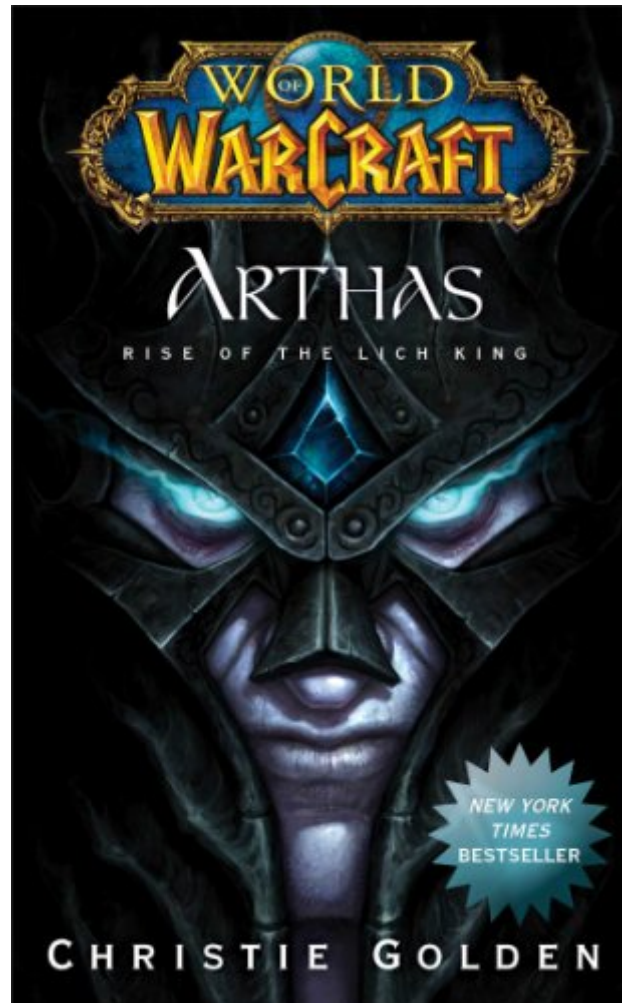


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World Of Warcraft: Arthas: Rise Of The Lich King



Synopsis

Frostmourne. It was caught in a hovering, jagged chunk of ice, the runes that ran the length of its blade glowing a cool blue. Below it was a dais of some sort, standing on a large gently raised mound that was covered in a dusting of snow. A soft light, coming from somewhere high above where the cavern was open to daylight, shone down on the runeblade. The icy prison hid some details of the sword's shape and form, exaggerated others. It was revealed and concealed at the same time, and all the more tempting, like a new lover imperfectly glimpsed through a gauzy curtain. Arthas knew the blade -- it was the selfsame sword he had seen in his dream when he first arrived. The sword that had not killed Invincible, but that had brought him back healed and healthy. He'd thought it a good omen then, but now he knew it was a true sign. This was what he had come to find. This sword would change everything. Arthas stared raptly at it, his hands almost physically aching to grasp it, his fingers to wrap themselves around the hilt, his arms to feel the weapon swinging smoothly in the blow that would end Mal'Ganis, end the torment he had visited upon the people of Lordaeron, end this lust for revenge. Drawn, he stepped forward. The uncanny elemental spirit drew its icy sword. "Turn away, before it is too late," it intoned. * * * His evil is legend. Lord of the undead Scourge, wielder of the runeblade Frostmourne, and enemy of the free peoples of Azeroth. The Lich King is an entity of incalculable power and unparalleled malice -- his icy soul utterly consumed by his plans to destroy all life on the World of Warcraft. But it was not always so. Long before his soul was fused with that of the orc shaman Ner'zhul, the Lich King was Arthas Menethil, crown prince of Lordaeron and faithful paladin of the Silver Hand. When a plague of undeath threatened all that he loved, Arthas was driven to pursue an ill-fated quest for a runeblade powerful enough to save his homeland. Yet the object of his search would exact a heavy price from its new master, beginning a horrifying descent into damnation. Arthas's path would lead him through the arctic northern wastes toward the Frozen Throne, where he would face, at long last, the darkest of destinies.

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Customer Reviews

If you're a player of World of Warcraft, but not into the old RTS games or the books that have come before, this novel is the place to jump and see some of the story behind the game you've been playing. Christie Golden has crafted a strong character-centric tale following the life of Arthas Menethil. It shows him growing into a young man, joining the ranks of the paladins, and his eventual fall from grace in a way that is quick, concise, and yet still meaningful. Arthas is portrayed as neither a spoiled brat or an arrogant upstart, but as a well-meaning person with a good soul and a few very human and realistic character flaws that gets twisted into something horrible, partly by outside forces, but also by the lack of control he has over himself. As I read it, I found myself comparing it to the fall of Anakin Skywalker in the Star Wars Saga, and I hate to say it, Golden did a superior job with her take on how a hero becomes the villain. If this book has any weakness, is that it's a little too short. The first two volumes take place at a good pace, always moving but taking the time to really show us all that's transpiring. As the book moves through its third act, those familiar with Warcraft III: The Frozen Throne will note at how briefly the events of the undead campaign are covered. In contrast to the first two thirds of the book, the last third skips over large chunks of the storyline to make sure the crucial points get the time needed, which is good. The main story in no way feels slighted.

I love Warcraft, have been playing since WC3 and own every collector's edition of WoW and its expansion packs since Vanilla. I mostly like playing games for their stories, so given the previous statement you might not be surprised to find out I am very familiar with the games lore. As such, I

both like and dislike this book. My main fault with this book is that, after the first few chapters, the book is pretty much a plot summary of WC3/TFT with expanded narrative and the character's internal thoughts added. On the one hand, it was nice to have a refresher on the pre-WoW lore for my favorite villain (the Lich King) and enemy faction (the Scourge), without having to replay the games since I'm not super fond of RTS gameplay (can anyone say warpten, whosyourdaddy and greedisgood?). On the other hand, I feel like the change in medium was not taken advantage of to provide a sufficiently differentiated experience from playing the games given that the plot is identical on a general level and also in more specific ways, like much if not all of the dialogue. The main differentiator was the plot details regarding Invincible, which I feel was extremely over used and kind of lame even if it hadn't been overused. I'm no Arthas fanboy, but I do enjoy his story and feel like his fall from grace could have been so much more compellingly elaborated upon without (literally) beating a dead horse. That isn't to say that Invincible couldn't have played a noteworthy role in the overall process, just that there should have been far more to it. Every kid who has a loved pet die does not turn into a monstrous shadow of their former selves, even in a World of Warcraft that routinely features good guys turned raid bosses "because crazy".

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