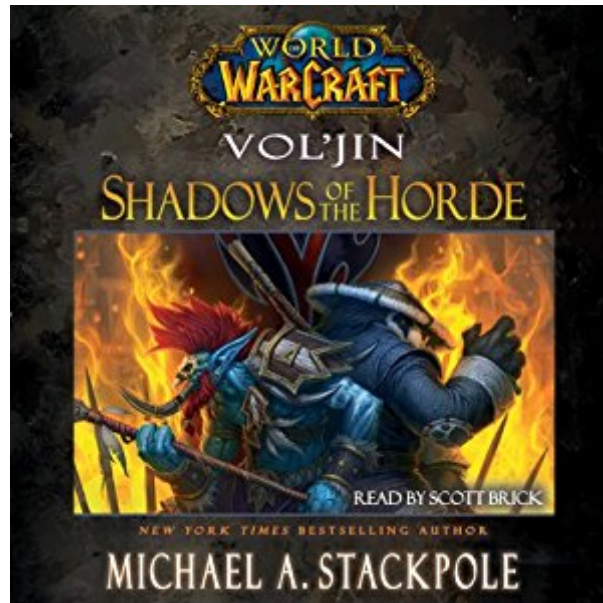


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World Of Warcraft: Vol'jin: Shadows Of The Horde



Synopsis

That night, visions mocked Vol'jin. He found himself in the midst of fighters, each of whom he recognized. He'd gathered them for that final assault on Zalazane, to end his madness and free the Echo Isles for the Darkspears. Each of the combatants took on aspects of a jinhui cube, faced to be at their maximum power. Not a fireship among them, but this did not surprise Vol'jin. He was the fireship, but not yet turned to display his maximum power. This was not a fight, though desperate, in which he would destroy himself. Aided by Bwonsamdi, they would slay Zalazane and reclaim the Echo Isles. Who be you, this troll, who be having memories of a heroic effort? Vol'jin turned, hearing the click of a cube snapping to a new facing. He felt trapped inside that cube, translucent though it was, and shocked that it had no values on any face. "I be Vol'jin." Bwonsamdi materialized in a gray world of swirling mists. "And who be this Vol'jin?" The question shook him. The Vol'jin of the vision had been the leader of the Darkspears, but was no longer. Reports of his death would just now be reaching the Horde. Perhaps they had not yet gotten there. In his heart, Vol'jin hoped his allies had been delayed, just so Garrosh could dwell one more day wondering if his plan had succeeded. That did not answer the question. He was no longer the leader of the Darkspears, not in any real sense. They might still acknowledge him, but he could give them no orders. They would resist Garrosh and any Horde attempt to conquer them, but in his absence, they might listen to envoys who offered them protection. They could be lost to him. Who do I be? Vol'jin shivered. Though he thought himself superior to Tyrathan Khort, at least the man was mobile and not wearing sick-robcs. The man hadn't been betrayed by a rival and assassinated. The man had clearly embraced some of the pandaren way. And yet, Tyrathan hesitated when he should not have. Some of it was a game to make the pandaren underestimate him, but Vol'jin had seen through that. The other bits, though, as he'd hesitated after Vol'jin complimented a move, those were genuine. And not something a man be allowing in himself. Vol'jin looked up at Bwonsamdi. "I be Vol'jin. I know who I was. Who I gonna be? That answer only Vol'jin could be finding. And for now, Bwonsamdi, that be enough."

Book Information

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Fantasy > Epic

Customer Reviews

Vol'jin: Shadows of the Horde is Michael A. Stackpole's first World of Warcraft book, and it doesn't disappoint. In the far off land of Pandaria, an outcast troll, a Pandaren brewmaster, and a deadly human archer join together to stop a ruthless invasion. Yet the story dives far deeper than simple warfare. Against long odds, the characters must fight battles within themselves as they struggle with identity and balance. Alongside bloody battle scenes and amazing feats of combat, there's a rich exploration of the characters. If fan's of World of Warcraft have been waiting for a book that would do Vol'jin justice, then the wait is over. The premise of the story revolves around Vol'jin and his examination of just who he is and where he should be heading. For those new to setting, Vol'jin is the leader of the Darkspears, an elite tribe of trolls allied with the Horde. The current leader of the Horde is an orc named Garrosh. Unfortunately Garrosh and Vol'jin don't see eye to eye, and the orc tries to assassinate the troll. But Vol'jin is no ordinary troll. He's a shadow hunter. Think of him as a mystical figure head for his people, a role model they look to for wisdom and guidance. He has a strong relationship with the troll spirits and in turn, he's a rather powerful figure. His near death experience, however, causes him to reevaluate his life. Why is he wasting his time serving a group that tried to kill him? What reason is there in following the will of his bloodthirsty gods? Who is he really? These questions and more are thoroughly explored through the novel. Stackpole does a great job of diving into the character's head and providing insight on Vol'jin's reasons and questions. But Vol'jin is not alone in this novel. Alongside the mighty troll is a human named Tyrathan.

What does one do when one survives an assassination attempt by your leader, one who has proven willing to do anything to accumulate power and may use your species as cannon fodder in genocidal wars against other races? Apparently, the answer is sit around and talk a lot. This is perhaps unfair but this is a strange sort of novel that goes in an unexpected direction after its explosive beginning. There's no lack of action in the book. It's one of the bloodiest World of Warcraft novels ever, though still PG-13 in terms of content, but the obvious hook never materializes. Instead

of desiring revenge against the person, Garrosh, who tried to kill--Vol'jin spends much of the novel feeling that his old life is over. This is perhaps a more realistic reaction than most to having the head of state in a fantasy setting try to kill you. In real life, if the President of the United States tried to have you killed, most people wouldn't start thinking about how they might take him out instead. Still, it's an unexpected reaction from one of Warcraft's many signature heroes. The premise of Vol'jin: Shadows of the Horde is the titular character, Vol'jin survives the aforementioned assassination attempt by Warchief Garrosh. Garrosh has determined Vol'jin is a potential threat, a fact which Vol'jin grudgingly admits was true. Rescued by the peaceful Pandaren race, basically Chinese panda-people (if the name wasn't clue enough), Vol'jin takes up residence in a monastery and tries to figure out what he's going to do now that he's an enemy of the state. He can't return to the Horde and his people, the Darkspear Trolls, are too weak to oppose Garrosh on their own.

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