

WORLD OF WARCRAFT

CHRONICLE



VOLUME II

THE SECOND SIEGE OF STORMWIND

Warchief Doomhammer would take no chances with the second attack on Stormwind City. He unleashed the full might of the Horde against the stronghold. He had briefly considered calling on the Warsongs, the Shattered Hand, and other clans that were still on Draenor to reinforce them, but there was no time. Every day that passed was another day that Stormwind had to regroup.

As the battle commenced, both sides knew that this day would decide the fate of Stormwind. There would be no quarter, no mercy, and no retreat. The Horde breached the city's walls and stormed into the streets, but Stormwind's defenders held them at bay. At least, for a time.

King Llane was convening with his military commanders in Stormwind's keep when he received word that Garona had arrived from Karazhan. Lothar and Khadgar were still gone, and the king was worried about their fate.

Eager to learn what had happened, Llane allowed Garona into his presence. She was going to tell him about the battle with Medivh. Before she could, something snapped in her mind.

She had resisted Gul'dan's order to kill King Llane before, but her encounter with the Guardian had scrambled her thoughts. The line between friend and foe blurred. Her willpower faltered. The warlock's old command to kill the king flared bright in her mind. Deep down, she had no wish to slay Llane, a stranger who had welcomed her into his kingdom, who had treated her with more respect in recent months than the orcs had shown her in a lifetime.

Yet she could no longer disobey Gul'dan's order.

With tears streaming down her face, she plunged a dagger into Llane's heart. The young prince, Varian, witnessed the murder. His father's assassination deeply impacted the boy, and it would forever taint his perception of the orcs; he would view them as a deceitful and murderous people.

In the confusion that followed, Garona escaped the keep, vanishing into the chaos of battle. Word of the king's death spread quickly, and morale faltered. Fighting engulfed nearly every corner of Stormwind. The Horde's continuing barrage set fire to the city.

That was when Lothar and Khadgar returned from Karazhan. They saw the chaos, and when they learned the king was dead, Lothar took command of the remaining forces. There was nothing left to be done for his city. He could only save as many of its people as he could.

Lothar ordered a mass evacuation of the city. He, Khadgar, Gavinrad, and the remaining soldiers gathered Prince Varian and his mother, Queen Taria, along with any other citizens they could find. They fought street by street to Stormwind's harbor, losing many on the way. Among the casualties was Taria. When Lothar and the other survivors finally reached the docks, before they set sail, they destroyed nearly all of the city's remaining boats so that the Horde could not follow.

Stormwind City burned to the ground behind the refugees. The First War was over.

The Horde stood victorious. But its warchief was anything but happy.



LOTHAR AND OTHER REFUGEES FLEE STORMWIND

He needed demons.

Sargeraz rallied the wicked creatures to his side, and he indulged in the terrible might of fel magic. The destructive energy enveloped his soul and scarred his noble form forever, but it also granted Sargeraz power beyond anything he had ever known.

The corrupted titan gave some of this newfound power to his demonic acolytes, uniting them as one in the emerald fires of fel magic. He named his growing army the Burning Legion, and he unleashed it upon the unsuspecting universe.

In time, the Legion's ranks would swell with new types of demons. World after world would fall to their relentless onslaught. Some mortal civilizations would willingly join the Legion to escape oblivion. Others would be forcibly corrupted.

And still others would be erased from existence forever.

DRAENOR AND THE EVERGROWTH

Before the Burning Legion launched its crusade, a small world took shape in a distant corner of the Great Dark. This world would be known by many names in the coming ages. The mighty ogres would call it *Datagar*, meaning "the Known Earth" in their brutish tongue. An intelligent avian race known as the arakkoa would later name it *Raksobar*, "the Sunstone."

In modern times, the most common name for this world would be Draenor.

Draenor did not contain a slumbering world-soul, but it was remarkable in other ways. Nearly all worlds in existence were home to elemental spirits of fire, air, earth, and water. Sometimes, these primordial beings were highly destructive. They took on physical forms and waged war against each other, keeping their respective worlds in a state of constant upheaval.

Such was not the case on Draenor. An abundance of the fifth element—the Spirit of Life—had saturated the world. This force had a natural calming effect on the elemental spirits. It tempered their violent nature, and it even prevented them from taking on physical forms.

The fifth element had another, far more extraordinary effect on Draenor. It accelerated the growth of flora and fauna. It made the world into a cradle of vibrant, untamed life.

Creatures of every shape and size roamed the young world, vying for dominance. The strong preyed on the weak. The cunning preyed on the strong. Savagery became critical to survival.

Draenor's greatest predators did not hunt with fang or claw. They hunted with root and thorn.

A carnivorous, invasive strain of plant had sprouted on Draenor. These life-forms were known as Sporemounds. Their tendril-like vines slithered over the earth and strangled every primitive beast that they could reach. As they grew, the Sporemounds consumed more and more and more. Their hunger and need to expand knew no end. They blossomed into living mountains of tangled brambles and noxious pods.

Wherever the Sporemounds' tendrils crept over the earth, lush forests and swampy mires took root. Before long, a labyrinth of deep wilds stretched to the far corners of the world.

Not even Draenor's elemental energies were safe from the Sporemounds. Their roots wormed deep underground in search of water. As they did, the invading plant life tapped into the fifth

element that suffused Draenor's stones and soil. Consuming this primordial energy ignited a crude communal sentience within the Sporemounds and the surrounding wilds. This newfound intelligence allowed Draenor's plants to act as a single massive organism. The Sporemounds and all other vegetation became known collectively as the Evergrowth.

If any major threat arose, the Evergrowth could react in unison. Yet such threats were nonexistent. The Evergrowth dominated everything in sight, and nothing could hold it at bay.

THE TAMING OF DRAENOR

While the Sporemounds flourished, Aggramar continued his hunt for demons. His grand mission eventually took him near Draenor, a world not yet discovered by the titans.

Aggramar lingered among the vast emptiness over Draenor, listening for the dreams of a world-soul at its core. He heard none. And yet the world still intrigued him. He had never seen a place of such voracious and diverse plant life, a place of such untamed savagery.

The more Aggramar observed the Evergrowth, the more he foresaw doom in Draenor's future. If left unchecked, the plant life would consume *everything* on the world, even the elemental spirits. Once that happened, the Evergrowth would devour itself. Draenor would be left a dust-blown wasteland, devoid of even the most primitive life.

Though Aggramar was eager to continue his war against demons, he could not leave Draenor to such a fate. His natural affinity for order compelled him to take action.

The titan warrior did not want to exterminate Draenor's plant life; he desired only to temper it. He knew that to do so, he would need to neutralize the Sporemounds. They were the heart of the Evergrowth's power and the cause of its rampant expansion.

Aggramar considered destroying the Sporemounds himself, but his power was so great that he feared he would irreparably damage or even shatter Draenor. He also knew he could not stand guard over the world forever. Instead, he would create a mighty servant in his image to uproot the Sporemounds and then maintain balance over Draenor.

Aggramar swept his colossal hand over the world and wove its fire, air, earth, and water energies into a massive elemental storm. He channeled the roaring tempest into Draenor's largest mountain. The energies blasted through the crust and sent shockwaves of force around the globe. Then the mountain itself groaned to life and stood up on two colossal legs. Raw elemental power crackled over a craggy hide crisscrossed by veins of molten stone.

Aggramar named his creation Grond. He would serve as the titan warrior's hand on Draenor.

At Aggramar's command, Grond set out to divide and conquer the Evergrowth. The walking mountain lumbered over the world, lakes of elemental fire trailing in his footsteps. Grond dredged out seas, carved valleys, and forged mountains to separate the Evergrowth. Then he marched toward the nearest Sporemound, which towered nearly as high as the giant.

The Sporemound's gnarled roots exploded from the earth to entangle Grond and bar his way. The giant smashed through them with ease. Grond stabbed his jagged fingers into the Sporemound, and then he tore it from the world's surface with a single mighty heave.

The other Sporemounds shivered in agony at the destruction of their kin. Mere roots and vines would not topple Grond. The Sporemounds needed a new weapon. They needed to adapt.





ORC CLANS RALLY FOR WAR

THE SIEGE OF GORIA

400 YEARS BEFORE THE DARK PORTAL

Goria's fortifications were significant, and the orcs saw no reason to waste countless lives breaking them down. They kept their distance on the hills surrounding the ogre city, content to starve out their enemy. The Gorians believed they could outlast any siege; they had ships and an ocean port, which the orcs could only threaten with help from the distressed elemental spirits. Due to the tumultuous state of the elements, the shaman were not as effective in calling on their powers as they once had been.

But as the months passed, the ogres found themselves unable to maintain their empire. They had been wrong in thinking that they could solely rely on trade via the ocean to support their city. It simply wasn't enough. The ogres needed access to their network of land-based trade routes, which the orcs had severed. Emperor Molok and his sorcerers revisited their Apexis crystals, searching for a way to break the siege. In time, they discovered the ancient arakkoan legend about the Curse of Sethe, and they began experimenting with ways to induce a similar affliction among the orcs.

They succeeded. A new affliction called the "red pox" spread like wildfire through the orcs' encampments. This wasting disease was highly contagious, lasted for months, and killed many of the infected. The orcs found their number of healthy combatants dwindling rapidly. After consulting the elements, Nelgarm and his fellow shaman learned that this was not a natural disease; it was an unseen attack from the ogres.

Uncertainty took hold in the clan chieftains as they realized that the siege was now doomed to fail—too many orcs would die before Goria succumbed. And with so many warriors ill, a frontal assault against the city was no longer possible. Time was running out.

Nelgarm and the other orc shaman decided to take a very dangerous step to secure victory: they beseeched the elements to annihilate Goria. Never before had shaman made such a violent request. Yet both the orcs and the elemental spirits understood that Emperor Molok would resume meddling with the Throne of the Elements if the clans failed.

The shaman gathered outside Goria's mighty walls and witnessed the true fury of the spirits. What happened next would never be forgotten.


A roaring storm churned above the city. The ground groaned and trembled. Over the course of hours, lightning and earthquakes brought down every wall and every building inside Goria. Fire enveloped the ruins, sealing off the escape routes and burning the ships in the capital's harbor. When there was nothing left but ash and rubble, the earth itself wrenched open like a giant maw, and Emperor Molok and the remains of his great city were swallowed whole.

Untold thousands of ogres died that day. The elementals let none survive. Only whispers of the event would reach the other Gorian cities and outposts, but those whispers would be enough to discourage any further tampering with the elements.

The orcs stood victorious but not jubilant. They had suffered tremendous losses, and they had witnessed a destructive power they never wanted to see again. Nelgarm and the other shaman were particularly frightened by the elementals' wrath. They said that the need for a unified army had passed and that the clans should go their separate ways.

There was little argument. The clans returned to their lands, but life had changed forever. The red pox never truly disappeared. Every few generations, an outbreak would wreak havoc among the clans.





CHAPTER III
**RISE OF THE
HORDE**

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that week, the Guardian had made appearances at Karazhan's parties every night. It did not seem possible for him to have committed the murders.

The council's remaining members had suspicions, but they couldn't rule out the possibility that someone else was targeting them. In truth, they found it hard to imagine that Medivh could have fallen so far as to murder fellow magi. They ceased their spying on Karazhan and focused their efforts on discovering who was slaughtering them like lambs.

Medivh was free to act once again.

THE DARK PORTAL

As the Dark Portal took shape on Draenor, Gul'dan urged Blackhand to strengthen the clans. The warchief staged mock battles and duels between the orcs to give them an outlet for their bloodlust. The Horde had grown feeble, and it needed every fighter at its disposal for the coming invasion of Azeroth.

Though many orcs reveled in combat, Durotan saw it as a disgrace to tradition. The Frostwolf chieftain could no longer stay silent about what was happening to his people. His world was dying. He had seen the orcs become bloodthirsty savages. Durotan began speaking out against Gul'dan and the use of fel magic. He urged the orcs to seek ways to heal their world. Most clans saw this as an act of treason and cowardice, and they lashed out at the Frostwolves.

Gul'dan kept a careful watch on Durotan, but his efforts were focused on other things. He and Blackhand convinced the clans that conquering Azeroth was the only way their people would survive. Most orcs, especially those who had drunk Mannoroth's blood, were delighted at the opportunity to slaughter once again. Draenor was dying; none could deny that. If the Horde did not take this chance to build a new home, everyone would perish.

Once the Dark Portal was built, Gul'dan worked with Medivh to open it. The warlock would conduct a ritual with his counterpart on Azeroth to tear a rift in the fabric of reality. The amount of raw power needed to do so was astonishing. It would require Gul'dan and Medivh to pool their magic together . . . but even that would not be enough on its own.

Nearly every draenei prisoner who still lived was brought to the base of the Dark Portal. At the moment the ritual began, Gul'dan drained all of their life essences in an instant. That massive spike of power created the spark needed to cross such a large distance.

Meanwhile, Medivh conducted his own spellwork on Azeroth. In an isolated swamp east of Karazhan known as the Black Morass, he called upon the full might of his Guardian energies to rip open a gateway. Due to his and Gul'dan's combined efforts, the Dark Portal shimmered and activated, forming a bridge between the two worlds.

Through the portal, Gul'dan and the orcs glimpsed Azeroth for the first time. The world that the hooded stranger had promised him was real.

Blackhand sent his most trusted scouts—members of the Bleeding Hollow and the Black Tooth Grin clans—to survey the other side of the portal. They emerged in the Black Morass and quickly established a camp. A number of warlocks accompanied these scouts. They oversaw the effort to build an enchanted stone frame around the portal on the Azeroth side, which would stabilize the gateway and allow it to stay open for extended periods.

As construction progressed, the orcs scouted more and more territory.

CLASH OF THE GUARDIANS

The sheer scale of magical power required to open the Dark Portal made the event impossible to hide. Medivh had concealed his activities as much as possible, but almost every creature attuned to magic on Azeroth felt ripples when the gateway roared to life.

Most could not detect where the disturbance had come from. One person could. Aegwynn immediately set out to investigate the source.

She was shocked to discover the Dark Portal and the green-skinned beings who had established a war camp in the Black Morass. They were clearly hostile, and they were laced with traces of the Burning Legion's fel power. Aegwynn had never seen orcs, nor had she heard of Draenor, but she was able to sense the bridge between the two worlds.

And then, in a moment that shook her to her core, she recognized that a Guardian's magic had been used to make this possible. There was no mistaking it: the only person on Azeroth who was capable of using *this* power in *this* way was her son, Medivh.

She also sensed the presence of fel magic intertwined with his. Aegwynn could not fathom what had happened, but she could only conclude that Medivh had somehow allied himself with the Legion.

With a heavy heart, she set out to stop him.

Accompanied by a blue dragon named Arcanagos—one of the few allies she had made during her long years of exile—she traveled to Karazhan to confront Medivh. The tower was crowded, filled with nobles who were expecting another exciting gala.

Aegwynn entered the tower alone at first, hoping she could convince Medivh to give up his power peacefully. It was not to be. The creature she fought that day was not Medivh but Sargeras. The lord of the Burning Legion seized full control of the Guardian's mind, suppressing his thoughts and memories, controlling his every action.

Sargeras revealed to Aegwynn that the darkness within her son was the same darkness she had felt as Guardian. It had nothing to do with her power or her burden. Sargeras had transferred a portion of his spirit into her when they'd fought long ago in Northrend, and he had remained hidden within the mage until she gave birth to her son.

Aegwynn was stunned as the truth set in. She had not bested Sargeras all those years ago; he had bested her. The darkness that had plagued her was not from the burden of Guardianship, but from her greatest nemesis lurking in her soul. Had she doomed her son to a life as a Legion slave? Had her entire tenure as Guardian been meaningless? These revelations might have broken a lesser human, but not Aegwynn. She did not lose herself to despair. No, she became *angry*. She would defeat Sargeras here and now, even if it meant striking down her beloved boy.

And with that, Aegwynn and Sargeras went to battle once again. The opening blows of the fight shook the tower to its foundations. The would-be revelers tried to flee. Arcanagos leaped into the fray just as one of Sargeras's spells temporarily incapacitated Aegwynn.

Despite being a dragon, Arcanagos was severely outmatched. Sargeras struck him down, burning the creature from the inside out, until all that remained was bone.

The loss of her friend sent Aegwynn even further into the depths of rage, and she drew on her anger to break free of Sargeras's spell. The Legion's ruler might have had the full weight of a Guardian's power under his control, but she had centuries of experience. As the great duel continued raging through the tower, Aegwynn slowly gained the upper hand.



CHAPTER V
**THE SECOND
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BATTLE OF HILLSBRAD FOOTHILLS

6 YEARS AFTER THE DARK PORTAL

With Admiral Proudmoore's fleet scattered, the Horde continued to Hillsbrad Foothills and made landfall uncontested. The Alliance's defenses were sparse. Though the majority of the Alliance forces had reached Hillsbrad, they were in disarray.

The orcish army stormed ashore, but the red dragons who guarded the Horde's fleet refused to follow them. Nekros had stayed in Grim Batol to watch over Alexstrasza, and he was not present to give the creatures new commands. He had ordered them only to protect the ships, and they would not kill any more humans than necessary. It was a small act of defiance, but it was all that the dragons could do without endangering Alexstrasza.

Orgrim did not press the issue. He left the dragons where they were and marched inland. He planned to cross the Alterac Mountains to reach Capital City. It would be a difficult journey, but it was the quickest way to strike at Lordaeron.

Lothar anticipated this plan. From a military standpoint, Lordaeron's capital was a target that was too good to resist. Its fall would breed division and throw the rest of the Alliance into chaos. Lothar would not let that happen. He arrayed his tired troops across Hillsbrad to bar the northern and western routes to the capital. Lothar then rallied his soldiers as best he could, but his words had little effect. He could see the fear in their eyes. This was the first time most of the humans had ever seen the hulking orcs. They were things born of nightmare.

Fortunately for Lothar, the paladins had finished their training. The holy knights rode through the Alliance lines, their presence filling their fellow soldiers with hope and courage.

The Horde's war drums sounded, and the howling mass of green-skinned warriors charged north. They smashed into the human lines with war cries on their lips and oiled blades in hand.

For the first time in history, the full might of the Horde and the Alliance armies clashed. Alleria and her high elf rangers thinned the Horde's ranks with bow and arrow, while Lothar fought beside his paladins. Elsewhere, Khadgar and other magi unleashed their arcane powers on the approaching orcs.

The Second War had begun.

Amid the fighting, a corrosive fog crept over the battlefield. From the fetid mists, slain human soldiers rose from the dead and then launched themselves at their former comrades. At the head of this unholy army were a handful of hooded figures riding skeletal steeds.

The death knights had entered the field.

They charged through the stunned human army, inflicting pain and terror on their enemies. Orgrim watched the attack with a mix of displeasure and satisfaction. He was still uneasy about the death knights, but he now saw just how effective they were in combat.

The mere sight of the death knights horrified the humans, and the Alliance lines began to crumble. It was then that a blazing white light appeared from Uther, Turalyon, and the other paladins. Waves of holy energy rippled over the Alliance soldiers, striking down the reanimated human corpses and sweeping away the death knights' corruptive fog.



ALLIANCE PALADINS AND OTHER SOLDIERS BATTLE THE DEATH KNIGHTS



GRUUL FACES DEATHWING

THE BLACK TEMPLE

Having recovered the Skull of Gul'dan, Turalyon turned his forces south. Shadowmoon Valley was far, but he had magic to help him expedite the journey. Khadgar and his fellow magi opened a series of portals through which the Sons of Lothar reached southern Draenor.

Outside the Black Temple, the two halves of the Alliance army reunited. Yet they had not reached the city in time to stop Ner'zhul. What was worse, the Horde had prepared for their arrival. The remnants of the orcish army had dug in around the Black Temple to keep the Sons of Lothar back.

Much to Khadgar's dismay, he sensed potent energies lashing out from atop the Black Temple. Ner'zhul and his followers were in the midst of preparing their spell to open new portals. There was no time for a drawn-out siege, no time to find a way around the Black Temple's guardians.

The Sons of Lothar launched themselves against the city and crashed into the defenders. While battle raged, Khadgar and his fellow magi hunted for Ner'zhul, hoping to reach him and disrupt his spellwork.

They would not succeed.

Atop the city's largest tower, Ner'zhul had gathered some of the death knights and a number of Shadowmoon orcs to help him with his spellwork and protect him from the Alliance. He and his followers had harnessed the power of the Eye of Dalaran, the Book of Medivh, and the Scepter of Sargeras. Ner'zhul tapped into the nexus of ley lines beneath the Black Temple, but he was woefully unprepared for the amount of skill needed for this ritual. He was desperate to succeed, and his recklessness caused the energies at his command to spiral out of control. As planned, Ner'zhul blasted multiple holes through the fabric of reality, but they were followed by others. *Many* others.

The magic that Ner'zhul had unleashed destabilized Draenor's ley lines. Unimaginable forces began to tear open rifts across Draenor. With each passing moment, the world groaned louder in upheaval. Fissures erupted across land and sea.

Khadgar and the other magi arrived just as this chain reaction was unfolding. They managed to recover the Eye of Dalaran and the Book of Medivh, but not the Scepter of Sargeras. With the artifact in hand, Ner'zhul and a few of his closest followers escaped into the nearest portal.

Ner'zhul had saved himself but doomed his world.

THE BREAKING OF DRAENOR

Khadgar had recovered most of the stolen artifacts, but the damage to Draenor had already been done. The unstable rifts opening across the land would soon shatter the world and almost certainly kill everyone on it. Even worse, the destructive energies would blast through the Dark Portal into Azeroth.

After consulting with Turalyon, Khadgar knew what needed to be done. The Sons of Lothar would have to destroy the Dark Portal to protect their homeworld, and they would have to do so from Draenor. With chaos unfolding all around, there was no time to gather on Azeroth and perform the task there. It was a suicide mission, but no one hesitated.

The energies lashing across the world hampered Khadgar's own magical abilities, preventing him from creating a portal to Hellfire Peninsula. He and his allies were forced to use gryphons