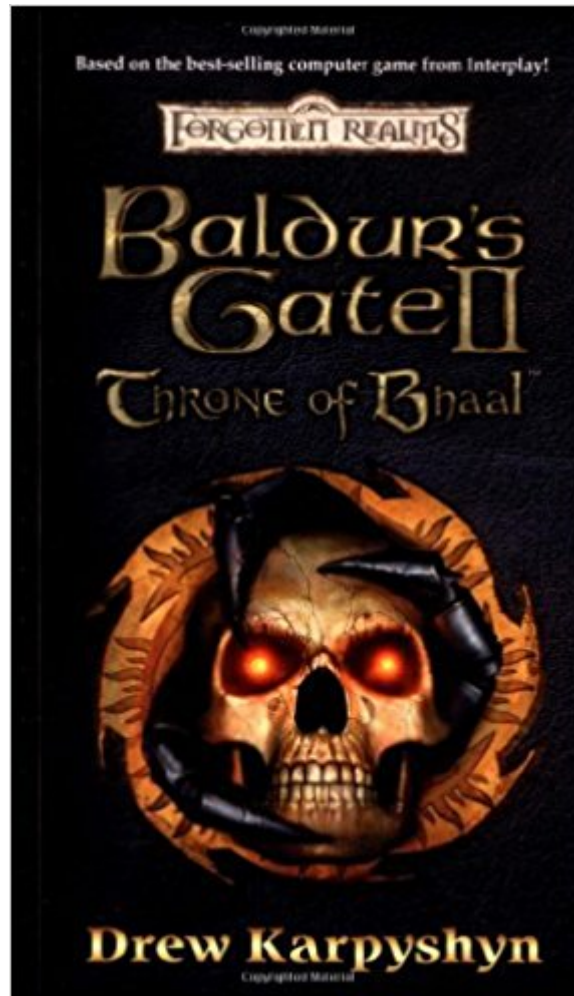




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Baldur's Gate II: Throne Of Bhaal (Forgotten Realms)



Synopsis

Death to the Children of Bhaal! On the run and hunted by everyone in Faerûn, Bhaal's offspring are being wiped out. Instead of ridding the land of evil, each kill gives more power to a vicious group of Bhaalspawn intent on returning their father to the world. Follow the ultimate battle of the children of Bhaal in this thrilling novel based on the computer game from BioWare and Interplay!

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I'm not going to bother adding too much here... the other reviewers have explained it all perfectly. There is far too much repetition in the novel and the author has an unusual fascination with the words 'cloying' and 'conflagration' (don't forget to mention how beautiful Jaheria is and that Abdel is VERY muscular) ;) The Baldur's Gate series was (and still is) one of the most beautiful and endearing games I'll ever play. To be twenty four years old and still have 'pangs' where every few years I'll suddenly get the urge to reinstall them says a lot at how timeless they are. Unfortunately, the novelizations left me feeling cheated. I am insulted the authors in all three novels didn't seem to bother inserting any of the wonder and epicness the games achieved. It's better to try than not bother at all, I say. On the other hand, Throne of Bhaal IS a novelization of a video game - don't expect high literature. They're trashy by nature and put together for desperate nerds seeking to further their adventures in yet another fantasy universe. Just buy it, read it, revel in your ultimate nerddom and then put it back on the shelf for this is their soul purpose of creation... You won't ever need to read ToB again either - one can see what's coming a mile away and the actual content is

merely copy and paste and edit who dies next. Like other Baldur's Gate gamers I have the sense of urgency to shout out "play the games first!" but the harshness of how primitive the graphics are may deter some youngins. Grit your teeth and in the first five minutes it will be plain to see the games and books are entirely different creatures. Judgement of the game based on the book is therefore tantamount to sin, in my humble opinion. The 90s was an interesting time for game development.. things had advanced enough to give fuel to envision what was to come but it was still just out of reach. This meant developers had to discover that special blend of storyline, character immersion and a sprinkle of NPCs or some other oddities that would inspire future nostalgia - and who doesn't remember Boo and Minsc, hmm? :) To be honest, it's quite nauseating to read this sad mess and bear witness to doves crying blood tinged tears at how it's even possible to reduce the depth and creativity Baldur's Gate had to a grey, withered dried out piece of dog excrement. Seriously, they had so much material to work with... WHY?

The novelization of the popular RP computer game Baldur's Gate is perhaps one of the worst series I have ever managed to read. The first two books of the series were written by Philip Athans. The intricate story line of the game itself as well as the many interesting characters that populate the game all went missing in Mr. Athans' books. I could find no redeeming value in the first two books. The main character was poorly conceived and never fleshed out. Subplots and any thoughts on what it means to be the child of a dead God are brushed aside without a second thought. Given the mangling of the story in the first two books one has to wonder if Mr. Athans even bothered to play the game itself before tossing off his forgettable stories. Athans was thankfully replaced as author for the third book by Drew Karpysyn. Sadly the destruction was so complete that there was little left to salvage. Mr. Karpysyn's writing is several steps up from Athans. The problem of this third book is not the talents of Mr. Karpysyn rather it is the horrible and incoherent mess of first two books of the series. The very fact that Mr. Karpysyn could continue the story and bring the tale to its conclusion speaks very well of his talents. It is very sad that it is only in the last half of the last book of the series that some of the themes of the game actually make an appearance. The nature of good and evil, the possibility of redemption finally get some thought put to them. The notion that what makes an individual a hero are not things one is born with but arise out of the choices we make. Unfortunately this attempt to redeem the series comes far too late. Chose to play the game and don't bother with the books.

First of all I must admit that technically Drew Karpysyn's writing is much better than Philip Athans',

though I must say it couldn't have been that hard to achieve since Athan's writing could be easily outdone by a five year old, the story is better structured and more fluid. Regarding the story itself, well, Drew Karpysyn didn't really have much to work with and I don't think it's his fault that it came out bad and far far away from the story presented in the awesome game. The reason for that lack of ability to change the story to the better lies in the fact that the story has been mutilated beyond recognition by Philip Athans, for example one of THE best characters in the game, Imoen, who is an innocent, kind, funny, light hearted and sweet soul in the game is turned by Philip Athans into an abused child who grows into a lesbian (also, unlike in the game she dies in Drew Karpysyn's book). The protagonist, like in the previous books, is a spineless jerk and a fool and not somebody who's prophesized to stop the rebirth of Bhaal, The God Of Murder. He doesn't grow to be somebody who's supposed to fulfil the prophecy, it seems like the prophecy would've fulfilled itself even if he hadn't lifted a finger (Balthazar reviving the protagonist and then killing himself so that the prophecy will be fulfilled ? Really ? Why didn't Balthazar kille all the Bhallspawns by himself and then fetched the protagonist from Candlekeep and then broke his own neck so that the prophecy will be fulfilled ? Who's the hero here ? The protagonist or Balthazar ? Sounds more like Balthazar is the hero here and the worthy one of the prophecy). In short DO NOT buy any of the books, buy the games. In Drew Karpysyn's defence I must say that as far as I know it's his first book and he wasn't given any material to work with and I think that with some practice he will become a good writer (maybe he'll rewrite the entire trilogy into one book then, writing the story the way it should be;)). I certainly hope somebody does, somebody skilled in writing and who won't be lazy to play the games or at least take the final scripts from Bioware and write the book according to them (The protagonist having a spine and a brain, and Imoen being the same Imoen like in the games who also stays alive and then continues to travel, at least for a while, with the protagonist before starting to make a name for herself in the realms).

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