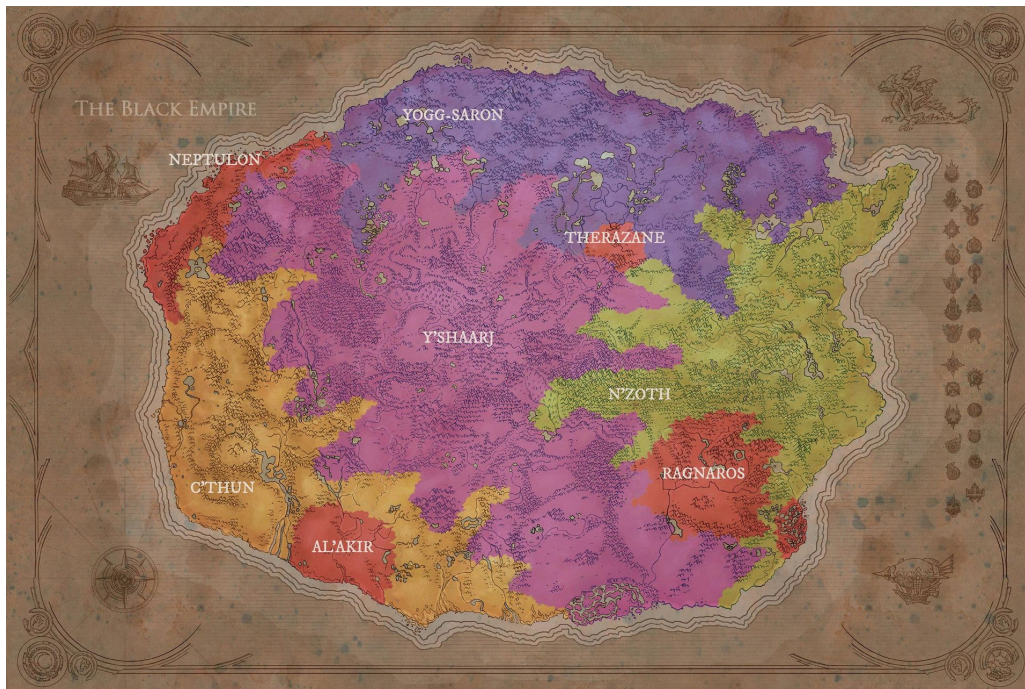


## Mythological era of Azeroth (>150,000 years before the Dark Portal)



*“The Black Empire before the war with the titan-forged.”*

Map of Kalimdor during the Black Empire's reign by Joseph Lacroix as seen in World of Warcraft: Chronicle Volume 1.  
(Source: [https://wow.gamepedia.com/File:Black\\_Empire\\_Kalimdor.jpeg](https://wow.gamepedia.com/File:Black_Empire_Kalimdor.jpeg))



*Aman'Thul rips Y'Shaarj from the center of Azeroth's supercontinent, primordial Kalimdor.*

Aman'Thul and Y'Shaarj, by YeastSoldier, Deviantart  
(Source: <https://www.deviantart.com/yeastsoldier/art/Aman-Thul-and-Y-Shaari-663068133>)

“The volatile arcane lifeblood of Azeroth's world-soul rushed to the surface and roiled over the world. It was through this event that the Pantheon realized that the Old Gods had embedded themselves too deep in Azeroth's surface to remove without severely harming the world-soul, and so they instead resolved to imprison the vile entities below the surface of the world.”

*Well of Eternity, Wowpedia (Source: [https://wow.gamepedia.com/Well\\_of\\_Eternity#History](https://wow.gamepedia.com/Well_of_Eternity#History))*



*Like an arrow removed from flesh, the torn form of the God of Seven Heads exposed a wound boring into Azeroth's surface, from which immensely potent energies poured out.*

*The Wound, by hipnosworld, Deviantart (Source: <https://www.deviantart.com/hipnosworld/art/The-Wound-697995303>)*

“The volatile arcane lifeblood of Azeroth's world-soul rushed to the surface and roiled over the world. It was through this event that the Pantheon realized that the Old Gods had embedded themselves too deep in Azeroth's surface to remove without severely harming the world-soul, and so they instead resolved to imprison the vile entities below the surface of the world.”

*Well of Eternity, Wowpedia (Source: [https://wow.gamepedia.com/Well\\_of\\_Eternity#History](https://wow.gamepedia.com/Well_of_Eternity#History))*

## **-16,000**

“At the heart of ancient Kalimdor lay the Well of Eternity, an enormous lake filled with powerful energies. The Well accelerated the cycles of growth and rebirth on the primordial continent, and soon sentient life forms arose from the wilds. The trolls were among the first and most prolific.”

*Troll, Wowpedia (Source: <https://wow.gamepedia.com/Troll#History>)*



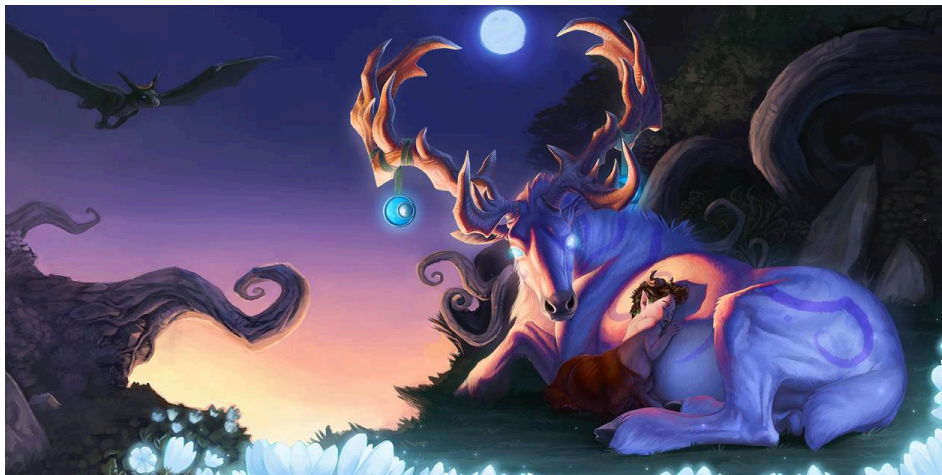


*“The ordered Azeroth after the fall of the Black Empire, with the well in the continent's center.”*

A map of Kalimdor after the ordering of Azeroth, by Joseph Lacroix, as seen in *World of Warcraft: Chronicle Volume 1*.  
(Source: [https://wow.gamepedia.com/File:Ordered\\_Azeroth.jpg](https://wow.gamepedia.com/File:Ordered_Azeroth.jpg))

“As the titan-forged began shaping Azeroth, Keeper Freya wandered the world, creating enclaves of life and nature in the places where the waters of the Well of Eternity had coalesced, such as Un'Goro Crater, Sholazar Basin and the Vale of Eternal Blossoms. The greatest creatures to emerge from Freya's enclaves were the colossal Wild Gods.”

Wild God, Wowpedia (Source: [https://wow.gamepedia.com/Wild\\_God#Origins](https://wow.gamepedia.com/Wild_God#Origins))



*Malorne, Wild God and Ancient Guardian. Consort to distant Elune, Ysera the Dreamer would care for his demigod son Cenarius, who would become patron of the druids.*

*The Farewell*, by Khaidu (Source: <https://www.deviantart.com/khaidu/art/The-Farewell-475890089>)

“What all trolls shared was a common religion centered around Kalimdor's Wild Gods, which the trolls worshipped as deities under the name "loa". The troll tribes gathered near the sacred mountain range of Zandalar in southern Kalimdor, where many of the loa dwelt. The lesser tribes built small encampments on Zandalar's slopes, but the most powerful tribe, the Zandalari, claimed the highest peaks and plateaus. There, they built a cluster of shrines that would later come to grow into the temple city of Zuldazar.”

*Troll, Wowpedia (Source: <https://wow.gamepedia.com/Troll#History>)*



*The remnants of the sacred mountain range of Zuldazar, as roughly depicted in-game. As a result of the Sundering, the region of its temple city would become fragmented from southern primordial Kalimdor, forming Zandalar Isle, an island of the South Seas.*

Battle for Azeroth Preview: Zuldazar Visitor's Guide, by Blizzard Entertainment (Source: <https://news.blizzard.com/en-gb/world-of-warcraft/21701414/battle-for-azeroth-preview-zuldazar-visitor-s-guide>)



*Skeram Prophet by Blizzard Entertainment*

(Source: [https://wowwiki.fandom.com/wiki/Qiraji\\_prophet?file=Skeram.JPG](https://wowwiki.fandom.com/wiki/Qiraji_prophet?file=Skeram.JPG))

“The titan-forged Archaedas used his earth magic to collapse the burrows, forcing the insectoids to escape above ground, where they found themselves surrounded by the titan-forged. Most of the aqir were destroyed by the titan-forged, though several small pockets survived by tunneling deep underground, too weakened to launch a counterattack.

Thousands of years later (...) a rebellious group of trolls accidentally awakened Kith'ix, an ancient servant of the Old God Yogg-Saron who had



survived an encounter with the titan-forged Tyr centuries earlier. Kith'ix, knowing that destroying the trolls would please its Old God masters, reached out with its mind and discovered the aqir, rallying them into building the subterranean empire of Azj'Aqir.

Aqir, Wowpedia (Source: <https://wow.gamepedia.com/Aqir>)

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*Forest troll of the Amani Empire (left) and jungle troll of the Gurubashi Empire (right).*

Left: illustration from the Warcraft RPG books (Source: [https://wow.gamepedia.com/File:Forest\\_troll.jpg](https://wow.gamepedia.com/File:Forest_troll.jpg)); Right: Untitled (?) by Tooth (Source: <https://www.pinterest.cl/pin/493496071667558323/>)

“The Zandalari Empire was heavily dependent on a caste system, and as time went on those castes evolved into their own people. The lower castes eventually left the Zandalari Empire, and the Zandalari trolls were content to see them go, seeing them as children who would see the folly of youthful rebellion and come back begging for Zandalari approval.

However, the trolls would not return. Over time two distinct troll empires emerged: the Amani Empire of the middle forestlands and the Gurubashi Empire of the Southeastern jungles. Smaller tribes lived far North in the region now called Northrend. These tribes founded a small nation known as Zul'Drak, but they never achieved the size or prosperity of the southern empires.”

Troll, Wowpedia (Source: <https://wow.gamepedia.com/Troll#History>)

A smaller tribe of Dark Trolls migrates to the heart of primordial Kalimdor, where the arcane waters of the Well of Eternity shimmer. Over the course of two millenia, the same font of power originally underlying their species' genesis would further transform them, and a new people would be born — a people destined to selfishly rip the world apart — and to gently nurture its healing.

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“When the time was right, Kith'ix led the aqir to the surface, launching a terrible war against the trolls.”

*Aqir, Wowpedia (Source: <https://wow.gamepedia.com/Aqir>)*

“The Empire of Zul was a powerful coalition of troll tribes which formed during the Aqir and Troll War, around 16,000 years before the First War. United by the most powerful and influential troll tribe on Ancient Kalimdor, the Zandalari, the Empire of Zul sought to halt the relentless advance of the insectoid aqir, who had begun to swarm across the breadth of the continent. The alliance was one of necessity, with each faction of trolls facing extinction at the hands of the aqir.

Working together and employing new tactics, the empire succeeded in repelling the aqiri invasion, significantly preventing the fall of the strategic Zandalar Mountains. Following these victories, however, the united troll tribes launched several brutal and concurrent campaigns to not only destroy the aqir threat permanently, but also to expand their borders to new and untouched lands (...) The Empire of Zul was now uncontested in its domination of all of Kalimdor.”

*Empire of Zul, Wowpedia (Source: [https://wow.gamepedia.com/Empire\\_of\\_Zul](https://wow.gamepedia.com/Empire_of_Zul))*



A map of Kalimdor after the war between the aqir and the trolls, by Joseph Lacroix, as depicted in World of Warcraft: Chronicle Volume 1. (Source: [https://wow.gamepedia.com/File:Kalimdor\\_Chronicle.jpg](https://wow.gamepedia.com/File:Kalimdor_Chronicle.jpg))



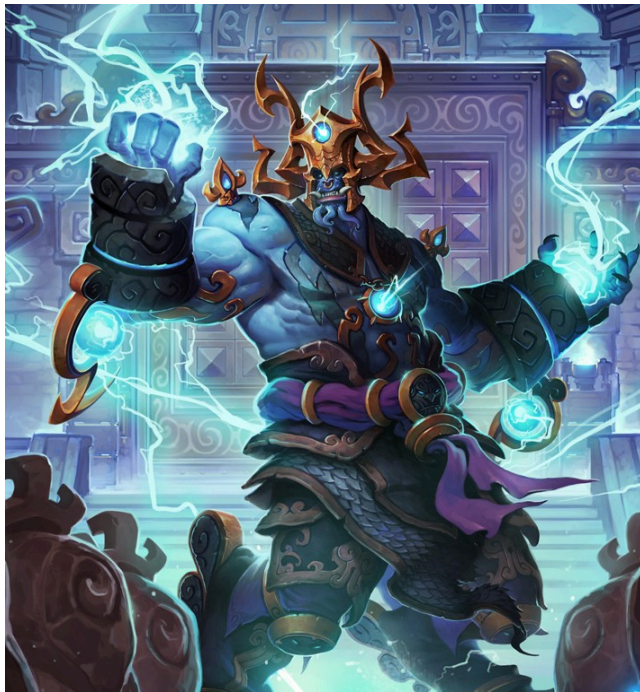
## **-15,000**

The Curse of Flesh spreads among the lesser titan-forged — confusion and hatred spread among the northern Vrykul; the situation is mirrored among the southern Mogu. Power shifts rapidly between the hands of Mogu warlords as a civilization is fragmented into disorganized clans, ushering in the Age of a Hundred Kings. A clan heir is left with a few loyal guardsmen after the betrayal and murder of his father.

“Rather than continue the fighting, the young mogu chose to go into exile, meditating and wandering the land. Most mogu saw Lei Shen's meditations as a sign of madness and proof that he would never threaten any mogu ever again.”

Lei Shen, Wowpedia (Source: [https://wow.gamepedia.com/Lei\\_Shen#Biography](https://wow.gamepedia.com/Lei_Shen#Biography))

Lei Shen uncovers the titanic vaults beneath Pandaria. Binding the lethargic Ra-den and taking the power of Aman'Thul, Lei Shen vows to continue the Titans' work to “order” Azeroth. Through bloodshed and subjugation, the Mogu Empire is wrought by the merciless tyrant who would become known as the Thunder King.



Lei Shen the Thunder King (Source: [https://wow.gamepedia.com/File:Lei\\_Shen.jpg](https://wow.gamepedia.com/File:Lei_Shen.jpg))

*“Pandaria, her hills of gold  
In dark and mournful times of old  
Did once a hopeless horror hold*

*When from her sacred veil did spring  
With storm and flash a monstrous thing  
His name Lei-Shen, the Thunder King*

*His thunder boomed across the land  
And none who dared and fought could stand  
Against the iron tyrant's hand."*

*Excerpt from Lorewalker Cho's poem "The Thunder King" (Source: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q51B6M70QBs>)*

"Possessed of immense size and strength, the mogu built an empire based on might, in which the weak — other races — were subjugated, and the strong — always mogu — ascended to power. Imposing stone monuments and titanic siege engines displayed the power of the mogu to the rest of the land. They turned their strength on the lesser inhabitants of Pandaria, shaping flesh to their whims as they shaped rock."

*Mogu empire, Wowpedia (Source: [https://wow.gamepedia.com/Mogu\\_empire#History](https://wow.gamepedia.com/Mogu_empire#History))*

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"Soon, the Zandalari trolls took notice of the otherworldly powers wielded by the Thunder King. Zulathra, a high priest of the Zandalari, proposed to Lei Shen an exchange of each other's secrets; the mogu's arcane power for the trolls' knowledge of the lands beyond the vale. Together, the two empires would be unstoppable."

*Mogu empire, Wowpedia (Source: [https://wow.gamepedia.com/Mogu\\_empire#History](https://wow.gamepedia.com/Mogu_empire#History))*

"The Zandalari were allied with the mogu and their empire, but both the mogu and Zandalari held contempt for one another. The Zandalari thought themselves above the mogu for two reasons: the presence of the loa, and that the Zandalari did not use slaves as the mogu did. The mutual contempt between the two would grow to polite indifference. They trusted the other not to attack because they were confident they would defeat the other. While Zandalari and mogu stood back to back, they did not watch the other and did not see the other falter."

*Troll, Wowpedia (Source: <https://wow.gamepedia.com/Troll#History>)*

## **-13,500**

"After their discovery of the Well of Eternity, the descendants of [the] dark trolls, now calling themselves "Kaldorei" in their new language, came to power. Despite the trolls' attempts to keep them from expanding their territories, the night elves built a strong empire that expanded rapidly across primordial Kalimdor. Wielding magics never before seen by their ancestors' kin, who remained largely superstitious, the night elves had little trouble demolishing the trolls' twin empires, an act the aqir could not accomplish."

*Troll, Wowpedia (Source: <https://wow.gamepedia.com/Troll#History>)*





## **-10,000**

“Eventually, the night elves' reckless overuse of magic lured the demonic Burning Legion to the world. The demons destroyed much of the night elves' civilization. Though there are no records to indicate that the Legion attacked either troll civilization, it is likely that battles took place across the breadth of the continent.

At the end of this conflict, known as the War of the Ancients, the Well of Eternity imploded. The resulting shockwave shattered the greater landmass of Kalimdor. The center of the continent was blasted beneath the sea, leaving a group of multiple, broken, continents. Thus, great chunks of both the Amani and Gurubashi Empires were lost to the waves, but plenty of their territories still exist in the present-day lands of Quel'Thalas and Stranglethorn, respectively. The Azj'Aqir kingdoms of Azjol-Nerub, Ahn'Qiraj and the Mantid Empire have also survived in present-day Northrend, Tanaris, and Pandaria, respectively.”

## **-1,500**

“The long centuries following the Great Sundering of the world were difficult ones for the troll race. Famine and death were commonplace within the broken kingdoms. The Gurubashi trolls, driven to desperate ends, sought aid from ancient, mystical forces. Though both of the troll kingdoms shared a central belief in a great pantheon of primitive gods, the Gurubashi fell under the sway of a darker one.”

*Troll, Wowpedia (Source: <https://wow.gamepedia.com/Troll#History>)*

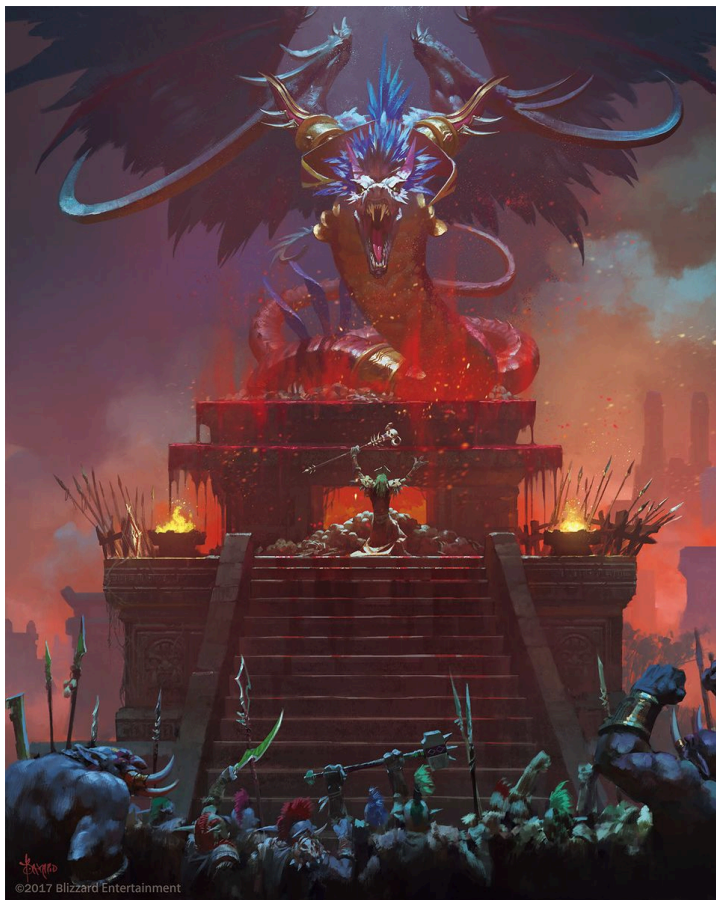


*Hakkar the Soulflayer by Blizzard Entertainment (Source: <https://wow.gamepedia.com/File:Hakkar2.jpg>)*



“1,500 years before the opening of the Dark Portal, Hakkar the Soulflayer (...) heard the trolls' calls of distress and decided to aid them. Hakkar gave his secrets of blood to the Gurubashi and helped them extend their civilization across most of Stranglethorn Vale and certain islands of the South Seas. Though he brought them great power, Hakkar demanded souls be sacrificed to him daily. He wanted to gain access to the physical world so that he could terrorize and devour mortal creatures. In time, the Zandalari helped the Gurubashi realize what kind of creature they had courted with, and both forces turned against him. The strongest tribes rose up against Hakkar and his loyal priests, the Atal'ai.”

*Troll, Wowpedia (Source: <https://wow.gamepedia.com/Troll#History>)*



*Hakkar, the loa of blood, in Zul'Gurub. From World of Warcraft: Chronicle Volume 3. Artwork by Bayard Wu. (Source: [https://wow.gamepedia.com/File:Chronicle3\\_Hakkar.jpg](https://wow.gamepedia.com/File:Chronicle3_Hakkar.jpg))*

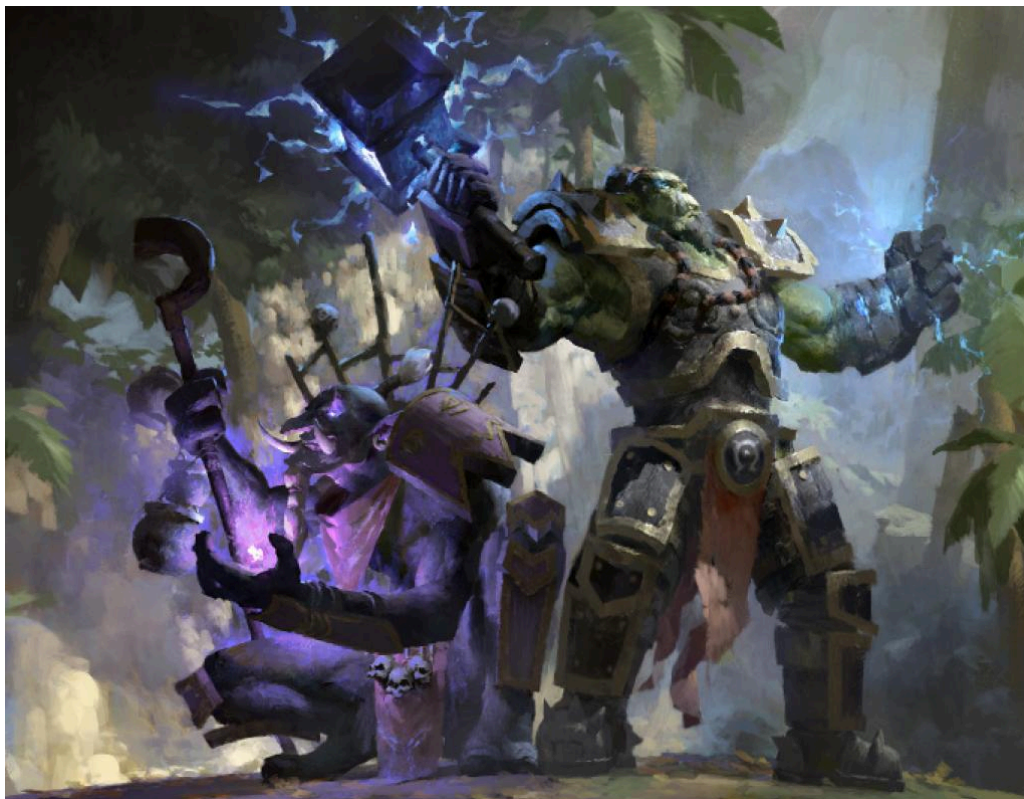
“The devastating war that ensued between Hakkar's followers and the rest of the Gurubashi tribes was not well recorded and has mostly been passed on through oral tradition. The budding empire was shattered by the magic unleashed between the angry god and his rebel children. Just as the war began turning away from the trolls' favor, they succeeded in destroying Hakkar's avatar and banishing him from the mortal world.

(...) The rest of the Gurubashi tribes separated after the great civil war had left their lands in ruins. The Skullsplitter, Bloodscalp, and Darkspear tribes set off to claim their own lands within the vast jungles of Stranglethorn. Though a fragile peace had settled over the broken empire, rumors of a prophecy that Hakkar would one day be reborn into the world spread.”

## Year 20

“As tribal rivalries erupted throughout the former Gurubashi Empire, the Darkspear tribe found themselves driven from their homeland in Stranglethorn Vale (...) Having settled on the Darkspear islands, the tribe soon found themselves entangled in a conflict with a group of murlocs. Eventually, they also found new enemies in humans when a Kul Tiran fleet landed on the island in search for some orcs who had stolen some ships. The trolls’ fate seemed sealed until the orcish Warchief Thrall and his band of newly freed orcs — the orcs the humans were looking for — took shelter on the island after a heavy storm. The orcs managed to defeat the humans, but their victory was short-lived.”

*Darkspear tribe, Wowpedia (Source: [https://wow.gamepedia.com/Darkspear\\_tribe#History](https://wow.gamepedia.com/Darkspear_tribe#History))*



*"Legacy of the Horde", featuring Sen'jin and Thrall, by Ruan Jia. From the Reign of Fire TCG set. (Source: [https://wow.gamepedia.com/File:Legacy\\_of\\_the\\_Horde.jpg](https://wow.gamepedia.com/File:Legacy_of_the_Horde.jpg))*



“Controlled by a Sea Witch, the Underworld Minions captured the Darkspears' leader Sen'jin along with Thrall and several orcs, trolls, and humans. They were all brought to a complex prison made by caves below the island. Thrall managed to free himself and his companions but was ultimately unable to save the trolls' leader. Although Sen'jin was sacrificed to the Sea Witch, he was able to reveal a vision he had in which Thrall would lead the Darkspear trolls from the island.

After returning to the island's surface, Thrall and his followers managed to fend off further attacks by the Sea Witch and her murloc minions and set sail for Kalimdor once again. Under the new leadership of Vol'jin, the Darkspear swore allegiance to Thrall's Horde and followed him to Kalimdor.”

*Darkspear tribe, Wowpedia (Source: [https://wow.gamepedia.com/Darkspear\\_tribe#History](https://wow.gamepedia.com/Darkspear_tribe#History))*

The events of the short story “Vol'jin: The Judgment” occur concurrently with the missions *Riders of the Storm*, *The Fires Down Below*, and *Countdown to Extinction* from Warcraft III's *Exodus of the Horde* campaign. The Judgment ends with Vol'jin deciding to send Zalazane ahead with some Darkspear to join Thrall in Kalimdor, while he helps those of his tribe still remaining to depart the now dangerous Darkspear Islands once and for all. After the trials at First Home, Vol'jin feels uneasy about Zalazane, although another part of his conscience still believes that, “They would help each other. Together they could do anything. They would be true, and fierce, and they would endure.”

In the following months, while the Darkspear work with Thrall's Horde to defeat Admiral Proudmoore and found new homes in Durotar, dissenting opinions arise among the Darkspear. Just as the loa had shown the witch doctor, Zalazane leads some Darkspear away from Vol'jin.



*Zalazane by Sean O'Daniels. (Source: [https://wow.gamepedia.com/File:Zalazane\\_TCG.jpg](https://wow.gamepedia.com/File:Zalazane_TCG.jpg))*

“I saw...” Zalazane hesitated. “I saw meself leadin’ Darkspear fighters away from de tribe. The leader, he was so weak, he sell us out, mon. I became the new leader, an’ the tribe split in half.”

*Vol'jin: The Judgment (Source: <https://worldofwarcraft.com/en-us/story/short-story/leader-story/voljin>)*