!"



CENTRAL DUROTAR

THRALL!
YOU'RE HERE
ALREADY?

I WAS BELOW
IN RAZOR HILL SPEAKING
WITH OUR MINERS. I AM
PREPARING OUR FLEET TO
INVADE NORTHERND.

WHY
DID YOU
CALL UPON
ME?



THERE'S MORE
TROUBLE, I'M AFRAID.
YOU KNOW OF
CHO'GALL?

THE OGRE?
DIDN'T HE
DIE AT
SARGERAS'
TOMB?

AN UNFOUNDED
RUMOR... UNFORTUNATELY.
HE NOW HEADS A GROUP CALLED
THE TWILIGHT'S HAMMER. HIS
MINIONS DISRUPTED OUR
RECENT SUMMIT.*

CHO'GALL
HAS ACQUIRED
TERRIFYING POWER,
BUT I BELIEVE WE
HAVE FOUND A WAY
TO DEAL WITH
HIM.

*AS SEEN IN BOOK THREE.



LONG
AGO THE MAGI OF
AZEROTH FORMED
A COUNCIL...



LATER...

SO YOU PLAN TO
RE-FORM THIS COUNCIL
WITH PRACTITIONERS OF
NATURE AND DIVINE
MAGIC...

...AS
WELL AS THE
ARCANE?



IT'S A GOOD PLAN. I WISH I COULD JOIN
YOU, BUT I AM PREPARING TO GO TO
WAR. WOULD YOU TAKE REHGAR IN MY
STEAD? HE'S DOWN BELOW.

IF HE AGREES,
YOU CAN TELEPORT
HIM BACK WITH YOU TO
THERAMORE.

AND WHAT
ABOUT THE TAUREN
ARCHDRUID, HAMMUL
RUNETOTEM?

I COULD
SEND VALEERA
TO SPEAK TO
HIM.



REHGAR KNOWS
HAMMUL OF OLD, PERHAPS
YOU SHOULD SEND
THEM BOTH.



HERAMORE

DESPITE THE GRAVITY OF MY MISSION, I'M LOOKING FORWARD TO SEEING IRONFORGE AGAIN.

IRONFORGE IS ALL RIGHT, MERYL. BUT MARAAD WILL BE GOING TO OUTLAND. I WISH I COULD GO, TOO. I'VE NEVER BEEN TO OUTLAND.



IF WE HAD MORE TIME, NEPHEW, I WOULD TAKE YOU WITH ME GLADLY.

BUT THIS IS NO VACATION. THERE WILL BE NO LEISURE TO SEE THE SIGHTS.

STAY HERE. PRACTICE YOUR MEDITATIONS. ONCE THIS IS OVER--

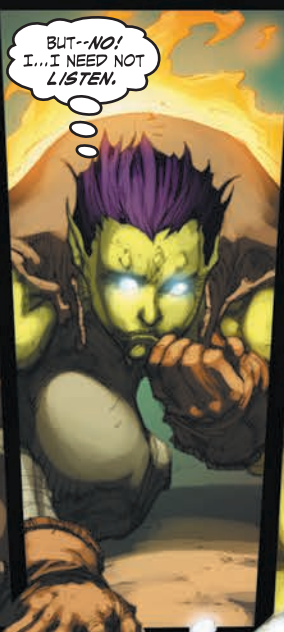
I HAVE BEEN PRACTICING, MARAAD.

THE STUDY OF DIVINE MAGIC IS SO SATISFYING. ITS SYSTEM FOR HEALING ALONE IS--



NO...NO, IT'S CREEPING BACK IN...

WORTHLESS NOTHING I AM THE WAY



BUT--NO! I...I NEED NOT LISTEN.



LIGHT, SHIELD ME FROM THIS ATTACK. PROTECT ME AND--



WHAT?! MERYL! MARAAD! LOOK SEAWARD!



WHAT IS THAT?!



IT MUST BE A FACELESS ONE. THEY ARE SO RARE EVEN I HAVE NEVER SEEN ONE.



FOR WHICH YOU SHOULD THANK THE LIGHT! THOSE HORRORS ARE JUGGERNAUTS... VIRTUALLY UNSTOPPABLE! BUT... WHY IS ONE HERE?

REALLY, AEGWYNN... DO YOU EVEN NEED TO ASK?



BACK, YOU HORROR!

MY FIREBOLTS HAVE ONLY MADE IT ANGRIER!



THEN LET US SEE HOW IT LIKES THE TASTE OF COLD, SHARP STEEL!

AEGWYNN--GET THE BOY INTO THE KEEP! WHILE HE'S FIGHTING THE VOICE, HE'LL HAVE NO ENERGY LEFT TO COMBAT THIS MONSTER!



A FACELESS ONE CAN CRUSH THE WALLS OF THE KEEP AS EASILY AS IT CRUSHED THAT PIER. ONLY DEATH WILL STOP IT.

I HATE THIS WEAKNESS! IN DAYS PAST, I WOULD HAVE LED THE BATTLE AGAINST THE CREATURE. NOW I CAN BUT COWER HERE!



AEGWYNN--TAKE IT! NOT THE WEAPON YOU'RE USED TO, I KNOW, BUT BETTER THAN NOTHING. YOU MAY NEED IT.



KEEP AWAY FROM THE BOY, MONSTER!

WHILE THERE IS BREATH IN MY BODY, YOU WILL NOT HAVE HIM... NOR WILL THE ONE WHO SENT YOU!

MED'AN--THE VOICE IS TRYING TO DRAIN YOUR WILL. WRAP YOURSELF IN THE LIGHT. BLOCK THE WHISPERS...!



LOOK TO THE SKIES! THE FACELESS ONE IS NOT OUR ONLY FOE!




THERE'S THE BOY! TAKE HIM!




YOU ARE RELUCTANT AND UNWILLING TO FACE THE TRUTH!



CHO'GALL ATTACKS ON THREE FRONTS--WITH MURMURS, MONSTER, AND MINIONS. HE MUST FEAR MED'AN GREATLY.




HE WANTS
MEP'AN BACK,
AEGWYNN! HE
MEANS TO USE
HIM!



THE REST OF YOU--
DESTROY CHO'GALL'S
MINIONS! I'LL DEAL WITH
THE MONSTER!



BUT, MERYL, YOUR FIREBOLTS
DON'T WORK! YOU SAID AS
MUCH YOURSELF--
AAK!



I'M WEAKENED
BY THE DIFFICULTY
THAT IS AFFLICING
ALL THE MAGI.

NO, MERYL, YOU ARE
TOO POWERFUL FOR
THAT ALONE TO AFFECT
YOU SO DRASTICALLY.
THERE'S SOMETHING
ELSE...!



WHAT'S
WRONG WITH YOU,
MERYL? YOUR BLASTS
HARDLY STING THAT
CREATURE.

AS IN ANCIENT DAYS CHAOS AND DESTRUCTION
THROUGHOUT AZEBOTH ALL FALL BEFORE ME

SHE'S RIGHT, YOU KNOW. YOU SPEND YOUR MAGIC RECKLESSLY TO CONTROL ME...

...WHILE I WASTE MY OWN POWER FIGHTING YOU.

WHY SQUANDER ALL OUR ENERGY THIS? WHY NOT A PARTNERSHIP INSTEAD?

LET ME HELP YOU FIGHT THAT MONSTER... FOR FEL MAGIC IS POWERFUL... AND WE ARE NEAR THE SEA.

IT REQUIRES BUT AN INSIGNIFICANT SACRIFICE--A LIVING FISH OR TWO, A FEW STRANDS OF SEAWEEP--TO FUEL THE MAGIC.

WHAT ARE THESE SMALL LIVES IF YOU SAVE THE BOY?

VERY WELL, KATHRA'NATIRI! YOUR SURVIVAL DEPENDS ON THIS AS MUCH AS OURS! BUT I RETAIN CONTROL!

AS YOU SHOULD, MAGE...

SHRAK

KRAK
BAROUM

BUT SEE WHAT A FORCE WE CAN BE TOGETHER...?

BE SILENT, DEMON AND FIGHT!

SHRAK-KRAK



SHRAK BAROUM





UNLEASH
THE FURY OF
LIGHTNING UPON
THE FACELESS
ONE!

LET THE
WRATH OF
THE SKIES
OBLITERATE
THIS ANCIENT
EVIL!

KKKRAKK
BA-DOOMB



WELL DONE,
NEPHEW!



"THAT'S MEAT ENOUGH
TO FEED THERAMORE
FOR A YEAR!"

"AND ALREADY
COOKED."



YOU LEAD AN **EXCITING LIFE** AT THERAMORE. I MUST COME HERE MORE OFTEN.

THE **MONSTER**-- CAN IT REALLY HAVE BEEN A **FACELESS ONE?** --IS **DEAD**. BUT THERE ARE **OTHER ENEMIES**. YOU **SAW** WHAT THE **BOY** DID?



HARD TO **MISS!** HE'S THE ONE YOU **SPOKE OF--GARONA'S SON?** I HARDLY NOTICED HIM DURING THE **SUMMIT BATTLE**. HE'S **YOUNG**. AND YET--
ARCANE AND SHAMANIC MAGIC... WOVEN TOGETHER INTO THAT **ENORMOUS BLAST**. HOW--?

I... **DON'T KNOW**. YET. I THINK... HIS **ABILITIES** MAY BE **UNIQUE**.



WHILE BELOW...
MERYL--YOU HAVE TAKEN ON **VALEERA'S DEMON!** I SHOULD HAVE SEEN IT **SOONER** BUT WE'VE BEEN IN **CONSTANT UPROAR** AND...

...AND I **MAKE EXCUSES**. IN TRUTH, I HAD EYES ONLY FOR **THE BOY**. BUT **WHY--?**

VALEERA'S **DEMON...** MY **DEMON...** IS WHAT IS LEFT OF **KATHRA'NATIR...** THE **DREADLORD** THAT THE **COUNCIL BANISHED** NEARLY **THREE THOUSAND YEARS** AGO.

HE... **THREATENED MEP'AN**. I DID WHAT I **HAD TO**. AND, **AEGWYNN**, I CAN **USE HIM!**

ASK YOURSELF, MERYL, AND ANSWER **TRULY--ARE YOU USING KATHRA'NATIR...** OR IS **HE** USING YOU?



VALEERA-- YOU'RE **HURT!**

JUST... A **SCRATCH**.

UH-HUH. **MARAAD** COULD PROBABLY DO THIS **BETTER** BUT--

HE'S... **BUSY**.

YEAH.

LIGHT SHINE ON HER AND **RESTORE** HER...



YOU HAVE DISPLEASED ME...
CHO'GALL... FAILED ME...
YOU ARE INSIGNIFICANT...
YOU HAVE EARNED AGONY...
FOR YOU HAVE PROVED...
YOURSELF WORTHLESS...

PAIN!
AGONY SUCH AS
I DIDN'T KNOW
EXISTED.

THIS
IS...HOW OUR
MASTER REWARDS
ITS GREATEST
SERVANT! WE ARE
UNWORTHY...

...YET STILL
I HEAR YOUR VOICE
AND I WILL YET BE YOUR
INSTRUMENT. FOR THIS I
OFFER PRAISE!

THE BOY
HAS DRIVEN OFF
THE FACELESS
ONE!

HE THINKS HE
HAS ESCAPED! BUT
HE SHALL SERVE YOU,
MASTER--IN LIFE OR
IN DEATH!

SINCE HE WILL
NOT OFFER HIMSELF UP
WILLINGLY, HE WILL BE
MY SACRIFICE TO OUR
GREAT LORD!

PROPERLY
ENGINEERED, HIS DEATH
WILL DISCHARGE HIS ENERGY
AND BURST THE BONDS
THAT IMPRISON OUR
MASTER...

... AS SURELY
AS IF THE BOY
HAD RELEASED
THE POWER
HIMSELF!

IT WILL
FREE OUR
MASTER TO UNLEASH
CHAOS ONTO
AZEROTH...

...AND THE
ANCIENT WORD OF
PROPHECY WILL BE
FULFILLED.

I WILL
SEE THAT
MONSTER
DEAD!

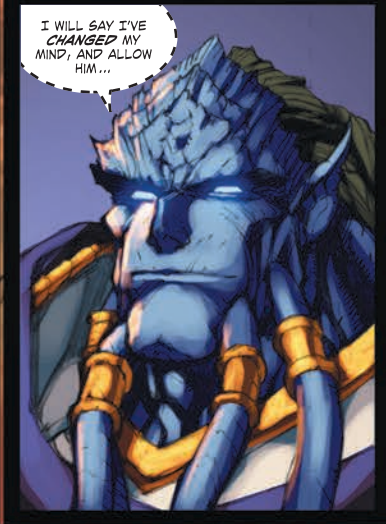
SOMEHOW,
SOME WAY, I
WILL FIND A WAY
TO SLAY IT
BEFORE IT CAN
KILL MY
SON!

Theramore

MED'AN IS TOO VALUABLE TO RISK. WE MUST GET HIM AWAY FROM HERE...

...TO SOME PLACE BEYOND THE OLD GOD'S REACH.

I WILL BE TRAVELING TO OUTLAND. HE SAID THAT HE WISHES TO GO WITH ME.



I WILL SAY I'VE CHANGED MY MIND, AND ALLOW HIM...



AEGWYNN, WHEN WILL YOU TELL HIM--?

THAT MY SON, MED'AN, IS HIS FATHER? NEVER. I HAVE DECIDED. NO ONE MUST EVER KNOW. EVEN MED'AN. ESPECIALLY MED'AN.

HE WOULD BE DISTRUSTED AND SHUNNED BY ANY WHO LEARNED OF IT. HIS LIFE WOULD BE BLIGHTED... THAT BRIGHT POTENTIAL, WASTED.

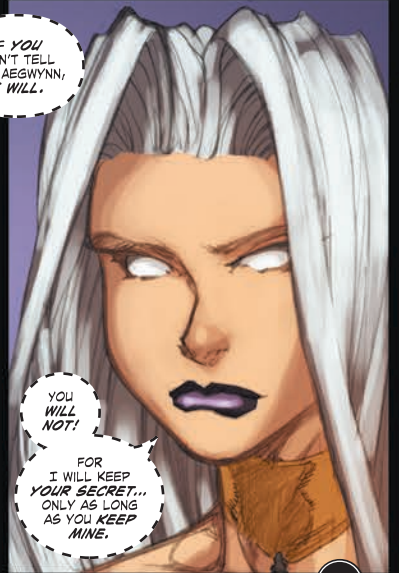


AEGWYNN! MERYL! I GET TO GO TO OUTLAND!

A WONDERFUL OPPORTUNITY!

THERE HAVE BEEN ENOUGH MYSTERIES CONCERNING THE BOY'S PARENTAGE. HE IS OLD ENOUGH... AND STRONG ENOUGH... TO HEAR THE TRUTH. HE MUST BE TOLD.

IF YOU WON'T TELL HIM, AEGWYNN, I WILL.

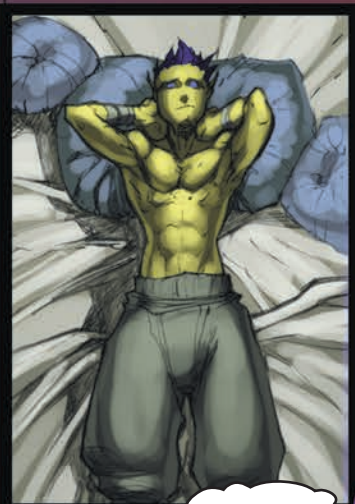


YOU WILL NOT!
FOR I WILL KEEP YOUR SECRET... ONLY AS LONG AS YOU KEEP MINE.

THAT NIGHT...

THEY SENT ME TO BED EARLY, AS IF I WERE A CHILD.

"THE BATTLE WILL HAVE DRAINED YOU... YOU'LL NEED YOUR STRENGTH FOR THE JOURNEY..." NOT THAT THEY'RE WRONG. BUT STILL...



IN A FEW HOURS, MARAAD AND I WILL LEAVE FOR OUTLAND!



THAT IS JUST TOO AMAZING. I'LL NEVER BE ABLE... TO FALL... ASLEEP...



W-WHO ARE YOU?

I AM MEDIVH THE ACCURSED.

AND I AM YOUR FATHER. WOULD YOU KNOW MORE?

THEN COME TO ME, MY SON, TO MY TOWER KARAZHAN, AND I WILL EXPLAIN ALL!

CHAPTER 2



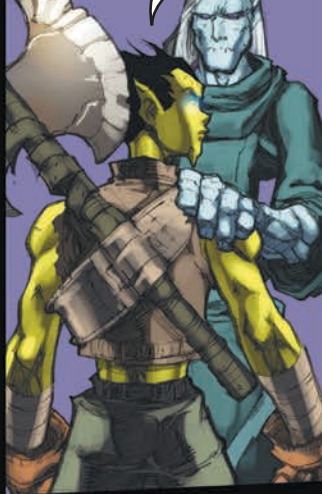


THEM MORE

YOU'VE BEEN QUIET, MED'AN. IS ANYTHING WRONG?
DOES THIS JOURNEY TO OUTLAND WORRY YOU?



NO, MERYL. I'M FINE. I-I WANT TO GO WITH MARAAD. BUT I JUST COULDN'T SLEEP. I HAD A... A NIGHTMARE.



NO WONDER, SON, CONSIDERING WHAT ATTACKED US YESTERDAY.

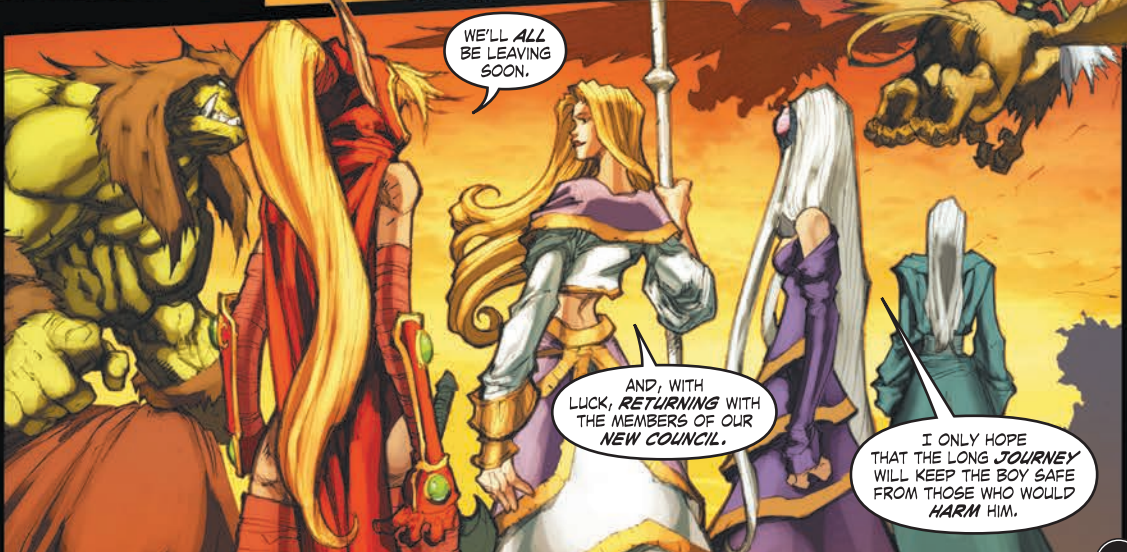
HOLD HIM CLOSE! AH... SUCH TEMPTING ENERGY--

NO, DEMON! BY ALL I HOLD HOLY, YOU WILL NOT HAVE HIM!



AND NOW, IT'S TIME YOU WERE OFF!

WE'LL ALL BE LEAVING SOON.



AND, WITH LUCK, RETURNING WITH THE MEMBERS OF OUR NEW COUNCIL.

I ONLY HOPE THAT THE LONG JOURNEY WILL KEEP THE BOY SAFE FROM THOSE WHO WOULD HARM HIM.

TWO DAYS LATER AND HALF A WORLD AWAY...

MERYL WAS RIGHT, MED'AN. YOU HAVE BEEN SILENT. HAS THE OLD ONE RENEWED ITS ATTACKS ON YOUR MIND AND WILL?

NO, MARAAD. THE TECHNIQUES YOU TAUGHT ME HAVE SILENCED IT.

IT IS MY FATHER'S IMAGE THAT FILLS MY MIND NOW.

I LIED TO MERYL. IT WAS NO NIGHTMARE, BUT A VISION MEDIVH SENT TO ME.

MY MOTHER KNOWS WHO HE IS...

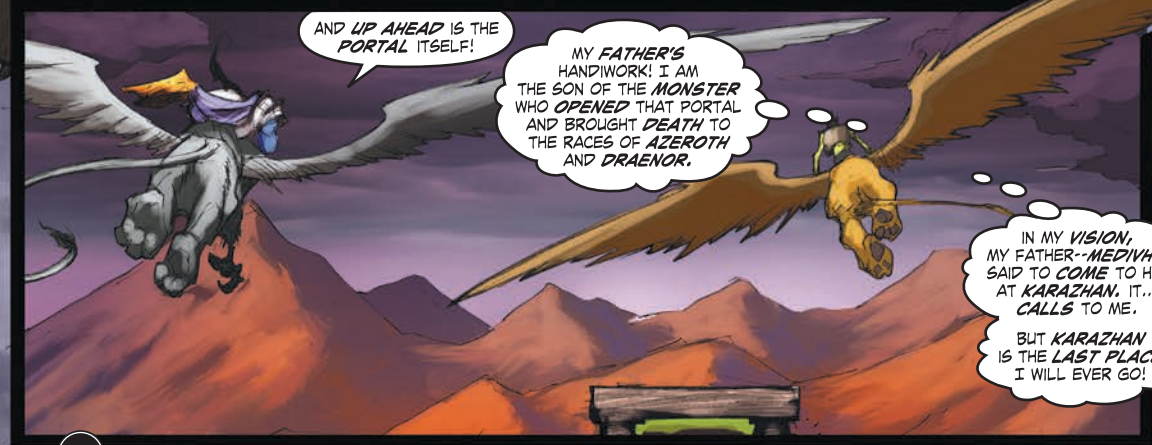


...BUT DOES MERYL KNOW?



NO. HE LOVES ME...AND NO ONE COULD LOVE THE SON OF SUCH A MONSTER.

THAT IS THE TOWER KARAZHAN. IT WAS THE HOME OF THE WIZARD MEDIVH, WHO OPENED THE DARK PORTAL FIRST.



AND UP AHEAD IS THE PORTAL ITSELF!

MY FATHER'S HANDIWORK! I AM THE SON OF THE MONSTER WHO OPENED THAT PORTAL AND BROUGHT DEATH TO THE RACES OF AZEROTH AND DRAENOR.

IN MY VISION, MY FATHER--MEDIVH--SAID TO COME TO HIM AT KARAZHAN. IT... CALLS TO ME. BUT KARAZHAN IS THE LAST PLACE I WILL EVER GO!



AND THE TWISTED TRUTH IS--I CAN'T WAIT TO FLY THROUGH THIS PORTAL THAT LED TO SO MANY DEATHS...

...AND ESCAPE INTO OUTLAND!

THE GATHERING



IRONFORGE, CAPITAL OF KHAZ MODAN IN THE EASTERN KINGDOMS.

MERYL, MY OLD FRIEND, WELCOME!



JAINA PROUDMOORE TELLS ME SHE REQUIRES MY HELP, BUT SHE WAS RELUCTANT TO SAY MORE.

THERE ARE SPIES EVERYWHERE, ROHAN.



WHAT HAVE YOU HEARD OF A STRANGE CULT CALLED THE TWILIGHT'S HAMMER, HEADED BY THE OGRE CHO'GALL?

NOT THAT MUCH, WHY?

LET US WALK. I HAVE MUCH TO TELL YOU...

LATER...



...AND YOU WANT ME TO JOIN THIS NEW SECRET COUNCIL.

WITH MOST OF THE MIGHT AND MAGIC OF THIS WORLD FOCUSED ON BATTLING THE LICH KING...

...INVESTING A NEW GUARDIAN MAY BE OUR ONLY CHANCE OF STOPPING THE OLD ONE'S EMERGENCE.

THERE'S LOGIC TO YOUR PLAN BUT...YOU'RE SURE YOU WANT TO INVOLVE KRANK AXELJINK?

HE PLACES MORE FAITH IN TECHNOLOGY THAN IS WISE, EVEN FOR A GNOME.

KRANK'S MAD BUT POWERFUL. AND, SO FAR, HE HASN'T BLOWN HIMSELF UP. COME...



...LET US GO TO TINKER TOWN AND SEE WHAT HE SAYS.

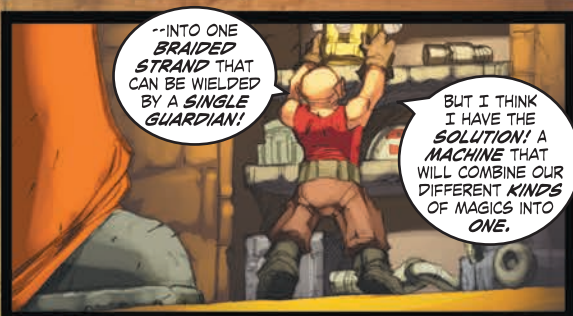
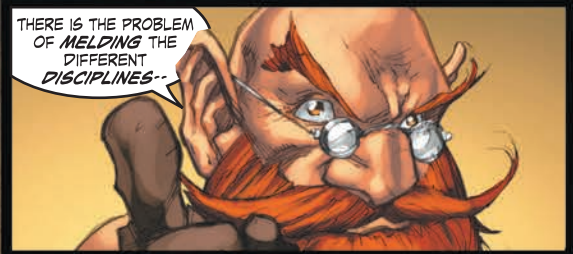


...INTERESTING THAT THE TWILIGHT'S HAMMER CULT IS CENTERED IN AHN'QIRAJ.

YOU KNOW, ONE OF KING MAGNI'S BROTHERS, BRANN BRONZEBEARD, DISCOVERED THE BASE OF THE SORCERER MERVIN'S STAFF, ATIESH...

...BUT SOMEHOW LOST IT AGAIN, IN AHN'QIRAJ.

A POWERFUL ARTIFACT. NO, I DIDN'T KNOW. INTERESTING, INDEED.



THIS IS
WHAT REMAINS OF
DRAENOR?

A CHUNK OF
THE PLANET THAT
WAS HOMETLAND TO THE
ORCS AND DRAENEI.
NOW A RUIN, FLOATING
IN THE TWISTING
NETHER.



MERYL
AND I MET
SOMEONE WHO HAD
COME THROUGH HERE.
HE SAID THERE WERE
DEMONS... AND
FIGHTING!

THE CROSSING IS
SAFER NOW, NEPHEW. OUR
FORCES HAVE SCoured MUCH
OF OUTLAND OF THE DEMONS
WHO LURKED HERE...

...AND THE FORCES OF
THE BURNING LEGION ARE
MUCH DIMINISHED.



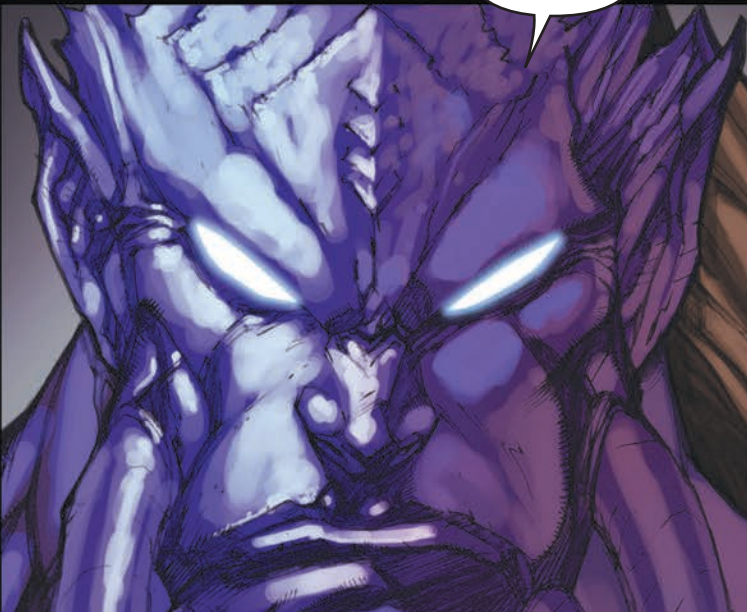
BUT WE
CONTINUE TO GUARD
THE DARK PORTAL
AGAINST THEIR
INCURSIONS.



MARAAD...
WHAT IS THIS
ROAD MADE OF?
IT LOOKS
LIKE--

THE ORCS
CALLED IT THE PATH
OF GLORY.

IT IS PAVED
WITH CRUSHED
BONES OF THE
DRAENEI MURDERED
BY DEMON-TWISTED
ORCS BEFORE THE
DARK PORTAL
WAS OPENED.

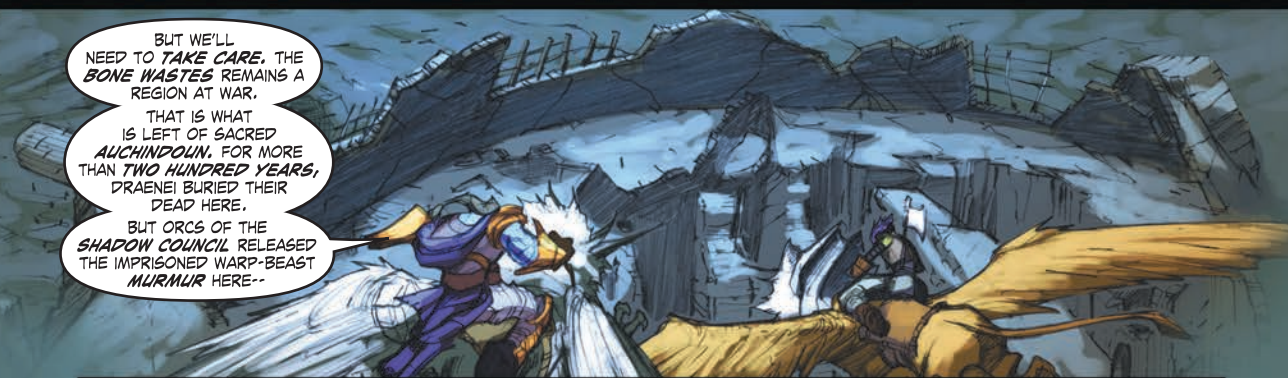




TEROKKAR FOREST IS BELOW. IT WAS ONCE HOME TO MANY OF OUR DRAENEI ANCESTORS.

THE RUINED CITY AUCHINDOWN IS WITHIN IT. IT'S A BIT OUT OF OUR WAY, BUT I WANT YOU TO SEE IT.

IT WILL HELP YOU UNDERSTAND WHAT IT WAS LIKE HERE, BACK BEFORE YOU WERE BORN.



BUT WE'LL NEED TO TAKE CARE. THE BONE WASTES REMAINS A REGION AT WAR.

THAT IS WHAT IS LEFT OF SACRED AUCHINDOWN. FOR MORE THAN TWO HUNDRED YEARS, DRAENEI BURIED THEIR DEAD HERE.

BUT ORCS OF THE SHADOW COUNCIL RELEASED THE IMPRISONED WARP-BEAST MURMUR HERE--



ON PURPOSE?



SO RUMORS SAY, BUT THOSE WHO KNOW THE TRUTH OF IT ARE DEAD NOW.

THAT RELEASE CAUSED AN EXPLOSION THAT DESTROYED THE TEMPLE AND SURROUNDING COUNTRYSIDE.



AND I AM A MONSTER-- THE SON OF A DEMON-SERVING HUMAN MONSTER...

...AND THE MAD ORCS WHO DID SUCH HARM.

PERHAPS I SHOULD EXILE MYSELF TO THIS WORLD FILLED WITH HORRORS. MAYBE IT IS WHERE I BELONG.



SHATTRATH CITY IS UP AHEAD. IT IS A SANCTUARY OF PEACE IN THIS WAR-TORN LAND.

THE LOWER CITY IS CROWDED WITH REFUGEES FROM THE FIGHTING. BUT WE'LL FIND KHADGAR ABOVE, IN THE TERRACE OF LIGHT.

WHO IS KHADGAR...? I KNOW HE'S A POWERFUL SERVANT OF THE LIGHT, BUT...



LONG AGO, ARCHMAGE KHADGAR WAS THE ASSISTANT OF THE SORCERER MEDIVH.

ALONG WITH YOUR MOTHER, KHADGAR HELPED EXPOSE THE WIZARD'S MISDEEDS AND WAS... THERE WHEN MEDIVH WAS KILLED.

KHADGAR KNEW MY MOTHER?

AND-- WAIT--HE SERVED MEDIVH?! BUT--HOW IS IT THAT EVERYONE TRUSTS A MAN WHO ONCE SERVED SUCH A MONSTER?

NOT ONLY SERVED MEDIVH, BUT HAS SOME SYMPATHY FOR HIM.

SYMPATHY?! BUT HOW--?!

I THINK I WOULD LIKE TO TALK TO THIS KHADGAR.



GREETINGS, MARAAD! IT'S GOOD TO SEE YOU ONCE AGAIN.

AND YOU, KHADGAR! WE CARRY A MESSAGE FROM JAINA PROUDMOORE.

AND THIS IS--?

MY GRAND-NEPHEW MED'AN, THE SON OF MY NIECE GARONA.

YOUR NEPHEW?! YES... I CAN SEE YOUR LIKENESS IN HIM. THAT...AND MORE...!

ATOP RED ROCKS IN NORTHEAST MULGORE, THE TAUREN TERRITORY ON KALIMDOR.

AND MAY THE SPIRITS OF THIS SLAIN FEMALE AND HER YOUNG SON FIND REST.

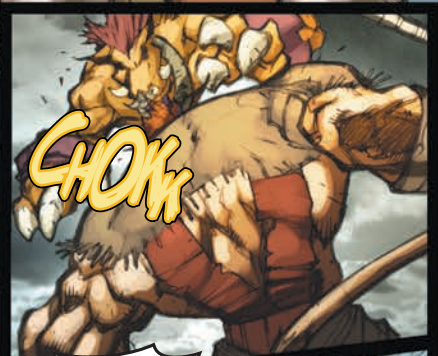
I FEAR THAT PRAYERS FOR THE FALLEN WILL INCREASINGLY BE NEEDED.

BETWEEN THE ATTACKS FROM THE LICH KING, TROUBLE IN DARNASSUS, THE BEHAVIOR OF THAT BLUE DRAGON MALYGOS, ALL OF AZEROTH SEEMS THREATENED.

EVEN THE BRISTLEBACK TRIBE HAS BEEN MORE ACTIVE AND MALEVOLENT OF LATE...

...AND MORE DEADLY THAN USUAL.

THIS UNPROVOKED MURDER OF INNOCENTS WAS VILE, EVEN FOR-- WHAT'S THAT...?



QUILBOAR!

LIGHTNING! SCOUR THIS BLIGHT FROM OUR BURIAL GROUND--

SHRAK

--SO OUR DEAD MAY REST IN PEACE!

KRAK-HOOUM

THAT WAS AMAZING, REHGAR! I CAN SEE WHY JAINA WANTS HAMMUL ON THE COUNCIL.

HE IS VERY POWERFUL.

BUT AREN'T TAUREN MOSTLY SHAMAN, LIKE YOU?

DURING THE BATTLE OF MOUNT HYJAL, HAMMUL WAS STIRRED BY THE DEPICTION OF THE DRUIDS AND WAS INSPIRED TO JOIN THEM.

MALFURION STORMRAGE HIMSELF TAUGHT HIM. HAMMUL IS NOW AN ARCHDRUID. FEW ACQUIRE THAT RANK, EVEN AMONG THE NIGHT ELVES.

THE VALEERA WHO WAS ONCE YOUR GLADIATOR? A CHAMPION IN DIRE MAUL?

TIME CHANGES MANY THINGS, OLD FRIEND. AND NOT ALL FOR THE BETTER. OUR WORLD IS THREATENED.

REHGAR, YOU KEEP UNUSUAL COMPANY THESE DAYS.

I FLY WITH VALEERA SANGUINAR, MY ALLY... AND JAINA PROUDMOORE'S.

VALEERA...?

BY MANY EVILS, THRALL HAS TOLD ME SOMETHING OF YOUR PLAN. I WOULD HEAR MORE...

OUTLAND. THE TERRACE OF LIGHT IN SHATTRATH CITY.

SO YOU SEE, KHADGAR, WHY WE MUST CREATE A NEW COUNCIL...

...AND WHY IT MUST BE STRUCTURED TO INCLUDE ALL MAGICAL DISCIPLINES. WE WOULD LIKE YOU TO JOIN US.

I UNDERSTAND, AND AGREE THAT IT IS IMPORTANT. BUT, FOR NOW, I MUST REMAIN IN OUTLAND.

PERHAPS YOU WOULD CONSIDER TAKING DALYNNIA WRATHSCAR, A MAGISTRIX IN SERVICE OF THE SCRYERS, IN MY PLACE.

DALYNNIA, THERE IS SOMEONE I WANT YOU TO MEET.

IF YOU WILL EXPLAIN THE SITUATION TO HER, MARAAD...

...I WOULD LIKE A WORD WITH YOUR NEPHEW.

SO, MED'AN... GARONA IS YOUR MOTHER?

YES, SIR. I AM BOTH ORCISH AND DRAENEI ON MY MOTHER'S SIDE.

AND ON YOUR FATHER'S...?

SHOULD I TELL HIM? HAS HE GUESSED?

MARAAD SAYS HE KNEW MY FATHER... EVEN HAS SYMPATHY FOR HIM. PERHAPS HE CAN EXPLAIN... BUT CAN I TRUST HIM?

I NEED TO KEEP THIS SECRET. AND YET, EVEN MORE, I NEED TO KNOW!



ONLY DAYS AGO, A VISION SHOWED ME HIS IDENTITY.

THE ASSASSIN GARONA IS MY MOTHER. THE WIZARD MEDIVH WAS MY FATHER.

I HAVE KEPT THE KNOWLEDGE SECRET. ANYONE WHO LEARNS THIS WILL SAY I AM THE SON OF AN INSANE REGICIDE AND A MONSTER.

I KNEW THEM BOTH WELL... OR SO I THOUGHT.



"MY MOTHER WAS A PRODUCT OF THE WARLOCK GUL'DAN'S BREEDING EXPERIMENT. FROM BEFORE HER BIRTH, SHE WAS UNDER HIS CONTROL.


"HE AGED HER, THEN TORTURED HER, AND IN TIME, ENSORCELLED HER. AFTER HE FOUNDED THE ORCISH SHADOW COUNCIL, HE USED HER AS HIS ASSASSIN.

"THE OGRE CHO'GALL, WHO NOW LEADS THE TWILIGHT'S HAMMER, WAS GUL'DAN'S FOLLOWER."



I SEE. AFTER MEDIVH'S DEATH, I REALIZED THERE WAS MUCH I DIDN'T UNDERSTAND.

AND SO I TRIED TO LEARN WHAT HAD REALLY HAPPENED. BUT I NEVER EVEN SUSPECTED YOUR EXISTENCE...!




STILL, YOU CONFIRM WHAT I LEARNED OF GARONA. SO BOTH OF YOUR PARENTS WERE DOOMED BEFORE THEY WERE BORN.

BOTH?


SINCE BEFORE HIS BIRTH, MEDIVH WAS POSSESSED BY THE CORRUPTED TITAN, SARGERAS.

MEDIVH'S BEHAVIOR WAS...ERRATIC. SOMETIMES, WHEN SARGERAS' ATTENTION WAS FOCUSED ELSEWHERE, I WOULD SEE THE REAL MEDIVH-- ENORMOUSLY POWERFUL, YES; BUT CHARMING AND INTELLIGENT.



I KNOW NOW THAT YOUR FATHER FOUGHT HIS POSSESSION. HAD HE NOT, YOU WOULD NOT HAVE EXISTED. BUT IN THE END, HE FELL.

YOU...LOOK LIKE HIM. AND, KNOWING WHAT YOU DO NOW, I SUSPECT YOU WILL FIGHT ALL THE HARDER TO SAVE AZEROTH.



EVEN THE MOST POWERFUL OF DEMONIC FORCES CANNOT ALWAYS FORESEE THE RESULTS OF THEIR PLOTTING...AND FOR ALL THEIR POWER, YOU MAY YET BE THEIR UNDOING.

WHIN'QIRAJ

UNPH!

A TELEPORT--
EVEN ACROSS
HALF A WORLD--
SHOULD NOT HAVE
DRAINED YOU
SO, MAGE.

YOUR ARCAINE
MAGIC IS WANING...
AND YOU ARE USING
MUCH OF WHAT IS LEFT
TO KEEP ME BENEATH
YOUR THUMB. BUT
AS YOUR POWER
LESSENS...

YOU
ARE **WRONG**,
KATHRA'NATIR.

YOU
THINK YOU WILL GROW
STRONGER? AND THAT,
SOON, YOU WILL BE ABLE TO
COMMAND ME, AS I, NOW,
COMMAND YOU?



AH, I
HAVE FOUND
GARONA.

AS YOU
SEE, I REMAIN
THE **STRONGER**
POWER, AND,
THOUGH YOU **CHAFE** AT
YOUR BONDAGE, YOU
WILL CONTINUE TO
SERVE ME.

INSTANTLY...

MERYL! WHAT
ARE YOU DOING
HERE? WHERE
IS MY SON?

SAFE IN
OUTLAND, WITH
HIS UNCLE, YOU
SHOULD HAVE
TOLD ME WHO HIS
FATHER WAS.

HOW DID
YOU FIND
OUT--?

LATER!
THAT'S
CHO'GALL'S
VOICE, WE NEED
TO HEAR
THIS.



THE
BOY **EVASD**
THE FACELESS ONE
AND **FLED**. NOW A
CONVOCAION OF
SPELLCASTERS
GATHERS AT
THERAMORE,
HOPING TO
OPPOSE US.

BUT THEY
WILL **FAIL**,
FOR IS IT NOT
WRITTEN--



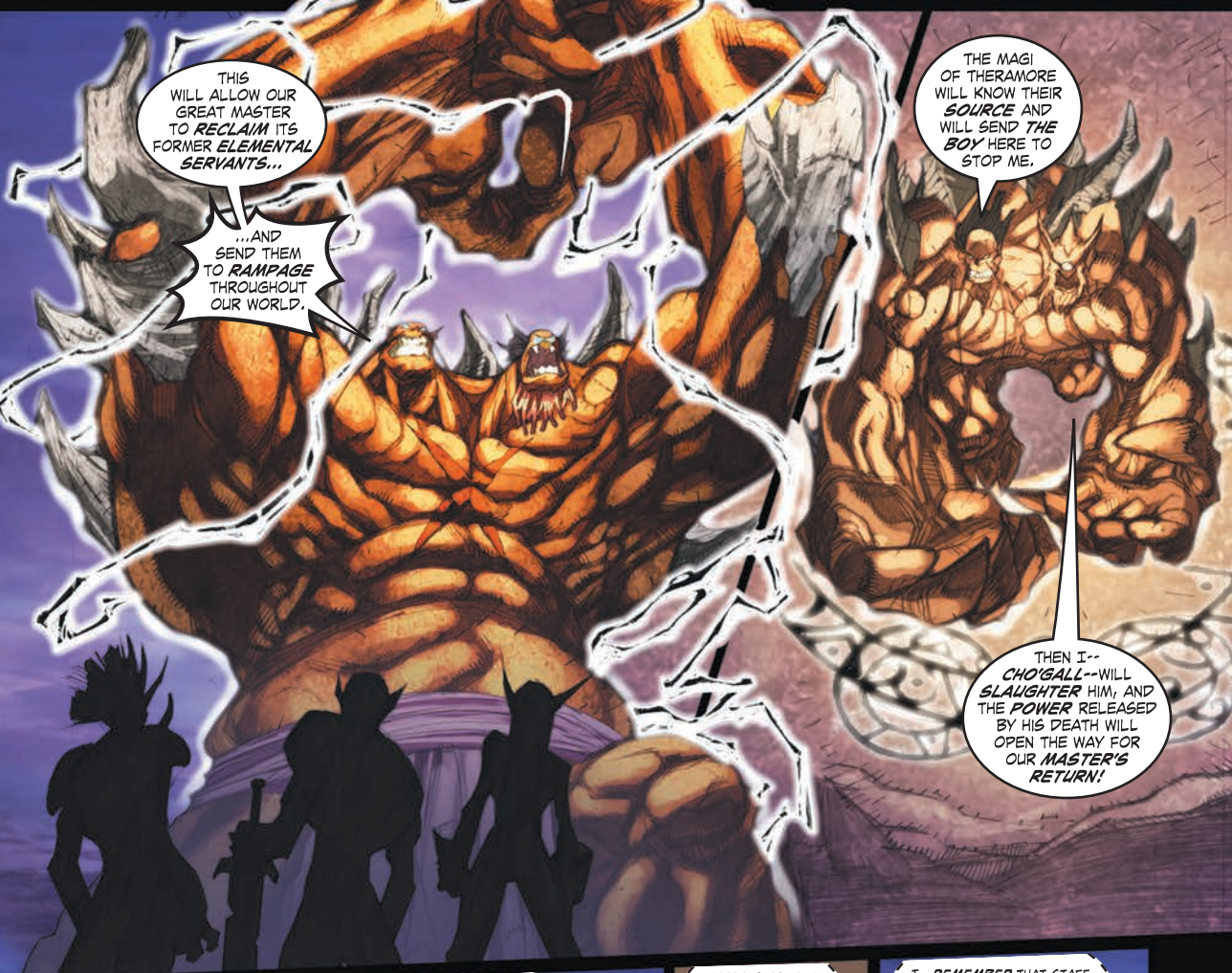
"WHEN THE CHILD OF THREE REALMS BECOMES AS LIGHT, THE ANCIENT POWER WILL BE RELEASED."

"THE EARTH WILL TREMBLE, THE SEAS WILL RISE UP IN ANSWER, AND ALL WILL BE MADNESS. A NEW DAY WILL DAWN, BRINGING WITH IT CHAOS OR PEACE..."

"...OUR MASTER IS A GOD OF CHAOS! PANDEMONIUM WILL AID THE OLD ONE'S RELEASE!"

TO THIS END, WE WILL WEAKEN THE BARRIER--

--BETWEEN AZEROTH AND THE ELEMENTAL PLANE.



THIS WILL ALLOW OUR GREAT MASTER TO RECLAIM ITS FORMER ELEMENTAL SERVANTS...

...AND SEND THEM TO RAMPAGE THROUGHOUT OUR WORLD.

THE MAGI OF THERAMORE WILL KNOW THEIR SOURCE AND WILL SEND THE BOY HERE TO STOP ME.

THEN I-- CHO'GALL--WILL SLAUGHTER HIM, AND THE POWER RELEASED BY HIS DEATH WILL OPEN THE WAY FOR OUR MASTER'S RETURN!



THIS ISN'T GOOD. LONG AGO, THE OLD GODS OF AZEROTH ENSLAVED THE ELEMENTALS. IN TIME, THE ELEMENTALS WERE BANISHED TO ANOTHER PLANE...

...THOUGH SPELLCASTERS HAVE OCCASIONALLY SUMMONED THEM, OFTEN TO THEIR ETERNAL REGRET.

IF CHO'GALL CAN INDEED OPEN A RIFT TO BRING THESE ELEMENTALS BACK AS SLAVES OF THE OLD ONE, THE THREAT COULD EVEN RIVAL THAT OF THE LICH KING!



THERE IS HOPE. I HAVE LEARNED OF AN ARTIFACT THAT MIGHT AID US AGAINST HIM.

THE BASE OF MEDIVH'S STAFF, ATIESH, LIES SOMEWHERE IN AHN'QIRAJ.



I...REMEMBER THAT STAFF, WELL. IT MUST BE FILLED WITH DARK MAGIC, MERYL. CAN YOU USE YOUR POWERS TO FIND IT...?

THE RAMORE

ROHAN, I'M GLAD YOU'VE ARRIVED. WHERE'S MERYL?

HE SAID HE HAD PRESSING BUSINESS ELSEWHERE, BUT WOULD BE HERE SOON.

THAT'S QUITE A PARCEL, KRANK!

MERYL MENTIONED THE CHALLENGE OF MELDING DIVERSE MAGICAL FORCES INTO A SINGLE UNIT.

THAT IS THE ANSWER! IF YOU WILL SHOW ME WHERE TO SET IT UP...?

JAINA, WE'RE BACK!

HAMUUL! THIS IS A TRUE PLEASURE.

COME INSIDE AND WE WILL TALK ABOUT WHY YOU HAVE ALL BEEN ASKED TO COME HERE.

ALMOST 3,000 YEARS AGO, IN DALARAN, A GROUP OF MAGI...

...HIGH ELF, HUMAN, AND GNOME-- CREATED A SECRET COUNCIL...

"... TO COMBAT THE DEMONS WHO WERE SLIPPING FROM THE TWISTING NETHER INTO AZEROTH.

"THE COUNCIL FOUND THEY WERE MOST EFFECTIVE WHEN THEIR POWER WAS CHanneled THROUGH A SINGLE CHAMPION, WHOM THEY CALLED A GUARDIAN.

"GUARDIANSHIP REQUIRED A RARE ABILITY TO HANDLE THE NEXUS OF POWER AND PROXIMITY TO DEMONS--

"--AS WELL AS BRAVERY, COMMITMENT, AND STRENGTH.

"THROUGH A SPECIAL CEREMONY, THE COUNCIL HANDED THE GUARDIAN THE WEAPON OF THEIR COMBINED POWER...

"... BUT IT WAS THE GUARDIAN WHO PHYSICALLY FACED THE DANGER.

"DURING THE BATTLES, THE GUARDIAN REMAINED IN *MAGICAL COMMUNION* WITH THE COUNCIL.

"AND, WHEN THE BATTLES WERE OVER, THE GUARDIAN *RETURNED* THE BORROWED POWER TO THE COUNCIL."

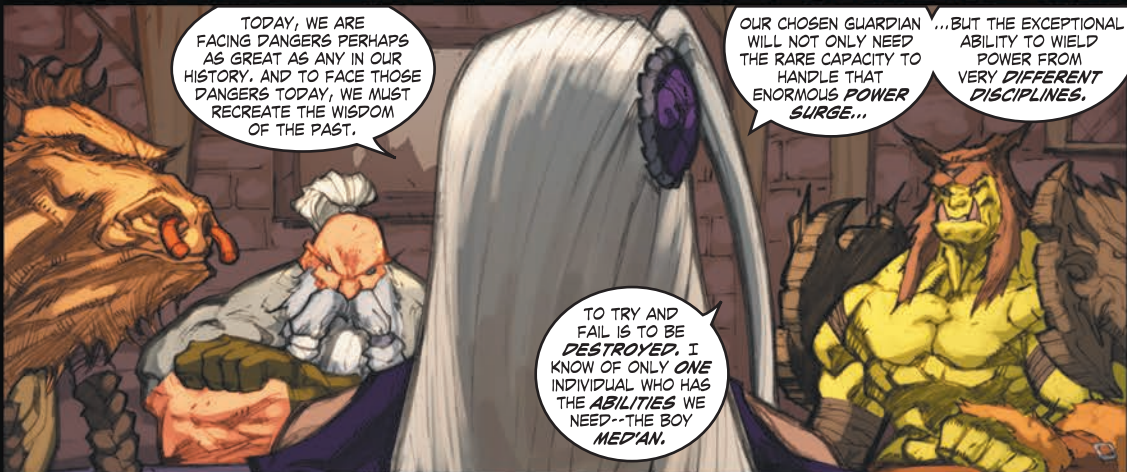


TODAY, WE ARE FACING DANGERS PERHAPS AS GREAT AS ANY IN OUR HISTORY. AND TO FACE THOSE DANGERS TODAY, WE MUST RECREATE THE WISDOM OF THE PAST.

OUR CHOSEN GUARDIAN WILL NOT ONLY NEED THE RARE CAPACITY TO HANDLE THAT ENORMOUS *POWER SURGE*...

...BUT THE EXCEPTIONAL ABILITY TO WIELD POWER FROM VERY *DIFFERENT DISCIPLINES*.

TO TRY AND FAIL IS TO BE *DESTROYED*. I KNOW OF ONLY *ONE* INDIVIDUAL WHO HAS THE *ABILITIES* WE NEED--THE BOY *MED'AN*.



THE *HALF-ORC* LAD MERYL TOLD ME ABOUT?

ASK SOME UNTRIED *MIXED-RACE* CHILD TO BE *GUARDIAN*?! RIDICULOUS!

HIS *MIXED RACES*... AND *MIXED APTITUDES*... COULD BE AN *ASSET* HERE.

I'VE SEEN *MED'AN WORK*. YOUNG THOUGH HE IS, HE HAS ALREADY STUDIED *ARCANE* AND *SHAMANIC* MAGICS.

AND IS LEARNING THE DISCIPLINE OF THE *HOLY LIGHT*. HE *WIELDS* THE THREE FORMS AS *NATURALLY* AS HE BREATHES.



NOT SO FAST. I HAVE CREATED A *MACHINE* THAT WILL *COMPENSATE* FOR AND *MELD TOGETHER* THE *DIVERSE MAGICS* THAT THE GUARDIAN WILL NEED TO CONTROL.

LET ME *SET IT UP* AND I'LL *DEMONSTRATE*.



WHIRRAJ

THE
SYMBOLS
ARE CAST!

NOW LET THE MAGIC
THAT OUR MASTER HAS GIVEN
ME SHRED THE BARRIER
BETWEEN AZEROTH AND THE
ELEMENTAL PLANE!

LET FISSURES
OPEN...

...AND, THROUGH MY
CONJURING,
LET ELEMENTALS
BE DRIVEN FORTH...

...INTO
AZEROTH...

...TO SERVE
THE WILL OF
THE OLD ONE!

ATTACK
WHERE OUR
MASTER
BIDS YOU!

BUT
SPEND YOUR
GREATEST
FURY AGAINST
THERAMORE!



MERYL, DID YOU HEAR THAT? WE NEED TO FIND THE **BASE OF ATESH** BEFORE THIS GOES ANY FURTHER. WE NEED A--

WEAPON. YES, I'VE FOUND IT.

I... SEE, BUT **WHERE--?**



YOU WILL FIND IT IN THE **BELLY OF THE CORPSE** OF THE OLD GOD **C'THUN**.

THE... **BELLY...?** I'LL FIND...? BUT WHERE--?



WRAP IT IN A **CLOTH** WHEN YOU BRING IT FORTH. DO NOT **TOUCH** IT OR TRY TO **USE** IT, FOR IT IS FILLED WITH **DEMONIC ENERGIES**.

I'LL **BE BACK.** I NEED TO **WARN** THE COUNCIL OF WHAT IS COMING...AND TELL THEM THE **WORDING** OF THE PROPHECY. BE CAREFUL.



MAGE, YOU ARE TOO **DRAINED** FOR ANOTHER TELEPORT JUST NOW. BORROW A **SMALL PORTION** OF MY **FEL STRENGTH**.

IT IS **UNWISE... BUT NECESSARY.** THE FATE OF **AZEROTH** MAY REST IN THE **BALANCE**.



MERYL, WHAT DID YOU SAY? ARE YOU **ALL RIGHT?**

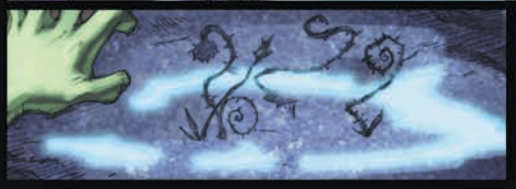
I'M... **FINE.**



THE **CHOICES** WE MAKE NOW...**YOURS, MINE, YOUR SON'S,** THE COUNCIL'S WILL MEAN THE **SALVATION** OF AZEROTH...OR ITS **DESTRUCTION.**

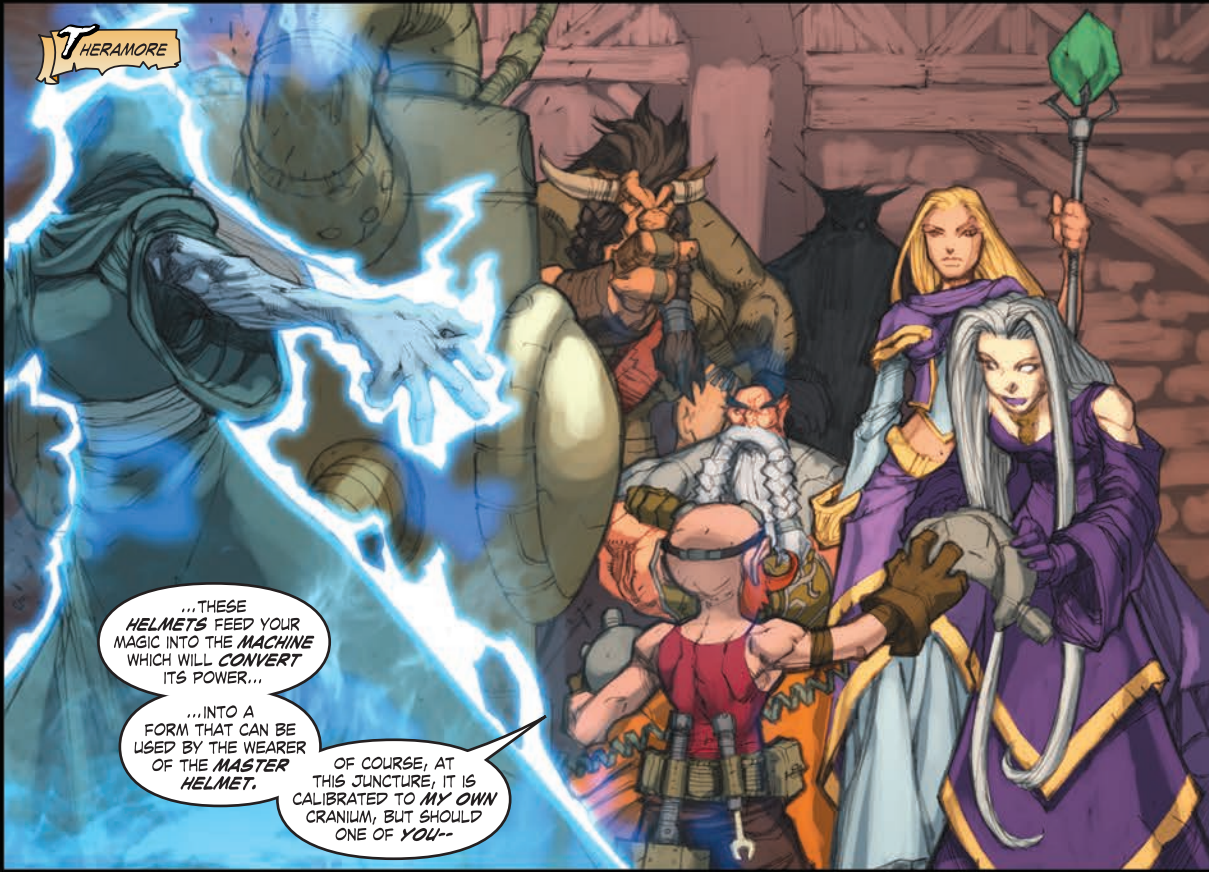


JUST... **FIND THE BASE.**



CHOICES...

THERAMORE



...THESE HELMETS FEED YOUR MAGIC INTO THE MACHINE WHICH WILL CONVERT ITS POWER...

...INTO A FORM THAT CAN BE USED BY THE WEARER OF THE MASTER HELMET.

OF COURSE, AT THIS JUNCTURE, IT IS CALIBRATED TO MY OWN CRANIUM, BUT SHOULD ONE OF YOU--



IF THIS IS THE EXTENT OF YOUR PROPOSED CONTRIBUTION, KRANK AXELJINK, IT WILL BE WORSE THAN USELESS AGAINST WHAT IS COMING!

BUT...IT IS A WAY TO EMPOWER THE GUARDIAN.



I ASSUME YOU'RE AN ADVOCATE OF THE BOY MEDIAN, BUT HE ISN'T HERE AND BESIDES--



MERYL, WHAT IS IT?

PREPARE YOURSELVES FOR BATTLE.

IN THE NAME OF THE OLD GOD, CHO'GALL HAS FORCED ELEMENTALS FROM THE ELEMENTAL PLANE...



...AND COMPELS THEM TO ATTACK THERAMORE.

LOOK OUT THE WINDOW!

EVEN NOW, THEY
ARE UPON US!



SHATTRATH CITY

I THANK YOU, KHADGAR, FOR YOUR HELP. I BELIEVE DALYNNIA WILL BE AN EXEMPLARY MEMBER OF OUR COUNCIL. WE NEED ARCANIC MAGIC REPRESENTED, IN ADDITION TO ALL THE OTHERS.

AND I THANK YOU, ALSO.

YOU HAVE ANSWERED MANY QUESTIONS FOR ME. MAYBE THE MOST IMPORTANT ONE OF ALL.

MEDITATE CAREFULLY ON YOUR DECISIONS, MED'AN, FOR THE LIGHT HAS GIVEN YOU GREAT GIFTS AND GREATER OPPORTUNITY.

CHOOSE WISELY, AND YOU WILL BECOME ONE OF AZEROTH'S GREATEST WEAPONS AGAINST EVIL.

BUT THE WRONG CHOICE COULD LEAD TO THAT WORLD'S DOOM.

CHOOSE WISELY, A'DAL? BUT HOW CAN I KNOW WHERE WISDOM LIES?

SHOULD I TURN AWAY FROM MEDIVH... OR ANSWER MY FATHER'S CALL TO JOIN HIM AT KARAZHAN?

CHAPTER 3







WE MADE IT THROUGH THE **DARK PORTAL** AND BACK INTO **AZEROTH** IN RECORD TIME, DALYNNIA! AND WITH YOU AS A MEMBER OF OUR COUNCIL!

JAINA AND THE OTHERS WILL BE PLEASED!

COME TO KARAZHAN, MY SON. FOLLOW MY VOICE. IT WILL SERVE AS A BEACON TO GUIDE YOU!

MY FATHER **MEDIHVH'S** VOICE AGAIN! IT SEEMS I'M DOOMED TO BE PLAGUED BY **WHISPERS**.

AND YET... THE **VISION--THE REQUEST--**SENT BY MY FATHER REQUIRES AN **ANSWER!** SHOULD I GO TO KARAZHAN OR NOT?

THE **WORLD** THINKS **MEDIHVH** WAS A **MONSTER!**

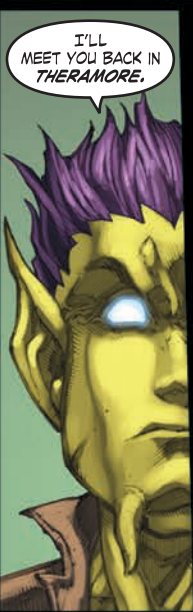
KHADGAR SAYS HE WAS **POSSESSED** BEFORE HE WAS BORN--THAT HE HAD **NO CHANCE** IN LIFE BUT **REDEEMED** HIMSELF IN DEATH.

THE **NAARU A'DAL** SAID THE LIGHT HAS GIVEN ME **GREAT GIFTS**, BUT THAT I MUST USE THEM **WISELY**, FOR THE WRONG CHOICE COULD **DOOM** OUR WORLD.

FINALLY, IT IS **CLEAR** WHAT I MUST DO. I MUST **KNOW** WHAT MY FATHER CAN TELL ME IF I AM TO MAKE THE **RIGHT CHOICE**, FOR THERE IS NO **WISDOM** WITHOUT **KNOWLEDGE**.



MARAAD, I HAVE SOMETHING **IMPORTANT** I MUST DO.



I'LL MEET YOU BACK IN **THERAMORE**.



MED'AN, DON'T! WHERE ARE YOU GOING? **WAIT!**



MED'AN!!



I AM *HERE*, FATHER. WHAT DO YOU WANT TO TELL ME?

FIRST, YOU MUST KNOW THAT I AM *NOT* *MEDIVH*...

...BUT HIS *AVATAR*, THE *VESSEL* OF HIS REMAINING POWER.



I HAVE BEEN WAITING FOR MANY YEARS TO DELIVER THE *MESSAGE* HE LEFT FOR YOU, BEFORE HIS FINAL DEPARTURE FROM AZEROTH.





IT IS **IMPORTANT**, MY SON, THAT YOU SHOULD KNOW THE **TRUE MEANING** OF THE **GAME** YOU ARE ABOUT TO PLAY.

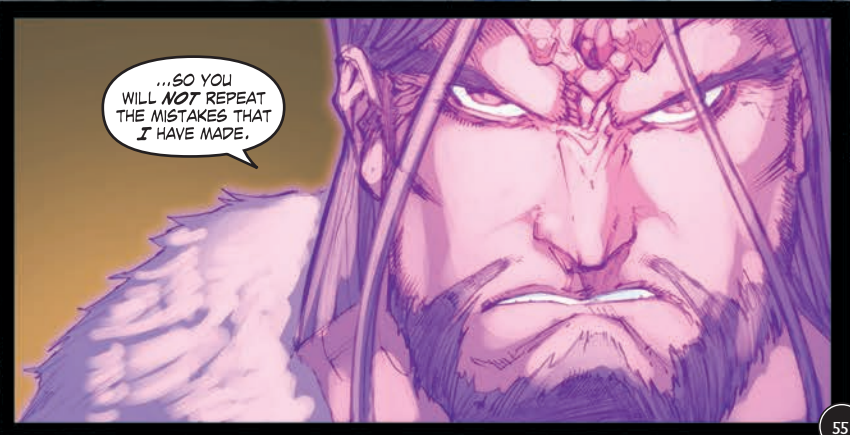


AND FOR THAT, YOU MUST KNOW YOUR **HISTORY...**




WHAT **MAGIC** IS THIS?

HARD CHOICES



...SO YOU WILL **NOT** REPEAT THE MISTAKES THAT I'VE MADE.



"IT BEGINS WITH YOUR GRANDMOTHER, MY MOTHER AEGWYNN, WHEN SHE WAS THE GUARDIAN OF THE COUNCIL OF TIRISFAL.

"SHE REFUSED TO SURRENDER HER BORROWED POWER AND END HER TENURE. INSTEAD, SHE TRANSFERRED THAT POWER TO ME, HER UNBORN BABE.

"IN HER PRIDE AND ARROGANCE, SHE BELIEVED THAT HER SON WOULD SAVE THE WORLD.



"SHE DIDN'T KNOW THAT, BEFORE I WAS BORN, I HAD BEEN POSSESSED BY THE CORRUPTED TITAN SARGERAS, WHOM AEGWYNN BELIEVED SHE HAD DEFEATED.

"AEGWYNN GAVE ME TO MY FATHER, NIELAS ARAN, TO RAISE.

"I CAME INTO THIS POWER ABRUPTLY WHEN I CAME OF AGE AND SARGERAS INSTANTLY AWAKENED WITHIN ME.

"THE BACKLASH OF THE POWER KILLED MY FATHER, WHILE I FELL INTO A COMA THAT LASTED TWENTY YEARS.

"WHEN I FINALLY AWOKE, I WARRIED WITH SARGERAS. AT TIMES, IN MY OWN ARROGANCE, I BELIEVED THAT I HAD CONQUERED HIM.

"BUT SARGERAS WAS THE STRONGER AND IN THE END, HE OWNED ME, BODY AND SOUL. I WAS HIS VESSEL.



"SARGERAS LED ME TO CREATE THE DARK PORTAL THAT BROUGHT THE ORCS TO AZEROTH. DEATH AND DESTRUCTION FOLLOWED.






"GARONA--WHO WAS TO BECOME YOUR MOTHER-- WAS SENT TO ME AS AN EMISSARY BY HER ORC MASTERS.

A muscular man with long brown hair and a brown tunic is shown from the chest up, looking towards a smaller, green-skinned woman with long braided hair. She is standing in a stone chamber with arches in the background.

"THOUGH SHE WAS UNAWARE OF IT THEN, IT WAS CLEAR TO ME THAT SHE WAS OF MIXED ORC AND DRAENEI BLOOD.

"SHE WAS ALSO UNAWARE OF MY POSSESSION. SHE DIDN'T KNOW IT WAS I WHO HAD OPENED THE DARK PORTAL. SHE KNEW ONLY THAT SHE CAME TO CARE FOR ME.

"AND I FOR HER.



"IN A SECRET MOMENT OF DEFIANCE-- WHILE SARGERAS' ATTENTION WAS TURNED ELSEWHERE-- I FATHERED YOU.

A close-up of the man and Garona embracing. The man is on the right, looking at Garona on the left. They are both looking down with serious expressions.

"SOON AFTER, MY APPRENTICE, KHADGAR, AND GARONA LEARNED THAT I WAS POSSESSED AND WHAT I HAD DONE.

"THEY TOLD KING LLANE, WHO DISMISSED THE NOTION. WITH ANDUIN LOTHAR, THE KING'S CHAMPION AND MY CHILDHOOD FRIEND, THEY RETURNED TO STOP ME.



"KHADGAR--WHOM I HAD AGED PREMATURELY AS WE FOUGHT--STRUCK."

An older man with a long white beard and a brown robe is shown from the chest up. He is holding a sword and looking towards a large, swirling purple portal in the background.

I THINK THAT THE HUMAN PART OF YOU KEPT OTHERS AROUND... AS A BACKUP. AS A PLAN SO THAT WHEN YOU FINALLY WENT MAD, YOUR FRIENDS COULD PUT YOU DOWN.

"EVEN AS HIS BLADE PIERCED MY HEART, HE REGRETTED WHAT HE WAS FORCED TO DO. HE... UNDERSTOOD... WHAT I WANTED.



"THE POWER OF SARGERAS ROSE WITHIN ME AND ATTACKED.

A man in a dark, hooded cloak stands in the center of a large, swirling purple portal. The portal is set within a stone structure.



"BUT TOO LATE.

A man in a blue and gold tunic is shown from the waist up, fighting a large, green-skinned creature. The creature is holding a sword and looking towards the man. The background is a stone wall.

"AND ANDUIN LOTHAR FREED ME AT LAST.

"I RETURNED, AND AT THAT POINT, I BECAME A TRUE GUARDIAN OF TIRISFAL, AT LAST."

"THROUGH MY REMAINING POWER, I WAS ABLE TO FORGE THE UNION THAT DEFEATED THE BURNING LEGION AT MOUNT HYJAL."



I AM GONE NOW. ONLY THIS, MY LAST ECHO, REMAINS ON AZEROTH.



THE KNOWLEDGE I HAVE KEPT FOR YOU--HIDDEN WITHIN THIS ILLUSION--IS NOW YOURS.

THE OLD GAME IS ENDED. A NEW GAME TO ABOUT TO BEGIN.





BUT FATHER... WHAT SHALL I DO?



FOR YOUR MOTHER AND I, OUR DESTINIES WERE FIXED BEFORE WE WERE BORN. I WOULD SPARE MY ONLY SON SUCH BONPAGE.



THIS KNOWLEDGE... THIS POWER... IS YOUR BIRTHRIGHT, TO USE FREELY, IN ANY WAY YOU WISH.

YOU ARE UNIQUE. AND YOUR PATH AND DESTINY WILL BE OF YOUR OWN CHOOSING!

THAT... IS MY GREATEST GIFT... TO YOU, MY SON.



USE IT WISELY...



"...IN WHATEVER GAME YOU CHOOSE TO PLAY, FAREWELL."



THEN I
WILL PLAY
THE GAME
BEFORE
ME.

I
WILL FACE
CHO'GALL!

*SEND OUT
YOUR MINIONS,
OGRE!*



IN THE
HOURS TO
COME, WE WILL
FIGHT...



...AND, WITH
THE HELP OF
THE LIGHT, I WILL
DESTROY
YOU!

TELL YOUR MASTER
THAT IS HOW I WILL
*ANSWER HIS DARK
WHISPERS!*



*LOOK
FOR ME ON
THE DUNES OF
SILITHUS!*



S ENTRY POINT AT DUSTWALLOW MARSH

ELEMENTALS! WE'RE UNDER ATTACK!

THEY'RE MOVING PAST US... THROUGH US...



"...TOWARD THERAMORE ISLE."



WHAT'S THAT NOISE?

ELEMENTALS, KRANK! MORE THAN I HAVE EVER SEEN IN ONE PLACE. THIS IS ANOTHER OF THE OLD ONE'S GAMBITS!



THEY HAVE THE KEEP SURROUNDED.

IN MOMENTS THEY WILL BE UPON US!

STKS! YOU ALL SEEM TO HAVE FORGOTTEN MY INVENTION...

...THOUGH YOU HOLD THE HELMETS THAT WILL LINK YOU TO IT IN YOUR HANDS!



PLACE THEM ON YOUR HEADS! HURRY!

NOW, FOCUS YOUR ENERGIES THROUGH THE WIRES--



ENOUGH! SELDOM HAVE I HEARD A MORE BONEHEADED SCHEME, EVEN FROM A GNOME!



WE HAVE LITTLE TO LOSE HERE, MERYL..

AND, IF IT WORKS, THERE IS MUCH TO GAIN!

I SAY IT IS WORTH A TRY.



EXCELLENT! I WILL CLIMB ONTO THE WINDOW LEDGE AND FACE OUR ATTACKERS!

NOW, CHANNEL YOUR POWER INTO THE MACHINERIES!

IT WILL MELD YOUR DIFFERENT FORMS OF MAGIC INTO ONE POWERFUL BLAST--AND I WILL USE IT TO SMITE OUR ENEMIES!

YES! THAT'S THE WAY! I CAN FEEL THE POWER BUILDING...



...TO A CRESCENDO--

--NOW!



DAMN FOOL GNOME! I KNEW THAT WOULD HAPPEN!

KRANK!

THE ELEMENTALS ARE UPON US!





IT IS AS I TOLD YOU! MACHINERY WAS NOT THE ANSWER.

WE HAD BETTER FIND A WAY TO JOIN OUR FORCES OR THERE WILL BE NO COUNCIL OR GUARDIAN...



...AND AS SURELY AS NIGHT FOLLOWS DAY, AZEROTH WILL FALL.



BUT, MERYL, THERE IS NO TIME TO CONSECRATE THE COUNCIL! WE MUST SIMPLY FIGHT THESE BEINGS AS BEST WE CAN!



LIGHTNING, HEED MY CALL!



ROOTS-- ARISE! DRAG DOWN THE ATTACKER!



AEGWYNN-- TAKE A KNIFE! EVEN ROHAN MAY NOT BE ABLE TO SHIELD US!



BY THE SUNWELL--AN ARMY OF ELEMENTALS! IS THAT WHAT THE COUNCIL IS FACING?!



MORE OF THE OLD GOD'S MINIONS! WE MUST GIVE WHAT AID WE CAN!



MARAAD-- WHERE IS MED'AN?!

HE TELEPORTED OFF HIS MOUNT AND DISAPPEARED! I DON'T KNOW WHERE HE WENT.



WE'RE UNDER ATTACK! MARAAD, JUMP! I'LL SLOW OUR DESCENT!

SO UAAARK

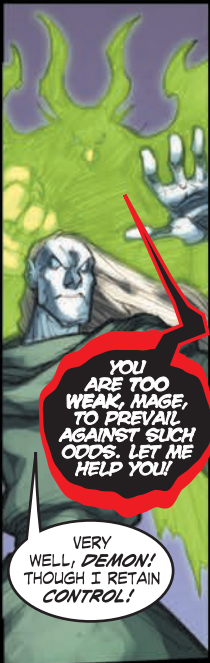


REARRGH!



HOLD ON, HAMULL! I'LL HEAL YOU!

WE ARE TOO FEW TO WITHSTAND THIS--AAK!



YOU ARE TOO WEAK, MAGE, TO PREVAIL AGAINST SUCH ODDS. LET ME HELP YOU!

VERY WELL, **DEMON!** THOUGH I RETAIN CONTROL!



OF COURSE YOU DO.

WE WILL USE THE INJURED GRYPHON'S LIFE FORCE TO POWER OUR FEL MAGIC. THE POOR CREATURE IS NEARLY DEAD, ANYWAY.



MERYL-- WHAT HAVE YOU DONE?!

SHRAKHOOM

WHAT I MUST! WITH THE WANING OF ARCANIC POWER ACROSS OUR WORLD, I HAD LITTLE CHOICE!



I WILL SACRIFICE WHAT I MUST, IF ONLY AZEROTH CAN BE SAVED!

THOUGH, WITH **MED'AN GONE**, IT MAY ALREADY BE TOO LATE!



TOO LATE FOR WHAT--?



WHAT HORRORS HAVE CHO'GALL AND HIS MASTER BROUGHT UPON US NOW?!

WINGIRAJ

THE SPELL
NEARS COMPLETION! THE
GAME IS OURS!

STAND BACK,
YOU FOLLOWERS OF
TWILIGHT'S HAMMER...
BEYOND MY SPHERE
OF RECKONING!

FOR SOON
THE ANUBISATHS WILL
AWAKEN...AND THERE
WILL BE AN EVOCATION
OF POWER SUCH AS THIS
WORLD HAS NEVER
SEEN!

CHO'GALL IS
DISTRACTED BY
HIS CONJURING AND
THE GUARDS HAVE
WITHDRAWN INTO
THE DESERT.

THIS IS MY
CHANCE TO
ENTER C'THUN'S
CHAMBER...

...AND
RETRIEVE THE
BASE OF
ATIESH.

MERYL
SAYS I WILL
FIND WHAT I
SEEK IN THE
STOMACH...

...OF THE
DEAD GOD
C'THUN.

THE STENCH
IS TORTURE...
AND GETS WORSE
THE FARTHER IN
I TRAVEL...

...YET I
WOULD FACE
ALL THE
BURNING LEGION
TO AID MY
SON.

AND
AGAINST
CHO'GALL,
WE MAY
NEED THIS
WEAPON!



LET ICE
COUNTER
FIRE!

HAMUUL
HAS FALLEN! MAY
THE POWER OF
THE LIGHT HEAL
HIM--

LIGHTNING
STRIKE!
SHATTER OUR
ENEMIES!



LET MY ARCANIC
POWER ROIL!
STRIKE
AT OUR
ENEMIES!

LIGHT, BLESS
OUR EFFORTS TO
DRIVE OFF THOSE
WHO WOULD
DESTROY US.



DRIVE
THEM OFF!
KILL THEM,
BOY!

THEY ARE CHAOS
PERSONIFIED, MERYL,
ENSLAVED TO THE OLD
ONE, BUT THEY DO NOT
SERVE THEIR MASTER
WILLINGLY.

THEY SHOULD
BE FREED, NOT
DESTROYED!



A WISE CHILD!
I DO NOT
SERVE YOU
WILLINGLY EITHER,
MAGE. YOU ARE
WEAKENING, YOUR
RESERVES OF
ARCANIC POWER
NEARLY AT
AN END.

SOON I
WILL BE THE
MASTER!
AND THEN--



NO, DEMON!
THAT WILL
NOT HAPPEN
WHILE--



AAK!

MERYL!

JAINA!
F-FEED ME! AN...
YOUR POWER!
YOU...KNOW THE
RITUAL!



YES! I--
ORUM
NO'BENDIR! ORUM
NO'MALLAH!*

*POWER I HAVE!
POWER I SHARE!



JAINA HAS BEGUN THE RITUAL
OF SHARING! BUT WILL IT UNIFY
OUR DIVERSE MAGICS?

WE CAN
BUT TRY! IT
IS OUR ONLY
CHANCE!

VOHL
LIM ARANAR...
AN'DELAHNA!*

*OUT OF MANY...INTO ONE!



YES!
MAGICS
OF AZEROTH,
DEFEND
US!



LIGHT,
GUIDE MY
HAND!

WAKT-

WAKT-



AKKT!

BAH WROO



ELEMENTALS!
FELLED BY A
FEARSOME
BLAST!



BUT
THE BATTLE
IS NOT YET
OVER...

...AND THE
LAD WHO
WIELDED THAT
FEARSOME
POWER HAS
FALLEN!



BROLL!
IT'S GOOD
TO HAVE YOU
HERE!

SPIRITS OF
GROWING THINGS--
ARISE! SEND UP
YOUR ROOTS TO
BIND AND CRUSH
OUR FOES...



"...AND DRAG THEIR **SHATTERED SHARDS** BENEATH THE EARTH AND SEA!"



WHAT'S HAPPENING HERE? I GOT YOUR MESSAGE, JAINA... BUT THIS-?!



WELCOME, BROLL, MY BROTHER.



BROLL! OH, BROLL! I'M SO **GLAD** YOU'RE HERE! I HAVE SO MUCH TO **TELL** YOU! YOU GOT BACK JUST IN **TIME!** BUT WHERE--?

HAMULL AND I WERE AMONG THE DRUIDS FANDRAL SUMMONED TO BOLSTER THE WORLD TREE TELDRASSIL'S **HEALTH.**

FANDRAL SAYS THE **TREE IS RECOVERING** RAPIDLY, AND THAT HE CAN MANAGE THE REST ALONE. HE GAVE ME **LEAVE** TO COME HERE, BUT--

--WHAT WAS THAT **BLAST...?**

JAINA, WHAT'S **GOING ON?**

SOME OF US **FED MED'AN** POWER. HE **USED** IT... BUT THE **FEEDBACK** FROM THE SPELL **FELLED** HIM.

WE JUST... **SHOVED** THE POWER AT HIM. HE HADN'T BEEN PROPERLY **PREPARED** TO ACCEPT IT BUT HE **USED** IT! **BRILLIANTLY!** STILL...

THE **FEEDBACK PROBLEM** IS BUT ONE REASON WHY A FORMAL **INVESTITURE** CEREMONY IS NEEDED TO **CONSECRATE** A **GUARDIAN.**

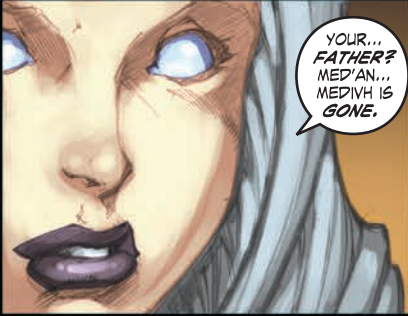
AND SOON...

AH, YOU'RE AWAKE. THE FULL COUNCIL IS MEETING NOW, MED'AN. DO YOU REMEMBER WHAT HAPPENED?

YES. ALL OF IT... I THINK YOU'RE MY GRANDMOTHER!

I...YES. HOW...HOW DID YOU--?

MY FATHER TOLD ME.



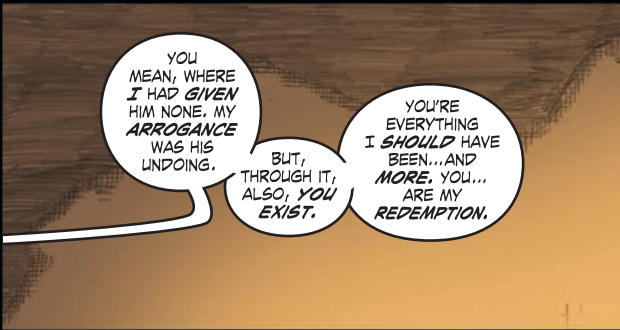
YOUR... FATHER? MED'AN... MEDIVH IS GONE.

HE...SENT ME A VISION...IN A DREAM. HE ASKED ME TO COME TO HIM. AT FIRST I DIDN'T WANT TO BUT--

--IN THE END, I WENT TO KARAZHAN.

HE LEFT ME A...A SORT OF MESSAGE. BOTH KNOWLEDGE AND POWER. HE... WANTED TO EXPLAIN.

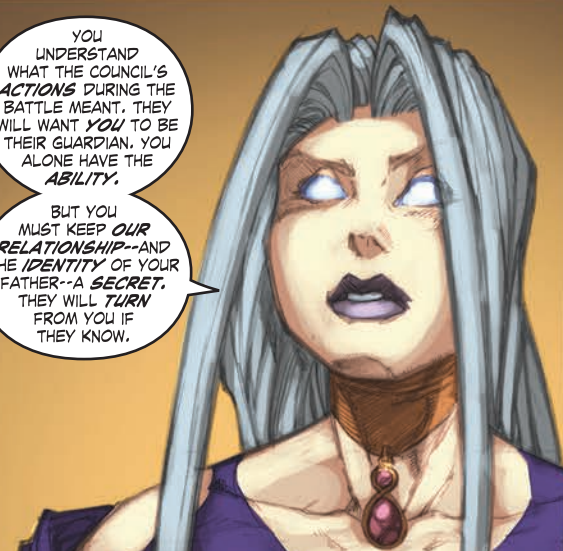
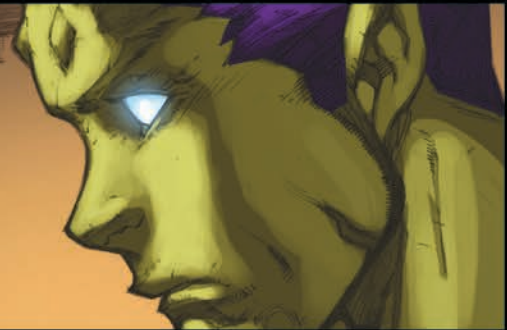
HE WANTED ME TO UNDERSTAND WHERE I CAME FROM...AND TO HAVE CHOICES WHERE HE HAD NONE.



YOU MEAN, WHERE I HAD GIVEN HIM NONE. MY ARROGANCE WAS HIS UNDOING.

BUT, THROUGH IT, ALSO, YOU EXIST.

YOU'RE EVERYTHING I SHOULD HAVE BEEN...AND MORE. YOU... ARE MY REDEMPTION.



YOU UNDERSTAND WHAT THE COUNCIL'S ACTIONS DURING THE BATTLE MEANT. THEY WILL WANT YOU TO BE THEIR GUARDIAN. YOU ALONE HAVE THE ABILITY.

BUT YOU MUST KEEP OUR RELATIONSHIP--AND THE IDENTITY OF YOUR FATHER--A SECRET. THEY WILL TURN FROM YOU IF THEY KNOW.



MAYBE, BUT WHEN THEY SHARED POWER WITH ME, I FELT A... CONNECTION. I THINK THEY...MOSTLY...WILL UNDERSTAND.



I HAD ENOUGH OF SECRETS AND LIES, GRANDMOTHER. THE COUNCIL MUST KNOW WHO AND WHAT I AM...AND ACCEPT IT...IF I AM TO BE THEIR GUARDIAN.



AND IN A NEARBY CHAMBER...

THIS IS THE TEXT OF THE PROPHECY SCROLL THAT FUELS THE OGRE CHO'GALL'S MADNESS...

"WHEN THE CHILD OF THREE REALMS BECOMES AS LIGHT, THE ANCIENT POWER WILL BE RELEASED."

"THE EARTH WILL RISE UP IN ANSWER, AND ALL WILL BE MADNESS. A NEW DAY WILL DAWN, BRINGING WITH IT CHAOS OR PEACE..."



I WOULD CHOOSE PEACE. BUT, BEFORE THAT, THERE MUST BE A TIME OF WAR, FOR CHO'GALL WON'T ABANDON HIS PLAN TO RELEASE THE OLD GOD BACK INTO AZEROTH...

...AND TO USE ME TO ACCOMPLISH IT.

WITH YOUR HELP--AND THE POWER THAT MY FATHER BEQUEATHED ME--I WILL TRY TO STOP HIM.



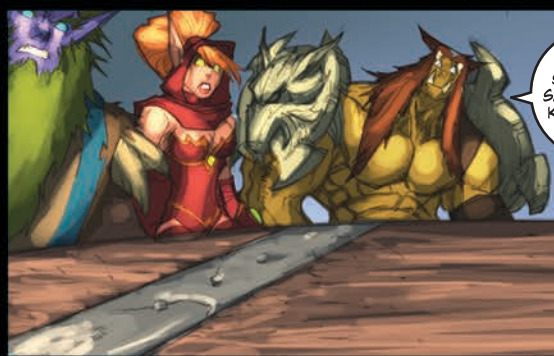
MED'AN ALONE AMONG YOU HAS THE ABILITY TO DO WHAT MUST BE DONE, FOR HE IS MY GRANDSON, THE SON OF MY SON MEDIVH.



AND MY GRANDNEPHEW, THE SON OF MY NICE, GARONA WHO IS HALF-DRAENEI BY BIRTH.

AND THE MAN I RAISED FROM INFANCY. HE HAS FACED HARDSHIP AND HARD TRUTHS WITH COURAGE.

HE SHOULD BE THE NEW GUARDIAN, THE REPOSITORY OF YOUR POWER.

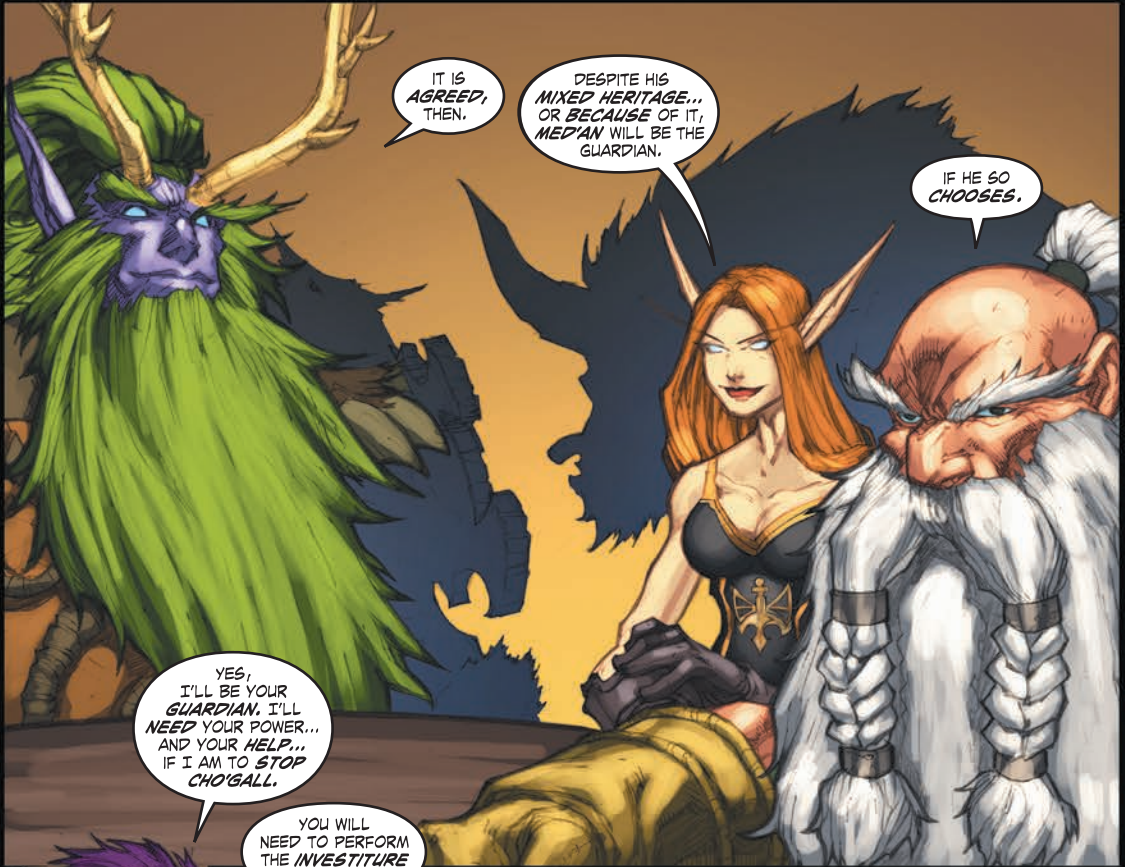


HIS MIXED HERITAGE IS HIS STRENGTH. YOU ALL SAW HIM HANDLE THE KIND OF POWER THAT DESTROYED A TOWER.



ONCE-BITTER ENEMIES MELDED INTO ONE HARMONIOUS WHOLE. MED'AN IS THE RIGHT CHOICE.





IT IS AGREED, THEN.

DESPITE HIS MIXED HERITAGE... OR BECAUSE OF IT, MED'AN WILL BE THE GUARDIAN.

IF HE SO CHOOSES.

YES, I'LL BE YOUR GUARDIAN. I'LL NEED YOUR POWER... AND YOUR HELP... IF I AM TO STOP CHO'GALL.

YOU WILL NEED TO PERFORM THE INVESTITURE CEREMONY.



BUT BEFORE THAT, YOU WILL NEED TO CREATE A SAFE PLACE--AWAY FROM CHO'GALL'S ATTACKS--FOR THE COUNCIL TO RESIDE.

THE EARLIER COUNCIL HAD THE GLADES OF TIRISFAL... BUT THOSE ARE NO LONGER AN OPTION.



NO, VALEERA. AS YOU KNOW, I HAVE TAKEN ON THE DEMON, KATHRA'NATIR, WHO STROVE TO POSSESS YOU.

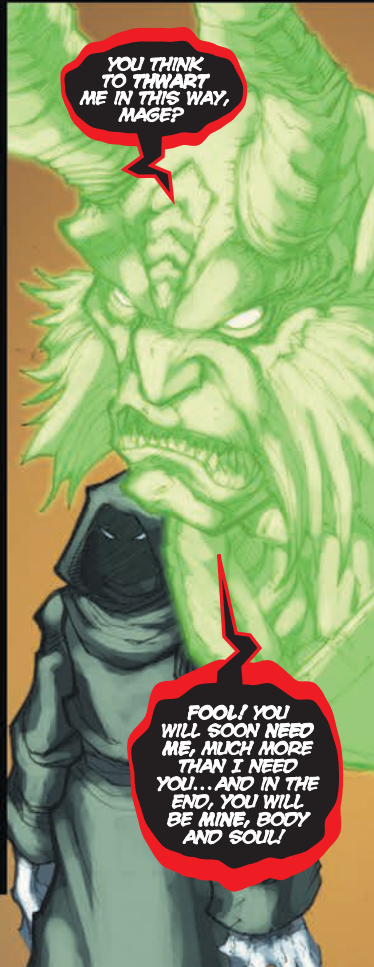
HE IS GROWING IN POWER. CONTROLLING HIM HAS BECOME... CHALLENGING.



I CANNOT ALLOW HIM ACCESS THROUGH ME TO THE COUNCIL... FOR I HAVE WIELDED FEL MAGIC.



MERYL, WON'T YOU, ALSO, BE ON THE COUNCIL?



YOU THINK TO THWART ME IN THIS WAY, MAGEP?

FOOL! YOU WILL SOON NEED ME, MUCH MORE THAN I NEED YOU... AND IN THE END, YOU WILL BE MINE, BODY AND SOUL!



WHN'QIRAJ

COME, MED'AN!

THE WINDS HAVE CARRIED YOUR WORDS TO ME AND MY MASTER HAS HEARD YOUR BOAST!



ALL IS IN READINESS! I HAVE PREPARED THE WAY FOR HIM TO EMBRACE YOU!

KNOW THAT CHO'GALL IS WAITING TO MEET YOU ON THE DUNES OF SILITHUS.

CHAPTER 4







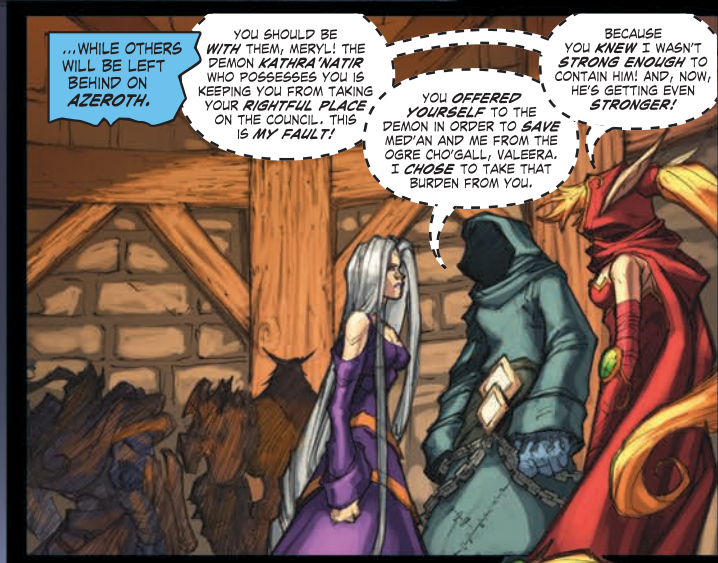
THERAMORE KEEP HAS BEEN DAMAGED BUT THE SPIRIT OF ITS DENIZENS REMAINS UNBROKEN.

WITHIN ITS SHATTERED TOWER, **JAINA PROUDMOORE** BEGINS THE CEREMONY THAT WILL MOVE THE NEWLY FORMED **COUNCIL** TO A POCKET OUTSIDE OF TIME AND SPACE...



MAL DAL, ELEYNA BORE, MEN VENL; ASHUL'O FALLAN!*

*TIME CRAWLS, PATHWAY OPENS, WALL CRUMBLES; THE BARRIER IS BROKEN!



...WHILE OTHERS WILL BE LEFT BEHIND ON **AZEROTH**.

YOU SHOULD BE WITH THEM, MERYL! THE DEMON **KATHRA'WATIR** WHO POSSESSES YOU IS KEEPING YOU FROM TAKING YOUR **RIGHTFUL PLACE** ON THE COUNCIL. THIS IS MY FAULT!

YOU OFFERED YOURSELF TO THE DEMON IN ORDER TO SAVE MED'AN AND ME FROM THE OGRE CHO'GALL, VALEERA. I CHOSE TO TAKE THAT BURDEN FROM YOU.

BECAUSE YOU **KNEW** I WASN'T STRONG ENOUGH TO CONTAIN HIM! AND, NOW, HE'S GETTING EVEN STRONGER!



IT IS TRUE THAT I NO LONGER CAN ALLOW MYSELF TO JOIN THE COUNCIL.

BUT THEY WILL SPEND THE UPCOMING BATTLE IN PROTECTED **MEDITATION**. WHILE I--AT MY ADVANCED AGE--HAVE COME TO PREFER ACTION TO CONTEMPLATION.

AH! THE COUNCIL HAS ENTERED THEIR **METAPHYSICAL CONSTRUCT**.



THE TIME HAS COME FOR ME TO JOURNEY TO **AHN'QIRAJ**. DURING SUCH A BATTLE, EVEN A **GUARDIAN** MAY NEED ASSISTANCE...

...AND **GARONA** WILL BE THERE, WAITING FOR ME.

I WOULD TRAVEL THERE WITH YOU, MERYL.

AS WOULD I.



COME, THEN! DEMON, LEND ME YOUR **POWER!**

WE WILL BE WAITING WHEN MED'AN ARRIVES, FOLLOWING HIS RITE OF **INDUCTION**...

"...WITHIN THE
TWISTING
NETHER."

THIS IS
TRULY A PLACE OF
MARVELS.

WE MAY *LINGER*
HERE, CONTEMPLATING
ITS *WONDERS*, WHEN
OUR WORK IS DONE,
BROLL.

BUT FOR NOW,
WE *MUST* FOCUS ON THE
CEREMONY THAT WILL UNITE
US AS A *COUNCIL* AND
INSTALL *MED'AN* AS OUR
GUARDIAN.

ARMAGEDDON



THE *RITUAL* IS AN ANCIENT ONE, ITS *WORDS* SPOKEN IN THE OLD TONGUE, AS THEY WERE FIRST INVOKED *AGES* AGO...



ORLIM
NO'BENDIR!*

*POWER WE HAVE!

ORLIM
NO'MALLAH!*

*POWER WE SHARE!

VOHL UM
ARANAR...*

*OUT OF MANY...

...AN'DELAHNA!*

*...INTO ONE!



THIS IS...
IS MORE THAN I
EXPECTED.



I'M LINKED
TO YOU ALL. I CAN
FEEL YOUR PRESENCE
AS YOU SHARE YOUR
POWER AND YOUR
KNOWLEDGE WITH
ME.

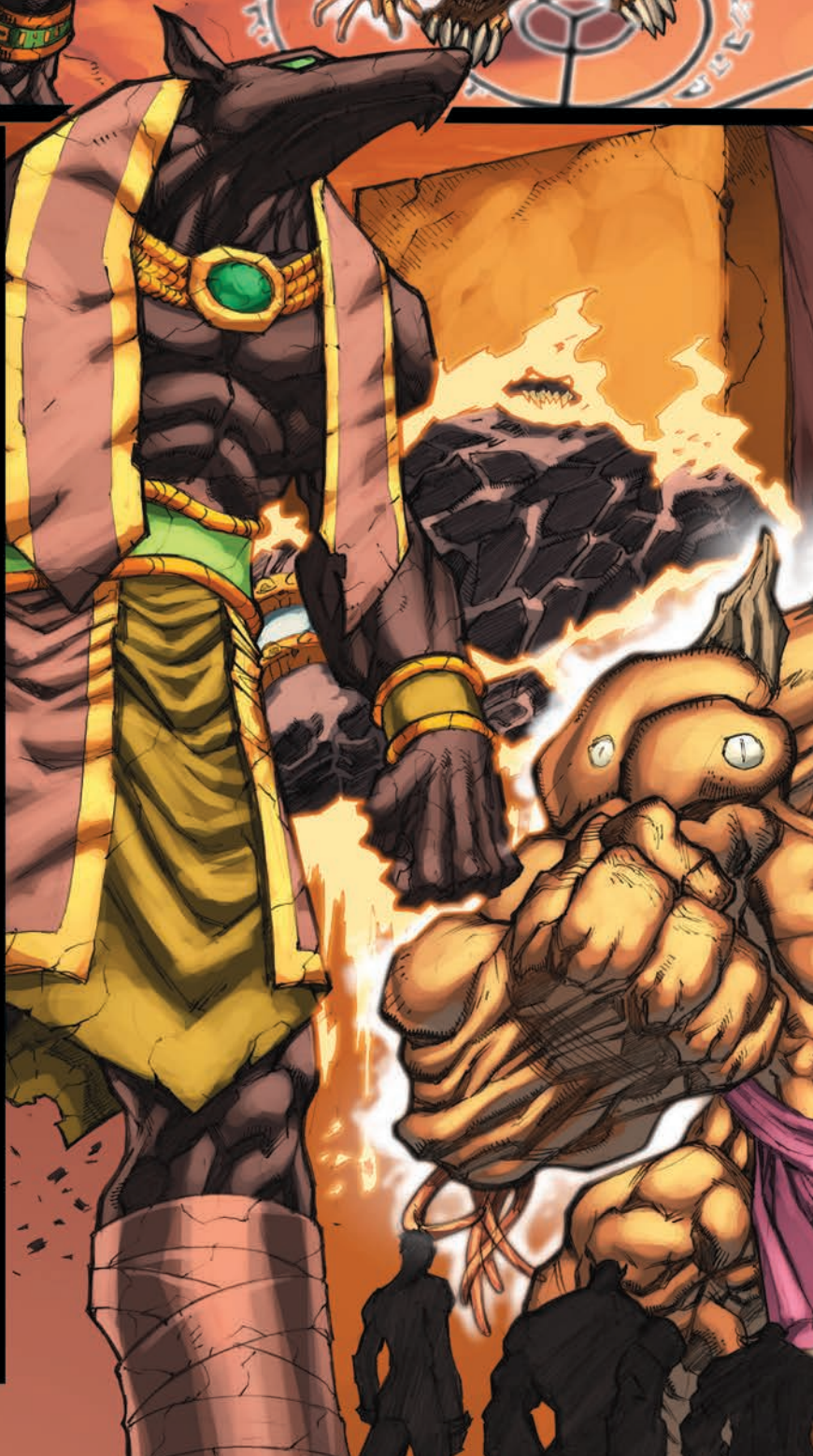
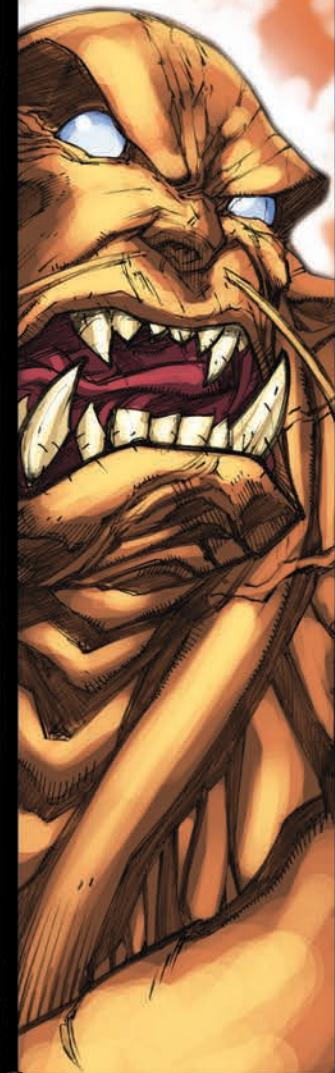
I... THANK YOU
FOR THE GIFT OF YOUR
TRUST. AND, WHATEVER
HAPPENS, I PROMISE I
WILL DO MY BEST TO
USE OUR POWERS
WISELY.


AND NOW,
I MUST GO. CHO'GALL
AND HIS DARK HOSTS
AWAIT ME...

"...IN AHN'QIRAJ."

AWAKEN, ANUBISATHS!
FOR YOU ARE THE LENSES
THAT WILL FOCUS THE OLD
ONE'S POWER.

FOLLOWERS
OF THE TWILIGHT'S
HAMMER! UNFURL THE
BANNERS! IT IS TIME TO
DECLARE OURSELVES
BEFORE THE
WORLD!





COME FORTH, YOU
ELEMENTALS! FOR YOU
ARE THE WEAPONS
THAT WILL STAY
THE HANDS OF OUR
ENEMIES!



FOR THIS
DAY, WE UNLEASH
LIVING MADNESS,
AND THE BONES OF
AZEROTH WILL BE
CRUSHED BENEATH
ITS RULE!

TWILIGHT'S HAMMER!!!
TWILIGHT'S HAMMER!!!
MAY CHAOS REIGN
FOREVERMORE!

WEARBY...

A LAVA ELEMENTAL TAKES UP GUARD DUTY WITHIN THE VAST STONE STRUCTURE KNOWN AS C'THUN'S CHAMBER...

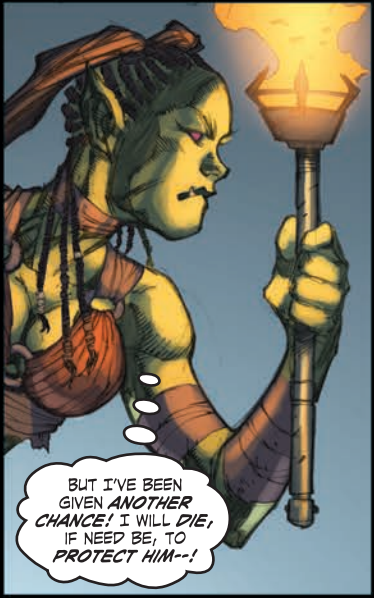
...WHILE WITHIN THE CAVELIKE CORPSE OF THE OLD GOD C'THUN, GARONA SEARCHES FOR AN ALMOST FORGOTTEN TREASURE...

...A REMNANT OF THE MISSING STAFF OF THE DEAD SORCERER MEDIVH.



MY ONLY CONTRIBUTIONS TO MEDIVH'S LIFE, THUS FAR, WERE GIVING BIRTH TO HIM...

...AND, THEN, ABSENTING MYSELF LEST HE BE TAINTED BY MY FATE.

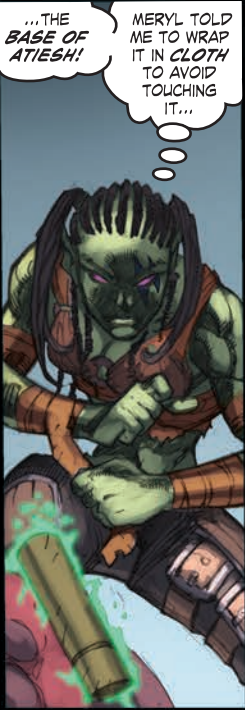


BUT I'VE BEEN GIVEN ANOTHER CHANCE! I WILL DIE, IF NEED BE, TO PROTECT HIM--!



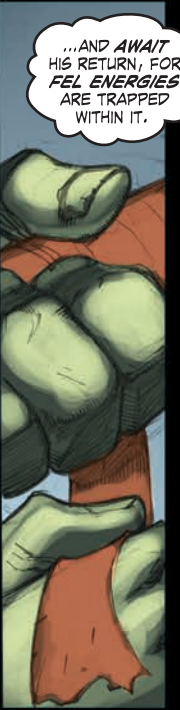
THERE...

...GLINTING IN THE TORCHLIGHT...



...THE BASE OF ATIESH!

MERYL TOLD ME TO WRAP IT IN CLOTH TO AVOID TOUCHING IT...



...AND AWAIT HIS RETURN, FOR FEL ENERGIES ARE TRAPPED WITHIN IT.



BUT WHAT IF MERYL HASN'T RETURNED?

SHOULD I OBEY HIM...OR SHOULD I TRY TO USE THE BASE AGAINST CHO'GALL MYSELF...?

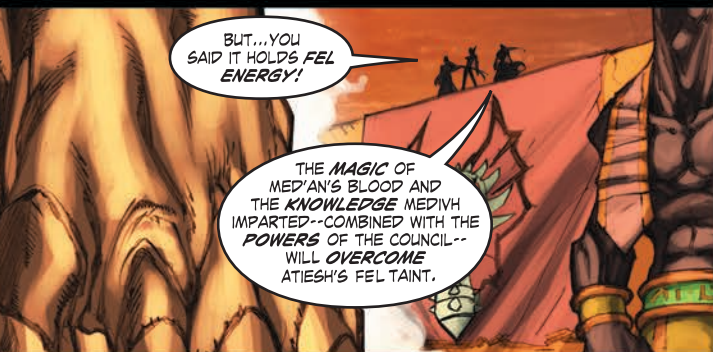


OH, YUCK! **RE**MIND ME AGAIN WHY I WANTED TO **COME** HERE...?

IT SEEMS MY **GRANDSON** HAS YET TO ARRIVE.



CHO'GALL IS MOVING FASTER THAN I THOUGHT. WE'LL NEED THE **BASE OF ATIESH** IF WE ARE TO HAVE ANY HOPE OF AIDING THE BOY.



BUT...YOU SAID IT HOLDS **FEL ENERGY!**

THE **MAGIC** OF MED'AN'S BLOOD AND THE **KNOWLEDGE** MEDIVH IMPARTED--COMBINED WITH THE **POWERS** OF THE COUNCIL-- WILL **OVERCOME** ATIESH'S FEL TAIN.



SO WHERE IS **GARONA?**



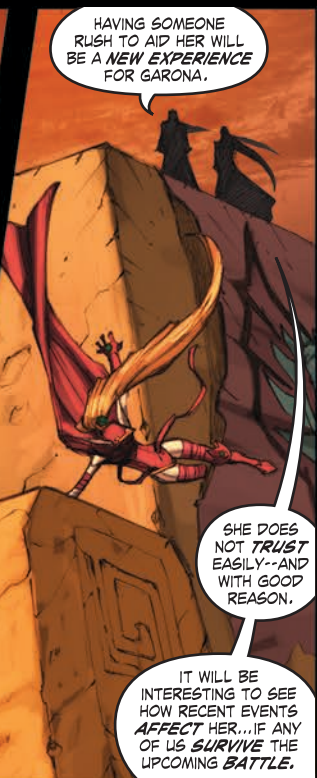
AH. SHE HAS THE **BASE...** AND IS ABOUT TO EMERGE INTO **C'THUN'S CHAMBER.**



WAIT! **CHO'GALL** HAS POSTED A **GUARD!** AN **ELEMENTAL!**

GARONA MAY NOT KNOW. SHE'LL NEED MY HELP!

KEEP WATCH FOR **MED'AN!** **GARONA** AND I WILL BE BACK **SOON!**



HAVING SOMEONE RUSH TO AID HER WILL BE A **NEW EXPERIENCE** FOR **GARONA.**

SHE DOES NOT **TRUST** EASILY--AND WITH GOOD REASON.

IT WILL BE INTERESTING TO SEE HOW RECENT EVENTS **AFFECT** HER...IF ANY OF US **SURVIVE** THE UPCOMING **BATTLE.**



THAT HEAT AND SMELL!



GRHHHA!

WHAT--?



GARONA! MOVE!

LHHHH!

KRAKK



I'LL EXPLAIN LATER.

THIS WAY! RUN! IF WE'RE LUCKY IT WILL BRING THE CHAMBER DOWN ON ITSELF...

...AND NOT US?



BAHROO

KAKOUM



WELL, YES. THAT WAS THE IDEA.

THANK YOU, VALEERA. MERYL HAS RETURNED...?

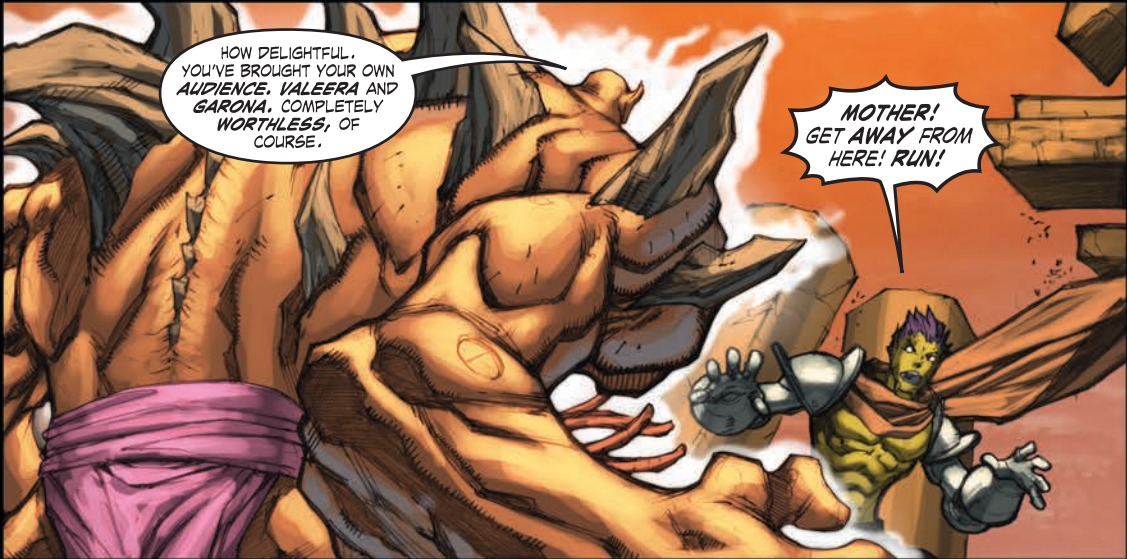
YEAH. A LOT'S HAPPENED. YOUR SON WILL BE HERE SOON. HE'S NOW THE **GUARDIAN**, IMBUED WITH POWER TO...UH...

YOU'VE ARRIVED AT LAST, BOY!

I KNEW THAT, GIVEN THE RIGHT INCENTIVE, YOU'D BE FORCED TO FACE ME!



MED'AN!
NO!



HOW DELIGHTFUL, YOU'VE BROUGHT YOUR OWN AUDIENCE. VALEERA AND GARONA. COMPLETELY WORTHLESS, OF COURSE.

MOTHER!
GET AWAY FROM
HERE! RUN!

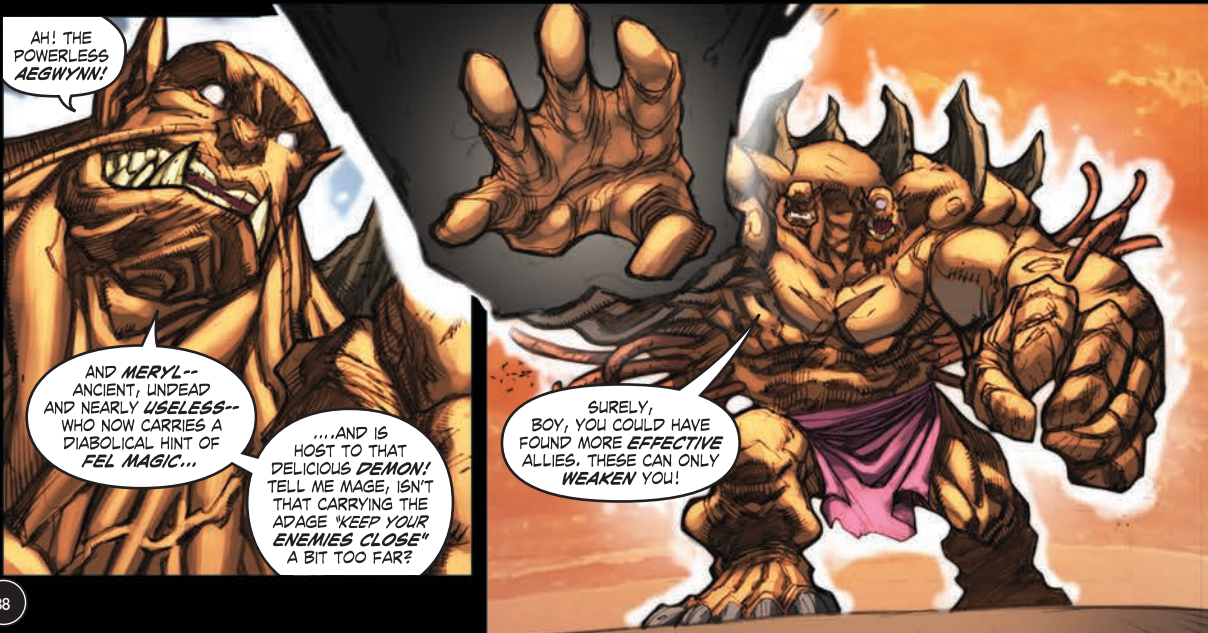


GARONA STILL HAS THE BASE OF ATIESH!

A VESSEL OF FEL ENERGY. IT WILL CORRUPT THE BOY!

I THINK NOT, DEMON!

YOU, WHO WERE ONCE A DREADLORD, HAVE EXPERIENCED THE POWER OF A GUARDIAN FIRSTHAND... TO YOUR EVERLASTING REGRET!



AH! THE POWERLESS AEGWYNN!

AND MERYL-- ANCIENT, UNDEAD AND NEARLY USELESS-- WHO NOW CARRIES A DIABOLICAL HINT OF FEL MAGIC...

...AND IS HOST TO THAT DELICIOUS DEMON! TELL ME MAGE, ISN'T THAT CARRYING THE ADAGE "KEEP YOUR ENEMIES CLOSE" A BIT TOO FAR?

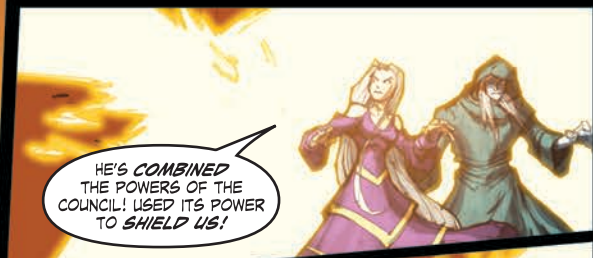
SURELY, BOY, YOU COULD HAVE FOUND MORE EFFECTIVE ALLIES. THESE CAN ONLY WEAKEN YOU!



LET US
DISPENSE WITH
THEM!



NO!
ROHAN, LEND ME
YOUR POWERS OF
PROTECTION! MAY
THE **HOLY LIGHT**
DEFEND YOU ALL!



HE'S **COMBINED**
THE POWERS OF THE
COUNCIL! USED ITS POWER
TO **SHIELD US!**



BRILLIANT!
WHAT NOW--?!



**BOLTS OF
LIGHTNING!
RAIN OF FIRE!
DEFEND
THEM!**

KRAK! KRAK! BOOM!



A GOOD
SHOT, BOY! YOU
HAVE **GROWN** IN
POWER!

I SEE
NOW THE **WISDOM**
OF MY MASTER'S
PLAN AND HOW THE
PROPHECY WILL BE
FULFILLED!



WHEN I HAVE
SLAIN YOU, THIS VAST
RESERVOIR OF **MAGIC**
WILL BE CHANNIELED TO
BLAST THE OLD ONE **FREE**
AND BRING ITS RULE
TO **AZEROTH!**



NOW!
LET THE
CEREMONY
BEGIN!

YWAQ
MWUAL'GYOS
GAG PRFAKT
S,JABBA
ZUR...*

*THEY ARE THE SHADOW
THAT FEASTS ON LIFE...



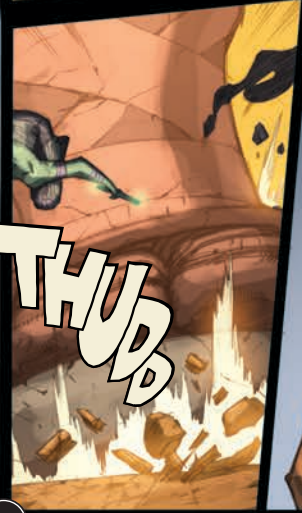
CHO'GALL'S ATTENTION
HAS TURNED FROM US!
COME ON!



AND THAT'S
WHY!

AN
ANUBISATH!

GARONA,
JUMP!!



THUD



DESERT
PLANTS--
SEND OUT YOUR
SHOOTS!

BRING
DOWN THE
DESTROYERS!



ANUBISATHS--
STAND YOUR
GROUND!

ELEMENTALS--
CRUSH THE
INTRUDERS!



HE PROTECTS THE ANUBISATHS! THEY MUST ACT AS THE LENSES FOR CHO'GALL'S POWER!

I SEE THAT, AEGWYNN! BUT WE'RE TOO HARD PRESSED TO DEAL WITH THEM NOW!



NO!



MED'AN-- FORGET US! THE ANUBISATHS MUST BE YOUR TARGETS!



I WON'T ABANDON YOU!

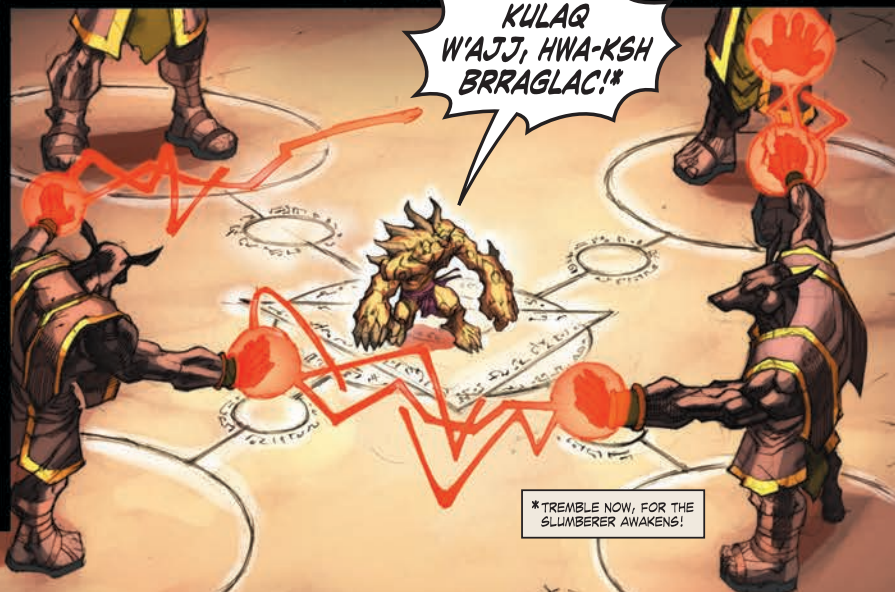
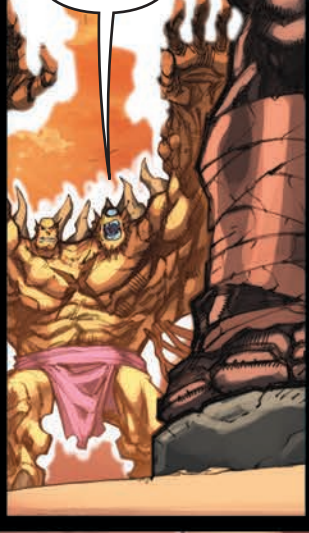
LIGHTNING-- SMITE THE ELEMENTALS!



SHRAK! BOOM
BAH-ROUMB

YOU ARE TOO EASILY DISTRACTED BY FEAR FOR THOSE YOU LOVE! YOU LACK FOCUS...

...AND THAT WILL BE YOUR DOOM!



KULAQ W'AJJ, HWA-KSH BRRAGLAC!*

*TREMBLE NOW, FOR THE SLUMBERER AWAKENS!

YWAQ MA
FVLOLF KSHT AAK
VRBL! SHN AGLF
OLBL'NYRAL!*

I AM
THE CONDUIT
FOR MY MASTER'S
POWER!

*THEY ARE THE HOWLERS IN THE DARK!
THE MADNESS WITHOUT END!

SOON,
AZEROTH ITSELF
SHALL BE TORN
ASUNDER!

MY MASTER
WILL EMERGE
AND CAST
ITS SHADOW
ACROSS LAND
AND SEA
ALIKE.

AND WITH
THIS GIFT, I WILL
SHATTER THE VERY
EARTH THAT HOLDS
THE OLD GOD
PRISONER!

"THE ANCIENT PROPHECIES
WILL BE FULFILLED AT
LAST, AND MY MASTER
SHALL HAVE DOMINION
OVER ALL THE WORLD!"

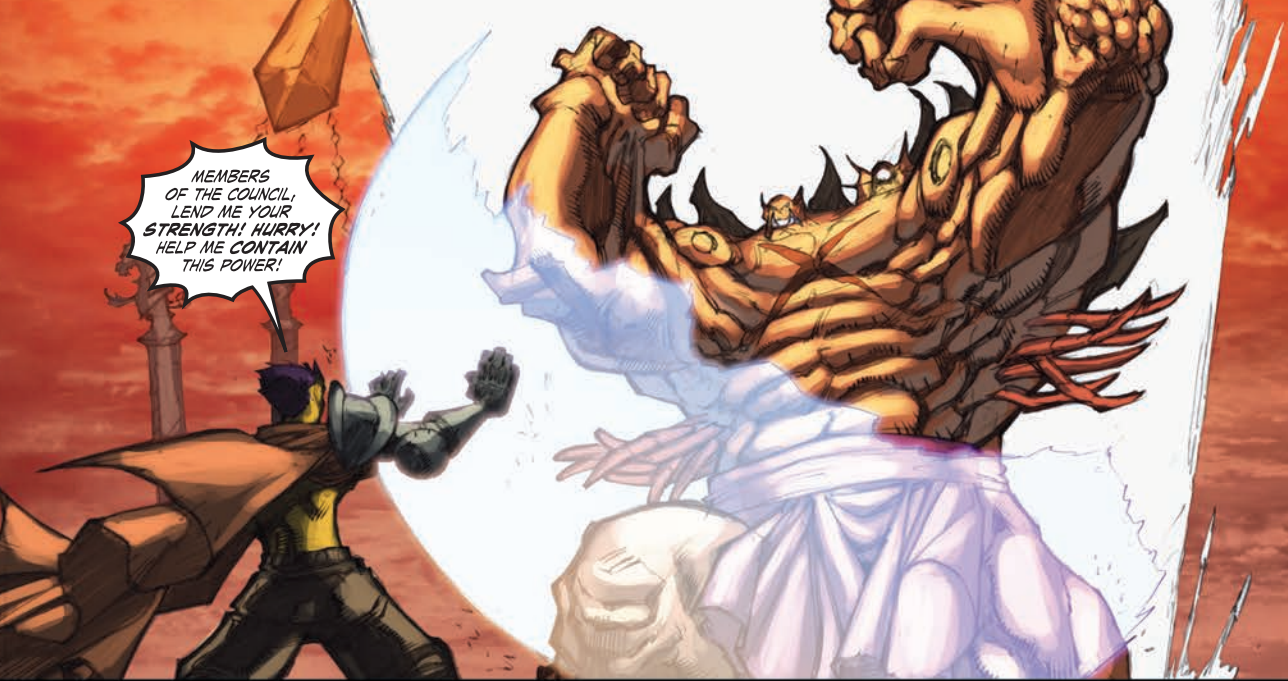
WHAT
EVIL CAN HAVE
CAUSED SUCH
MADNESS?!

NEVER HAVE
I SEEN SUCH A
STORM!

KRANKOOM BAROOM

DOOMB

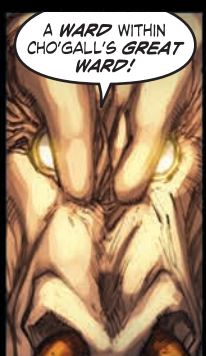
KRAKKA



MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL, LEND ME YOUR STRENGTH! HURRY! HELP ME CONTAIN THIS POWER!



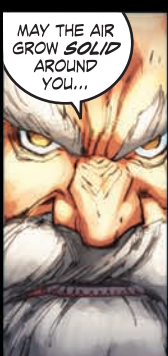
CLEVER, MED'AN!



A WARD WITH CHO'GALL'S GREAT WARD!



OUR POWERS ARE YOURS!



MAY THE AIR GROW SOLID AROUND YOU...



...AND MAY IT FORM A SHIELD...



...TO ENCLOSE THE OLD ONE'S POWER...

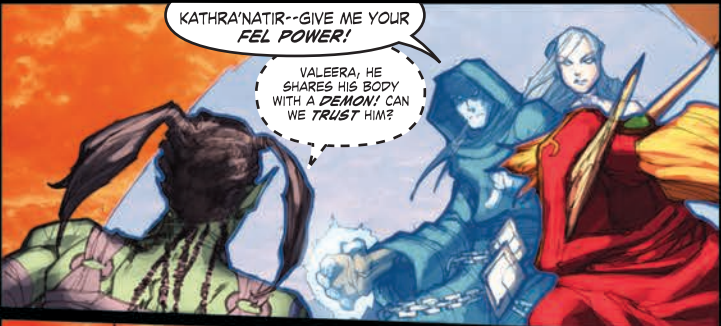


...AND PROTECT ALL AZEROTH!



MED'AN HAS TRAPPED CHO'GALL'S ENERGY IN HERE WITH US! WE'RE DOOMED!

NO! MERYL HAS A PLAN...!



KATHRA'NATIR--GIVE ME YOUR FEL POWER!

VALEERA, HE SHARES HIS BODY WITH A DEMON! CAN WE TRUST HIM?



SHRAKT



DO YOU HAVE A BETTER IDEA? IT OBEYS HIM... SO FAR.

I SEE. TRULY, IT'S HARD TO SAY WHO POSSESSES WHOM.



YOU THINK YOU HAVE STOPPED ME, BOY. BUT MY MASTER'S POWER IS TRAPPED AND CONCENTRATED WITHIN YOUR WARD...NOT DISSOLVED.

YOUR ACTION ONLY MAKES IT MORE POTENT.

THE SOURCE OF YOUR MIRACULOUSLY INCREASED MASTERY IS NO SECRET FROM ME, GUARDIAN!

WE, OF THE TWILIGHT'S HAMMER, KNOW ALL! YOUR DESPERATE PLOY IS PART OF THE PROPHECY... AND ESSENTIAL TO THE PLAN!

SHRAKKT

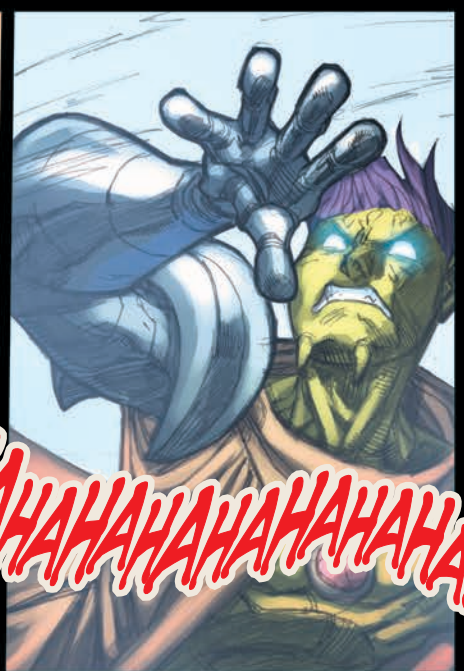
LET YOUR COUNCIL FEED YOU THEIR MAGIC. LET US MATCH YOUR STRENGTH AGAINST THAT OF MY GREAT MASTER.



WHEN YOU FALL, THE SUDDEN RELEASE OF YOUR POWER-- THE POWERS OF ALL THE COUNCIL-- WILL BE ADDED TO THE ENERGY THAT YOU HAVE CONCENTRATED WITHIN THIS WARD.

I WILL CHANNEL IT TO FREE MY MASTER...

...AND CHAOS WILL RULE AZEROTH ONCE MORE!



HAHAHAHAHAHAHAHA!



WRONG, MONSTER! IT IS YOU WHO WILL FALL! AND YOUR MASTER WILL REMAIN LOCKED AWAY FOR ETERNITY.

WE'RE AT A **STALEMATE**, FOR THE NONCE. BUT YOUR RESOURCES ARE **FINITE** WHEREAS I WIELD **POWER** BEYOND YOUR IMAGINING.

AND WHEN YOUR CONTROL FINALLY **WEAKENS**, AS IT **MUST...**

BA-DOOM

THIS **RICOCHETING ENERGY** IS AS **DANGEROUS** TO CHO'GALL'S CAUSE AS IT IS TO OURS! IT STRIKES **INDISCRIMINATELY!**

BUT CHO'GALL IS **RIGHT!** IF THIS GOES ON TOO LONG, MED'AN WILL WEAKEN.



SO LET'S **END** IT, HERE AND NOW! USE THE **BASE** OF ATIESH! ISN'T THAT WHY I **GOT--**



SUCH A SURFEIT OF FEL POWER! IT MUST BE MINE!!!

NO, KATHRA'NATIR! GET BACK!



MERYL'S POWER IS FOCUSED ON **CONTROLLING** THE DEMON! WE'RE NO LONGER **SHIELDED** FROM CHO'GALL'S BARRAGE!



GARONA!
COVER THE BASE!
NO DEMON CAN RESIST
ITS LURE!

KRA-KDOOM



AEGWYNN!

I... STILL
LIVE.



IT'S
ALL RIGHT,
EVERYONE. I
COMMAND THE
DEMON ONCE
MORE!

DO YOU,
MAGEP



BACK,
DEMON! THIS
POWER IS NOT FOR
THE LIKES OF YOU...
OR ME!

I OFFER
MYSELF AS A
CONDUIT FOR THE
POWER OF
ATIESH!



ORUM
N'BENDIR!*

NOOOOOOOOOO!

*POWER I HAVE!



**ORUM
N'MALLAH!***

MED'AN--
THROUGH THE
PATHWAYS THE
COUNCIL HAS FORGED,
I SEND YOU THE
POWER FROM
YOUR FATHER'S
STAFF!

THROUGH
THE KNOWLEDGE
AND THE BLOOD HE
HAS BEQUEATHED YOU--
PURIFY IT AND USE
IT TO PRESERVE
AZEROTH!

**TO WASTE
SUCH LUSCIOUS
MAGIC! STOP,
YOU UNDEAD
FOOL!
I'LL
DESTROY
YOU FOR
THIS!!**

*POWER I SHARE!



**VELAM
DELAHNA,
ALM VAL'ALLA
O'SHOLL!***



MAY
THE SPIRITS
OF AZEROTH
TRANSFORM
THIS POWER! MAY
THE HOLY LIGHT
ACCEPT AND
BLESS IT...

*FROM ONE, FOR
THE GOOD OF ALL!



... THAT IT MAY
DEFEND OUR
WORLD FROM THOSE
WHO WOULD DO
IT HARM!

SHRAKKT



IT IS...*DONE!*
ANCIENT MAGIC...
SHOULD SERVE US...
WELL.

**THE MAGE
HAS FALLEN!
I AM FREE TO
TAKE WHAT
SHOULD BE
MINE!**

**TO SEIZE
THAT LAST
GLIMMERING
STRAND OF
POWER!
TO--**



**GONE!
THE BOY
IS TOO
STRONG NOW!
I CANNOT
APPROACH
HIM!**

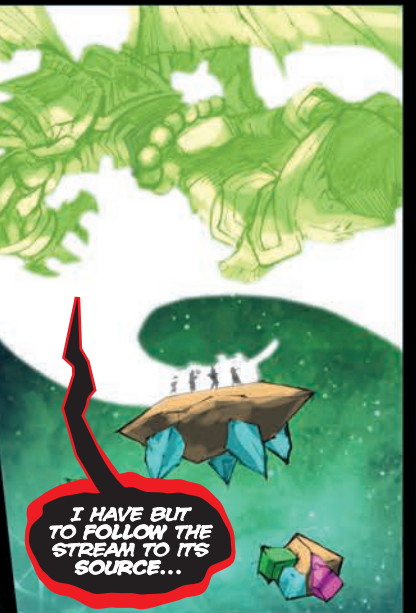
**BUT
THERE IS
ANOTHER
SOURCE OF
MAGIC!**



**THE
TORRENT
THAT POURS
FROM THE
COUNCIL!**



**ENOUGH
TO EMPOWER!
ENOUGH TO
RESTORE!**



**I HAVE BUT
TO FOLLOW THE
STREAM TO ITS
SOURCE...**



... AND WREST IT FROM THEM!

WE HAVE AN UNINVITED VISITOR!

I THOUGHT THIS SPACE INVIOLEATE!



A DEMON!

REPEL HIM!



DALYNNIA! MARAAD! DON'T LET HIM DISTRACT YOU!!

DISTRACT US--?!!


HE'S BLOCKING THE FLOW OF OUR POWER, JAINA! ABSORBING IT FOR HIMSELF! WE HAVE TO STOP HIM!



THRATKX

AND IN AHN'QIRAJ...

WHERE IS YOUR MAGIC, NOW, BOY? YOUR LETHAL BLAST... YOUR POWERFUL WARD?



THAT WONDERFUL *DEMON* HAS ATTACKED THE *SOURCE* OF YOUR MAGIC...AND LEFT YOU *FLOUNDERING* BEFORE ME!

HE HAS DONE MY MASTER A *GREAT SERVICE!* TO HONOR HIS DEED, I WILL DEVOUR HIM LAST OF ALL!

DO YOU NOT FEEL IT, YOU PATHETIC CREATURES WHO WOULD SET YOURSELVES AGAINST THE CALL OF *DESTINY?*

ALL OF AZEROTH *QUAKES* BENEATH THE ONSLAUGHT OF MY MASTER'S *POWER!*

UPON *YOUR DEATH,* HIS *VICTORY* WILL BE AT HAND!

MED'AN'S IN *TROUBLE!* WE HAVE TO *DO* SOMETHING...!

TAKE... TAKE... BASE OF ATIEGH!

BUT--

WITH THE... FEL POWER...GONE... THE BASE STILL *GLOWS.* MY *SON* HAS POURED A *GREATER MAGIC* INTO IT...

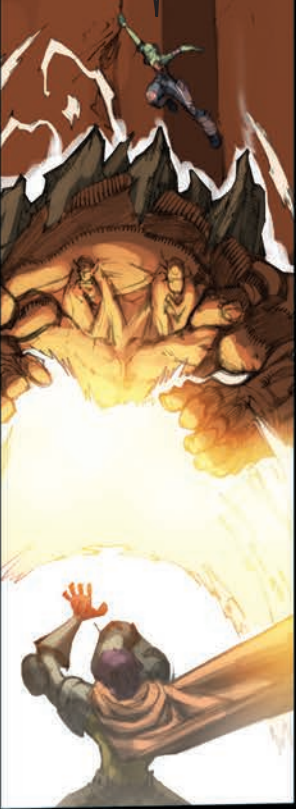
...AND... MY BLOOD TELLS ME... THAT IT IS *MED'AN'S LEGACY...* AND WILL ANSWER ONLY HIS *TOUCH!* HURRY...

THEN
I'LL SEE HE
GETS IT!

TAKE... CARE!
NOT ALL BOLTS...
ARE FOCUSED
SKYWARD!



MOST OF THE
COUNCIL'S POWER HAS
BEEN WITHDRAWN... AND
MED'AN IS IN GREAT
DANGER!



IF I
CAN SAVE
HIM, I--



WHILE WITHIN
THE TWISTING
NETHER...

ELF...
YOUR
ARCANE
MAGIC IS
MINE!

SKKKKKK...

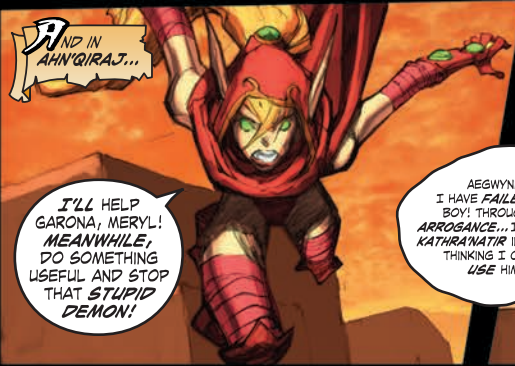


NOW... WHO ELSE WILL
CONTRIBUTE THEIR POWER TO
MY REHABILITATION?



AND IN
AHN'QIRAJ...

I'LL HELP
GARONA, MERYL!
MEANWHILE,
DO SOMETHING
USEFUL AND STOP
THAT STUPID
DEMON!



AESWYNN,
I HAVE FAILED THE
BOY! THROUGH MY
ARROGANCE... I BROUGHT
KATHRAN'ATIR INTO THIS...
THINKING I COULD
USE HIM!

BUT I WAS
HIS PAWN AS WELL...
AND NOW HE HAS
SLIPPED BEYOND
MY CONTROL.





BEYOND YOUR CONTROL... BUT NOT THE COUNCIL'S! GIVEN TIME, THEY WILL DEFEAT THE DEMON.

BUT WE HAVE NO TIME!

THEN WE MUST BUY SOME!



MERYL... I AM DYING. TAKE WHAT IS LEFT OF MY LIFE ENERGY. CHANNEL IT INTO MED'AN TO STRENGTHEN HIM...

...UNTIL VALEERA AND GARONA CAN REACH HIM... AND THE COUNCIL WINS THEIR VICTORY.



AEGWYNN, NO! DON'T ASK THIS OF ME!

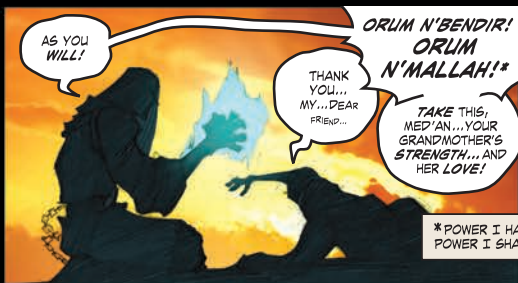


YOU MUST. I, TOO, AM NO STRANGER TO OVERSEEING FRIE, SELF-RECRIMINATION... AND THE DUPLICITY OF DEMONS!



ONCE I BETRAYED THE TRUST OF MY GUARDIANSHIP, AND PLACED THIS WORLD IN PERIL.

NOW, I WILL ATONE. LET MY DEATH STRIKE A BLOW FOR AZEROTH, MERYL! HELP ME! SAVE MY GRANDSON.



AS YOU WILL!

THANK YOU... MY... DEAR FRIEND...

ORUM N'BENDIR! ORUM N'MALLAH!*

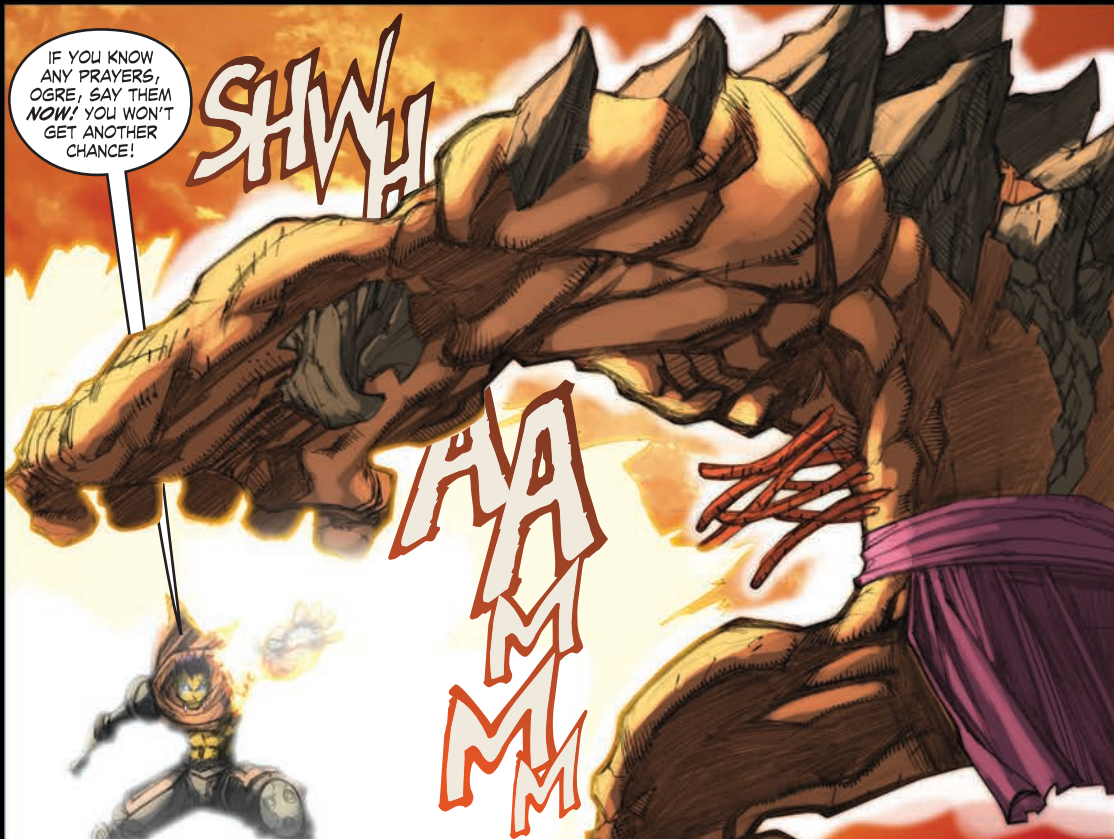
TAKE THIS, MED'AN... YOUR GRANDMOTHER'S STRENGTH... AND HER LOVE!

*POWER I HAVE! POWER I SHARE!



GRANDMOTHER! NO!

SHE'S GONE!



IF YOU KNOW ANY PRAYERS, OGRE, SAY THEM NOW! YOU WON'T GET ANOTHER CHANCE!

SHW!

HAMMM



WHILE IN THE TWISTING NETHER...

THE DEMON IS ENTRAPPED!
CAUGHT WITHIN OUR WARD!

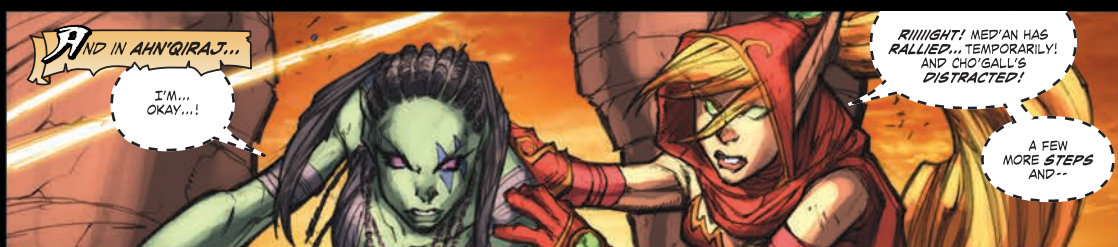
NOOOO!

BLESS THE BOY FOR SHOWING US THIS TRICK...
AND HOW WE MIGHT LINK OUR POWERS IN CONCERT!

BUT AEGWYNN...
THROUGH OUR LINK, I FELT HER LIFE FORCE ENTER MED'AN! SHE... IS GONE!

SHE HAS GIVEN HIM HER STRENGTH AND WILL TO PREVAIL FOR THE MOMENT. HER SACRIFICE SHALL NOT BE IN VAIN!

WE MUST RESUME OUR MEDITATIONS! AT ONCE!



RAND IN AHN'QIRAJ...

I'M... OKAY...!

RIIIGHT! MED'AN HAS RALLIED... TEMPORARILY! AND CHO'GALL'S DISTRACTED!

A FEW MORE STEPS AND--



TWO MORE OF MY ENEMIES-- DESTROYED!

AND... AH... WHAT HAVE WE HERE... ?

I BELIEVE THEY'VE BROUGHT ME A PRESENT!

SHRYAAM

HOW...
THOUGHTFUL!

HANDS
OFF,
OGRE!

GROW

HAHAHAHA!
AWAY, LITTLE FLY!

YOU'RE OUT
OF YOUR DEPTH
AGAINST ME!

THKWRACK

WHHGH!

THAT MAY BE,
MONSTER...

... BUT
I AM
NOT!

"IN MY HANDS, IT SHALL
BE A COMFORT TO ME..."

SHKCHRR

BY
MY HANDS,
MY FATHER'S
STAFF IS NOW
RESTORED.

...AND THROUGH
MY HANDS, IT SHALL
SUMMON THE COMBINED
STRENGTH OF THOSE
WHO WOULD DEFEND
THIS WORLD!

NO!!!
IT ISN'T
POSSIBLE!

HHHHH
NNNNN
GGGGG

NOW LET US
SEE WHOSE WILL IS
STRONGER, CHO'GALL!
MAY THE POWERS OF
EARTH AND AIR **PROTECT**
US! MAY THE **LIGHT**
SUSTAIN ALL WHO
LIVE!

LET THE
EARTH **CRACK OPEN!**
LET THE SEAS **RISE**
AND SWAMP THE LAND.
LET LAVA DESTROY
YOU!

STAFF OF
MY FATHER--
DEFEND
AZEROTH!

SHRINKKKKK

KOWHAMMMB
KHROOMBBB

AND THROUGHOUT AHN'QIRAJ...

KRAK-KHASH
KK-THOOMB



THANK THE LIGHT!



MED'AN... HOW IS--?

VALEERA...? SHE LIVES!



AND SHE WILL BE HEALED.



IT IS UNHEARD OF FOR THE COUNCIL TO PHYSICALLY COME TO THE GUARDIAN...
...BUT THIS WHOLE EVENT HAS BEEN UNPRECEDENTED.



AESWYNN!
NO...

BE AT PEACE, JAINA... IT WAS MY GRANDMOTHER'S CHOICE.

WITHOUT HER SACRIFICE...



I...KNOW. WE FELT HER SPIRIT SUSTAIN YOU.

BUT SURELY, MERYL, THERE MUST HAVE BEEN ANOTHER WAY!



IT'S...HARD TO ACCEPT, JAINA. BUT MERYL TOOK ONLY WHAT SHE GAVE FREELY. HENCEFORTH, CHAMBERLAIN AESWYNN WILL LIVE... THROUGH ME...

...AND NEVER BE FORGOTTEN.



SHE WAS WILLING TO SACRIFICE HERSELF FOR THOSE SHE LOVED.

SHE...SHE WOULDN'T WANT ANY OF US...TO... TO GRIEVE FOR HER.

MY FIRST INSTINCT WAS CORRECT. MY PRESENCE NEAR THE COUNCIL POLLUTES IT, FOR I AM NO LONGER WINTERSTORM BUT FELSTORM. I MUST LEAVE SOON.

BUT FIRST, I MUST TAKE BACK CONTROL OF KATHRA'NATIR.

HE KNOWS TOO MUCH OF THE COUNCIL AND ITS WORKINGS TO BE ALLOWED TO ROAM THE TWISTING NETHER.

I'M SORRY, MERYL... BUT I FEAR YOU ARE RIGHT.

YOU WILL COME TO REGRET THIS, WIZARD! YOU WILL ALL COME TO REGRET IT!!

I THANK YOU ALL FOR THE GIFTING OF YOUR POWERS.

I HAVE SEEN THE WORLD THROUGH YOUR EYES AND WIELDED THAT WHICH TOOK YOU YEARS TO MASTER.

YOU HAVE TAUGHT ME HOW MUCH MORE I HAVE TO LEARN.

ORUM N'BENDIR! ORUM N'MALLOTH!*

VOHL UM DELAHNA... AN'ARANAR!***

*POWER I HAVE! POWER I RETURN TO YOU!
**OUT OF ONE...INTO MANY!

MANY HERE HAVE PRESSING BUSINESS AND MUST RETURN HOME IMMEDIATELY, BUT AEGWYNN WAS AN OLD FRIEND, AND I WOULD SEE HER TO HER FINAL REST.

THE GRAVEYARD WEST OF KARAZHAN CALLED MORGAN'S PLOT

WHEN...MY GRANDMOTHER... GAVE ME HER LIFE FORCE, I FELT HER LOVE... AND HER LAST WISH THAT HER BODY BE BURIED HERE, NEAR MY FATHER.

SHE HAD A TUMULTUOUS LIFE... AND NOW SHE IS AT PEACE. I... I WILL... MISS HER.



MERYL, WHERE WILL YOU GO NOW?

I WILL BEGIN MY EXILE WITH THE HUNT FOR THOSE OF THE TWILIGHT'S HAMMER WHO STILL SURVIVE. THEY WILL LEARN TO CURSE MY NAME.

NO DOUBT, KATHRA'NATIR AND I WILL HAVE MANY LONG AND INTERESTING CONVERSATIONS AS WE JOURNEY TOGETHER.

AND YOU, GARONAZ? YOU'RE STILL A FUGITIVE FROM STORMWIND. IT'S NOT FAIR, BUT--

PERHAPS, WHEN YOU EXPLAIN MY CIRCUMSTANCE, KING VARIAN WILL CALL OFF HIS HOUNDS.

IN THE MEANTIME, I WILL GO WITH MERYL.

NO! MERYL, YOU WILL BE BEST OFF WITH YOUR GREAT-UNCLE, STUDYING THE WAYS OF THE HOLY LIGHT.

MERYL, YOU RAISED MY SON. YOU... SAVED HIS LIFE. FOR THAT, I OWE YOU MORE THAN I CAN REPAY.

AND YOU ARE RIGHT. AS USUAL, THE TWILIGHT'S HAMMER REMAINS A THREAT THAT MUST BE ERADICATED.

I AM GOOD AT KILLING. SO TOGETHER, MERYL AND I WILL TEACH THE HAMMER HOW TO DIE.

"BUT CHO'GALL--THE LAST BEING ON AZEROTH WHO HELD SWAY OVER ME--IS NO MORE.

"FOR NOW, AT LEAST, WE HAVE WON."

CHAPTER 5









BEGINNINGS & ENDS

WHAT IS THIS WORLD
I FIND MYSELF IN?

WHO ARE THESE
PEOPLE WHO
TOIL UPON IT?





I HAVE JUDGED
COUNTLESS WORLDS.
BUT I HAVE NEVER
HAD OCCASION TO LOOK
UPON THEIR PEOPLES.

AND YET, FROM
THE DUNGEONS
IN ULDUAR,
I SEE MUCH...

I SEE
STRIFE.



CLANK

I SEE ENEMIES
LOCKED IN BATTLE.
PERHAPS
ETERNAL BATTLE.

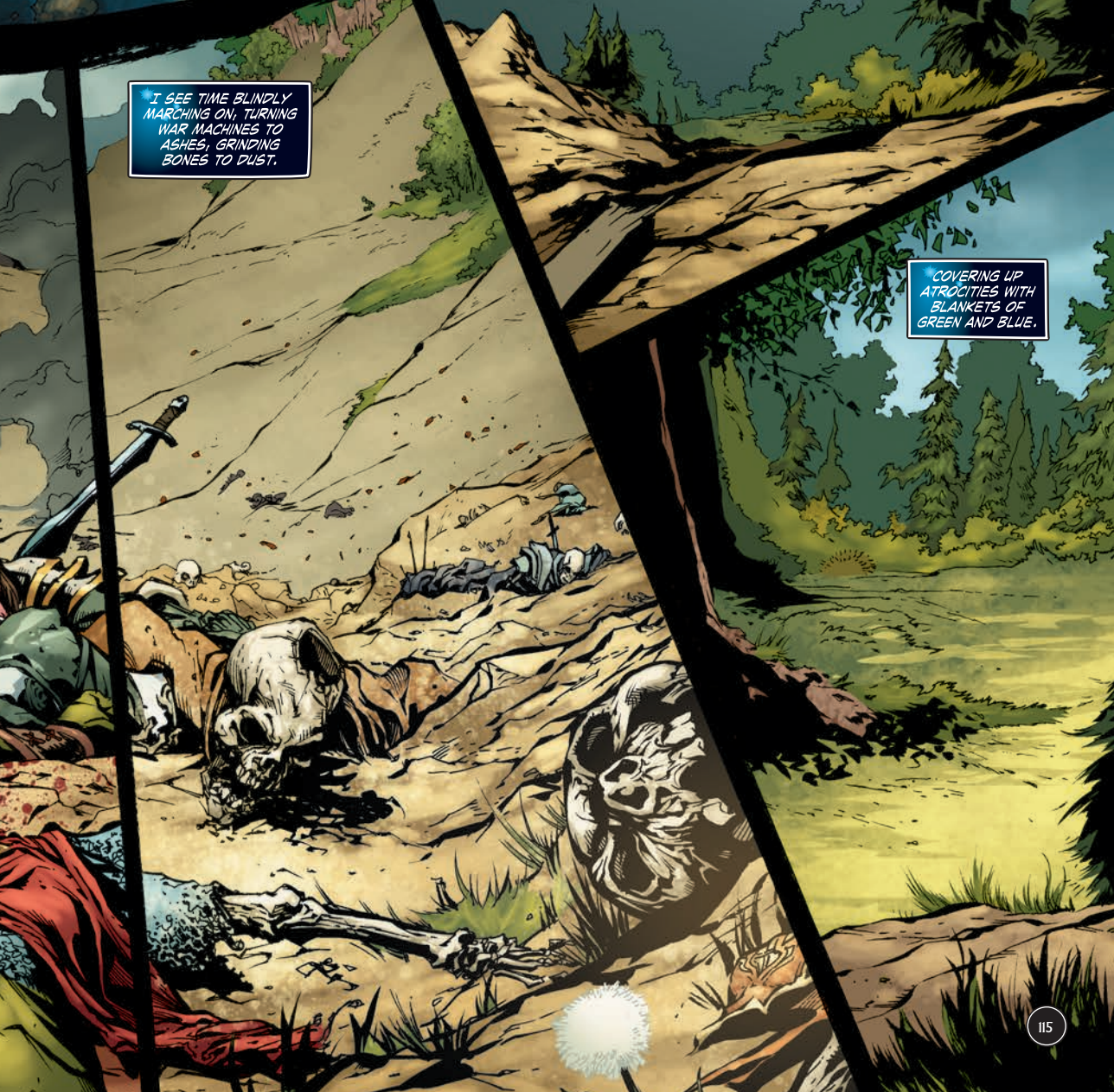
I SEE DEATH.



SMOOTHING DOWN STONES
ROUGH-HEWN BY THE
SPEAKING PEOPLES.

I SEE TIME BLINDLY
MARCHING ON, TURNING
WAR MACHINES TO
ASHES, GRINDING
BONES TO DUST.

COVERING UP
ATROCITIES WITH
BLANKETS OF
GREEN AND BLUE.





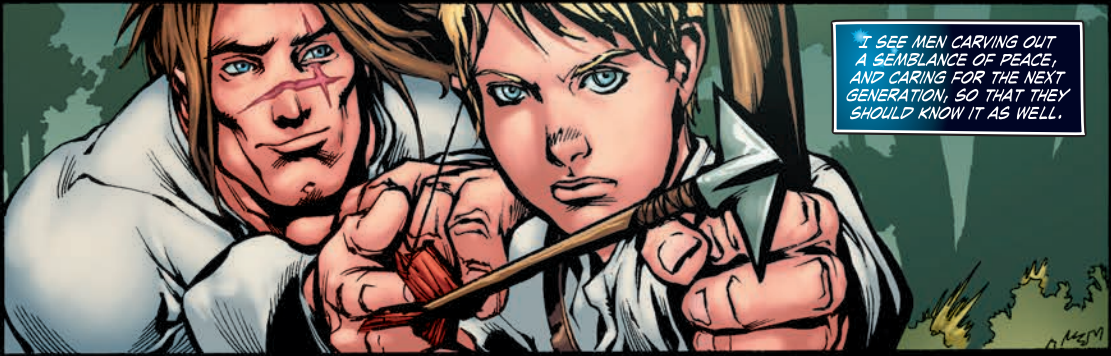
AND FOR WHAT?



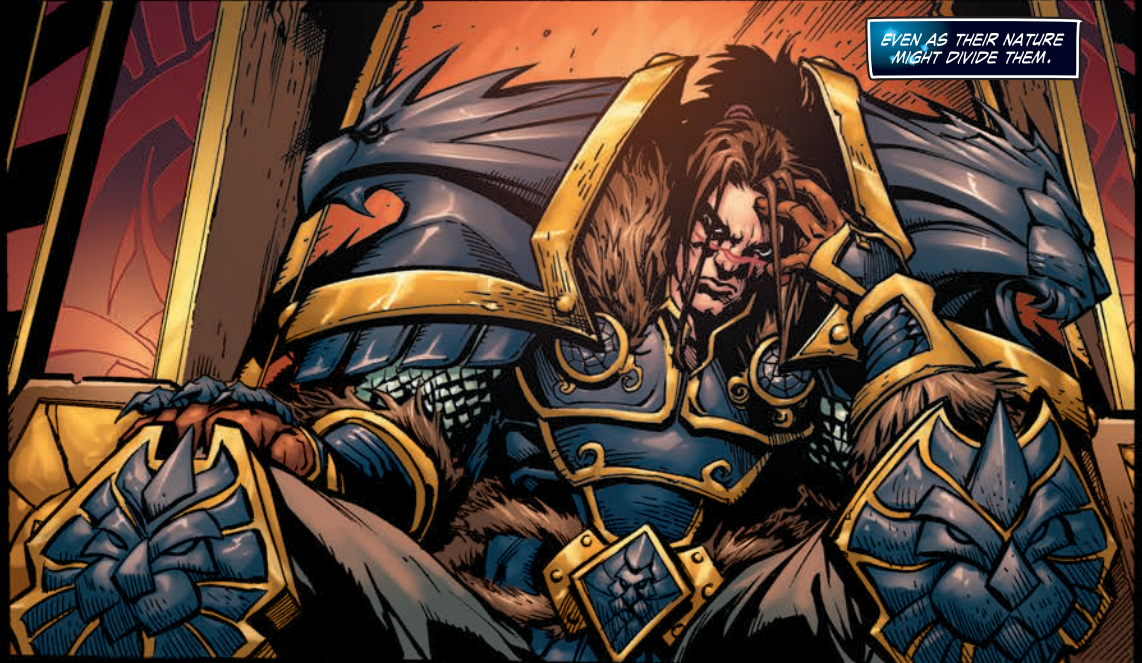
TO BEGIN THE CYCLE OF VIOLENCE OVER AGAIN?



BUT I SEE OTHER THINGS AS WELL.



I SEE MEN CARVING OUT A SEMBLANCE OF PEACE, AND CARING FOR THE NEXT GENERATION, SO THAT THEY SHOULD KNOW IT AS WELL.



EVEN AS THEIR NATURE MIGHT DIVIDE THEM.

I SEE GREAT CITIES ERECTED
AS BEACONS OF ACHIEVEMENT.



WHERE PROSPERITY
BRINGS HAPPINESS.



BUT THAT PEACE
IS NOT WITHOUT
ITS STEWARDS.




AND STRONG
HANDS SUPPORT
ANCIENT TRADITIONS.





SECURITY ISN'T ALL
THAT SOME CRAVE.



FOR EVEN WITHIN
THE MOST UNCERTAIN
CIRCUMSTANCES,
LIFE THRIVES.



AND THERE ARE THOSE TO
WHOM EXILE DOES NOT
FEEL LIKE PUNISHMENT.



BUT FREEDOM
FROM A LIFE SPENT
RULED BY OTHERS.



STILL OTHERS FIND
THEIR CONTENTMENT
IN KNOWLEDGE.



AND TO WORK
ALONE HAS NO
SATISFACTION.



BECAUSE FOR SOME,
HAPPINESS IS NOT FREEDOM,
BUT A SENSE OF BELONGING.



SHUHRAK

AND A SENSE OF
ACCOMPLISHMENT.

THOUGH SOME HUNGER
FOR SOLITUDE.

THE HORDE, A FACTION LED BY
OFF-WORLERS AND COMPOSED
OF OUTSIDERS, HAS SURVIVED
THESE OBSTACLES BY BONDING
TOGETHER, FIGHTING AS FAMILY,
COMRADES, OR EVEN UNEASY
ALLIES. YET SOME WOULD CHOOSE
TO REJECT THAT BOND IN THE
FACE OF THE HARSH WILDS.

MALGAR





BUT I HAVE FOUND
THAT EVEN THOSE WHO
HAVE CHOSEN TO BE
OUTCASTS STILL SEEK
THE HELP OF A FRIEND.

Awooooooo

REMNES

THE ALLIANCE CONSISTS OF POWERFUL CULTURES AND GROUPS BOUND NOT BY DESPERATION OR NECESSITY, BUT BY THEIR DEEP COMMITMENTS TO ABSTRACT CONCEPTS LIKE NOBILITY AND HONOR.

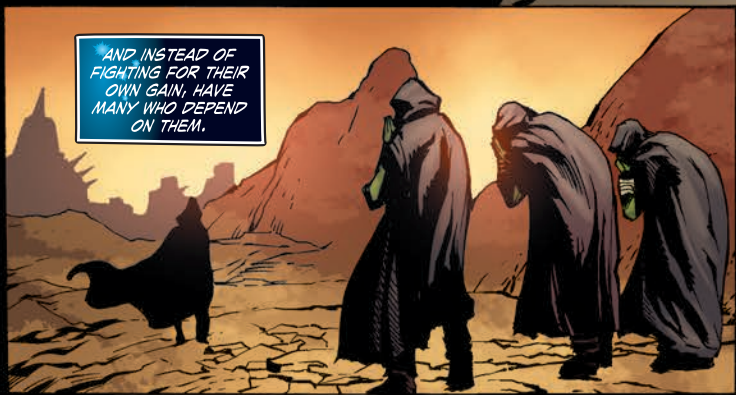
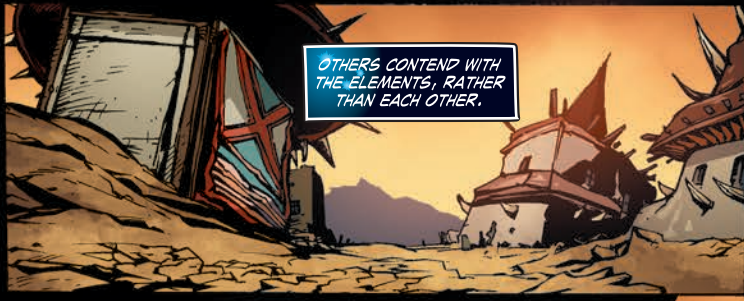
THEY, TOO, HAVE POWERFUL SOLDIERS, DEADLY WITH BLADES, AND BRAVN.

BUT BRAVN ISN'T ALWAYS ONE'S BEST STRENGTH ON THIS WORLD.



BRITK

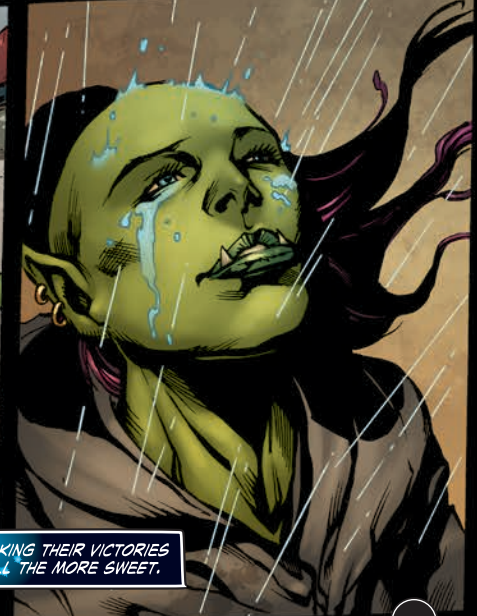




SHAGARA



SSCRAK-A-BOOM!



MAKING THEIR VICTORIES ALL THE MORE SWEET.



SOME WORK TOWARD GOALS MORE PERSONAL.

KARLAIN



BUT NO LESS DIFFICULT TO ACHIEVE.



FWOOOSH



CONTROL. ALWAYS, CONTROL.

FOR THEM, DISCIPLINE IS ITS OWN REWARD.



HEY!

MARDIGAN



EXCUSE ME, YOU JUST SPILLED MY ALE.

YEAH?

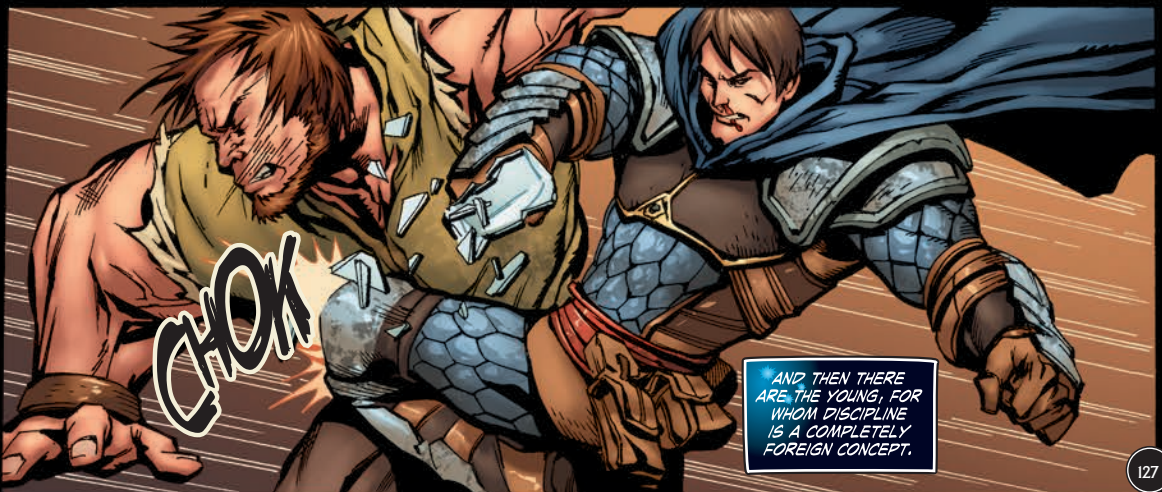


THWAK

NOW I JUST BROKE YOUR NOSE, TOO! HAW HAW HAW!



IF THAT'S THE WAY YOU WANT IT.



CHOK

AND THEN THERE ARE THE YOUNG, FOR WHOM DISCIPLINE IS A COMPLETELY FOREIGN CONCEPT.



KLANG

ARE YOU SURE ABOUT THIS, OLD FRIEND?



YOUR ARMOR IS FULL OF RUST AND HOLES. PERHAPS IT IS BEST HUNG FOR DISPLAY RATHER THAN WORN.



I'M SURE.



THIS ARMOR HAS PLENTY OF BATTLES TO FACE AHEAD.

JUST AS CHANGE
IS DIFFICULT
FOR THE OLD.

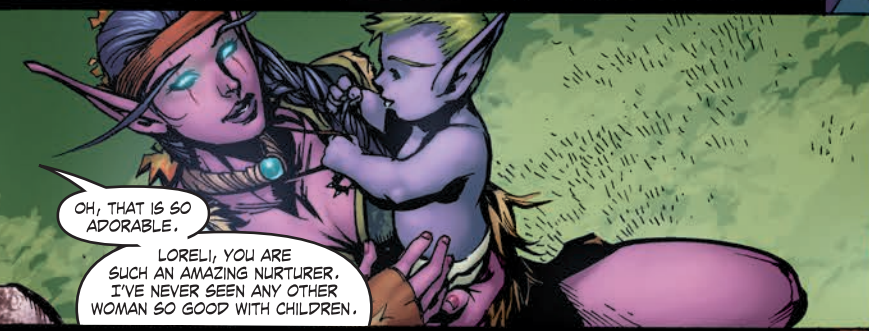
IRONHOOF



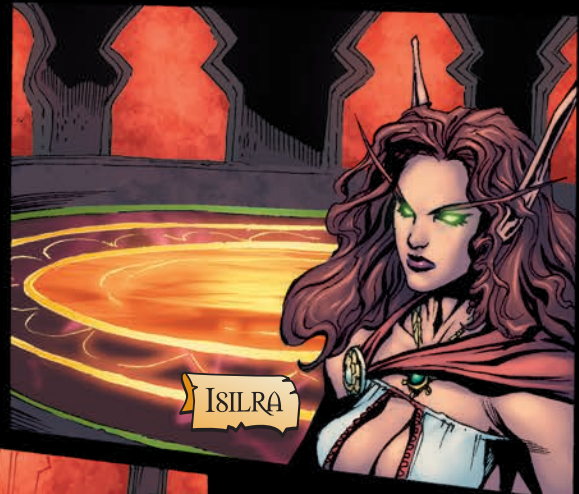


LORELI
FALLGLADE





THE YOUNG SOMETIMES YEARN FOR CHANGE THAT CAN NEVER BE. FATE CAN TAUNT SOME WITH THEIR HEART'S DESIRE.

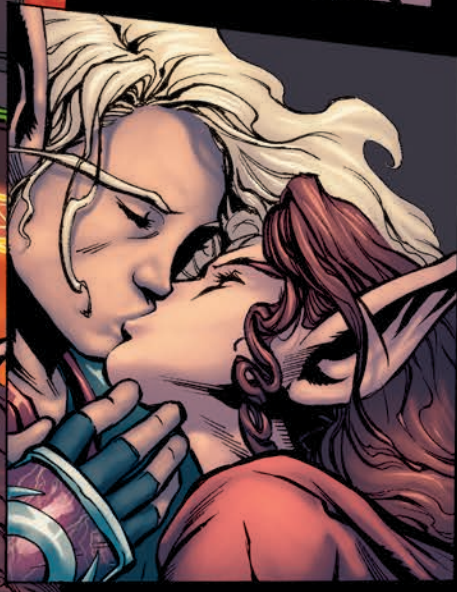


ISILRA

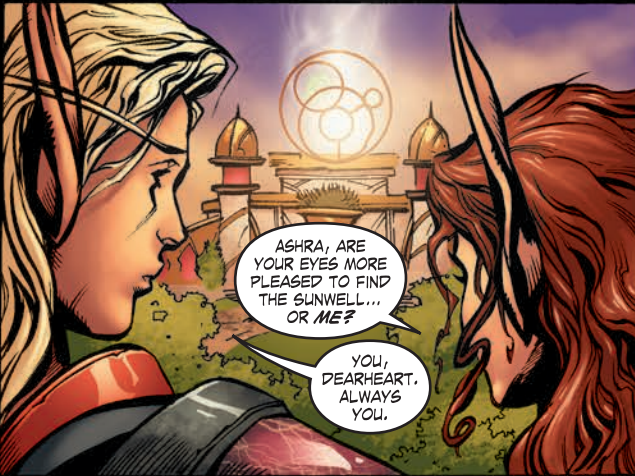


ASHRA

YOU'RE HERE!



WE CAN'T STAY HERE, IT'S TOO DANGEROUS. MY FATHER MIGHT SEE US.



ASHRA, ARE YOUR EYES MORE PLEASED TO FIND THE SUNWELL... OR ME?

YOU, DEARHEART. ALWAYS YOU.

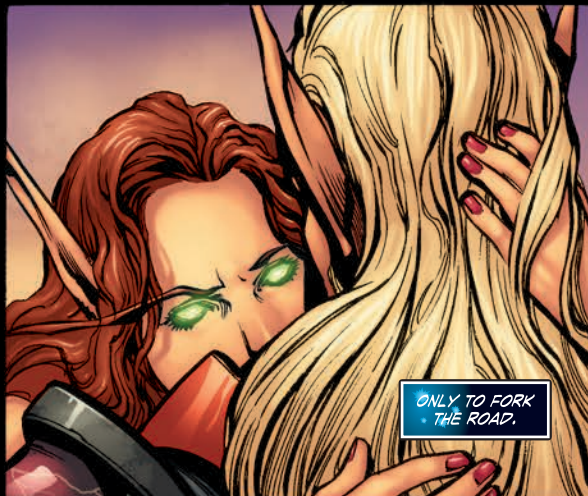


THOUGH I FEEL YOUR PASSION BURNING HOT FOR ME... PERHAPS IT BURNS EVEN HOTTER FOR THE LIGHT.



NO, DARLING. IT'S NOT TRUE.

TIME AND AGAIN I SEE DESTINY PLACE ONE'S HEART'S DESIRE IN THEIR PATH.



ONLY TO FORK THE ROAD.



OUR PROBLEM IS SOLVED.

NO...NO, HE'S NOT GOING TO LIKE THIS.

WHILE OTHER TIMES, THE ROAD TO WHAT THEY MOST DESIRE SUDDENLY BECOMES CLEAR IN THE MOST UNEXPECTED WAY.



YOU HAVE BEEN CHOSEN TO RECOVER OUR STOLEN ARTIFACT.

YOU SAY I'VE BEEN "CHOSEN." WHO, EXACTLY, DID THIS CHOOSING?

REVLIL



YOU FORGET YOUR PLACE.

NO. INDEED I KNOW IT WELL; IT IS HERE WITH MY WORK. WHY MUST I BE INTERRUPTED AND UPROOTED FOR THIS "ERRAND?"



REVLIL, THIS IS INDECENT. YOU HAVE YOUR ORDERS. WE'LL ENTERTAIN NO FURTHER DEBATE ON THIS MATTER.

THE DARK RIPERS HAVE STOLEN WHAT IS OURS AND THE RUMORS PLACE THEM IN WESTFALL. YOU ARE EXPECTED THERE AND--



AND DUSKWOOD?



OBVIOUSLY I WILL LEAVE POST-HASTE AND BE A TRUE SERVANT TO THE LIGHT.

MANY HAVE FOUND RELIGION TO BE THEIR GUIDE.



IT GIVES PURPOSE, JUSTIFYING THE LOSSES THEY HAVE ENDURED.



PLEASE, PLEASE GIVE ME GUIDANCE...



...TOWARD THE ULTIMATE VENGEANCE TO COME.

THE LIGHT HEALS, BUT SOME WOUNDS REQUIRE A DIFFERENT SORT OF ELIXIR.



PERHAPS VENGEANCE EXPLAINS THE SUFFERING, THE HATE, OR PERHAPS SUFFERING IS INESCAPABLE... ALL WERE BORN INTO IT... ALL HAVE KNOWN NOTHING ELSE.



CLEAR THE WAY, TRAVELER!



FELGRIM



NO!

FORSAKEN! A WARLOCK!

HE IS BUT ONE! RUN HIM THROUGH!





I AM
NEVER BUT
ONE.


SSKRAK-BOOM



I...
HUNGER!

VOIDWALKER!

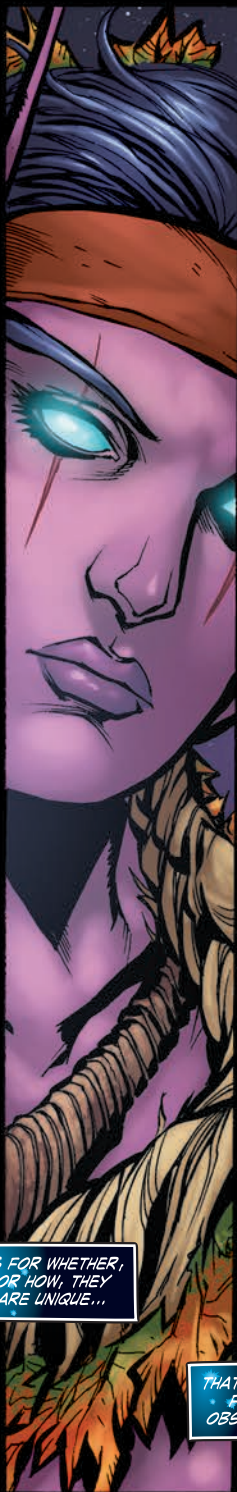
HORDE ALLIANCE.
A CYCLE OF
HATRED... ETERNAL.



NO MATTER THEIR SIMILARITIES, IT
APPEARS THAT THEY SELDOM PUT ASIDE
THEIR DIFFERENCES LONG ENOUGH TO
MAINTAIN PEACE. PERHAPS THEY AND
THEIR KIND ARE DESTINED FOR WAR...

THEIR FORTITUDE,
BRAVERY, EXPERTISE...
ALL UNQUESTIONABLE.



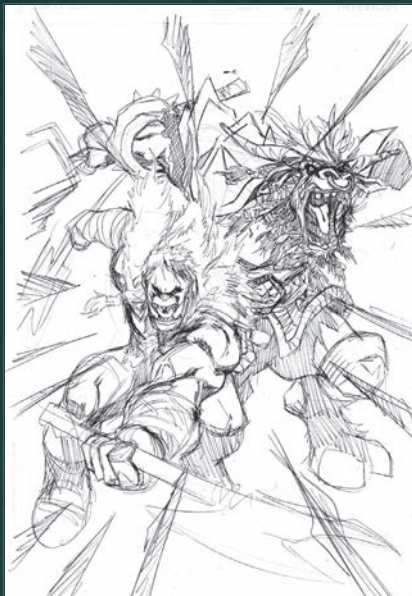


AS FOR WHETHER,
OR HOW, THEY
ARE UNIQUE...

THAT WILL TAKE
FURTHER
OBSERVATION.

PIPPUR ART BY POP MHAN

Initial sketch



Rendered pencils





Inks by Jason Martin

A TASTE OF THINGS TO COME...





