Baldur 's Gate II : Shadows of Amn

Baldur 's Gate II : Shadows of Amn is a role @-@ playing video game developed by BioWare and published by Black Isle Studios . It is the sequel to Baldur 's Gate (1998) , and was released for Microsoft Windows in September 2000 . Like Baldur 's Gate , the game is set in the Forgotten Realms campaign setting , based on the Advanced Dungeons & Dragons 2nd edition rule set .
 Baldur 's Gate II opens shortly after the events of Baldur 's Gate and continues the story of the protagonist , Gorion 's Ward , whose unique heritage has now gained them the attention of Jon Irenicus . The game 's plot revolves around the protagonist 's encounters with Irenicus , and is set south of the events in Baldur 's Gate in the country of Amn , mainly in and around the city of Athkatla .
 The game received critical acclaim upon its release ; GameSpy , GameSpot , and IGN awarded Baldur 's Gate II their " Role @-@ Playing Game of the Year " awards for 2000 , and the game has sold more than two million units . An expansion pack , entitled Baldur 's Gate II : Throne of Bhaal , was released on June 21 , 2001 . Besides adding a large dungeon and enhancements to the game , it concluded the Child of Bhaal saga . Baldur 's Gate II : Enhanced Edition , an enhanced version of Baldur 's Gate II , was released on November 15 , 2013 .

= = Gameplay = =

Baldur 's Gate II : Shadows of Amn is an Advanced Dungeons & Dragons 2nd edition computer role @-@ playing game . The central quest of the game consists of about sixty hours of play , while the full game , including all side quests , totals around 300 hours . The player controls a party of up to six characters , one of whom is the protagonist ; if the protagonist dies , a saved @-@ game must be loaded , or a new game begun . The game begins with character creation , where , through a series of configuration screens , the player creates a player character protagonist , choosing such things as class , ability scores , appearance and alignment . Alternatively , an existing character from Baldur 's Gate or Tales of the Sword Coast can be imported . Once in the game world , the player may recruit certain non @-@ player characters (NPCs) to travel with him or her , though only five may do so at a time ; depending on who is present in the group , bickering , romance , and side quests can result . NPCs in the party often converse with the player or with one another , and at times interject into the player 's conversations with others .
 The game is played from an isometric perspective , and the screen , which does not need to remain centered on the protagonist , can be scrolled with the mouse or the keyboard . Areas are revealed as they are explored by the player 's characters . A fog of war effect hides explored areas when the player 's characters move away from them . The player can also change the formation in which the party moves . Clicking an area exit , such as a doorway or staircase , causes another area to be loaded . Clicking on the edge of an outside area causes the party to travel there ; the game then presents the player with the World Map , from which the player may select a destination .
 The player interacts with characters and objects by clicking on them . Clicking on the ground causes the player 's selected characters to move . The gameplay , though in real @-@ time , can be paused , whereupon commands may be issued to controllable characters , who will attempt to execute them when the game is unpaused . The game can also be set to pause automatically at certain times . Dialogue is started by NPCs at certain scripted times , or by the player 's clicking on NPCs who are not immediately hostile . When speaking to an NPC , the player must often choose what to say from a list of responses . Dialogue may lead to quests or important information . When the player clicks on a hostile being , the currently selected characters will advance to attack it . Information about characters , creatures , items , and buildings in the game environment is shown on a tool tip , which appears when the mouse pointer is held over game elements .
 When a character in the group gains the necessary experience points , he or she gains a level . Experience points are awarded for certain player actions , such as killing enemies or completing quests . The party also has a reputation , which is affected by the player 's moral actions , and which , along with the party leader 's charisma attribute , influences how NPCs in the game world react to

the player . The characters in the party will also complain if the party 's reputation conflicts with their alignment . Resting heals the characters in the party and refreshes those who are fatigued ; also , resting allows a character to memorize spells . The game contains over 300 spells available for memorization . With the exception of sorcerers , magic @-@ users must memorize spells before they can be cast . Spell @-@ casting takes time and may be disrupted by attacks or other spells .

 The player can access sub @-@ screens through the interface : area and world maps ; the journal , which tracks important information , such as quests and the game 's plot ; the inventory page , which is used to manage and equip items ; the record screen , which is used to view information about , as well as level up , characters in the party ; the mage book and priest scroll screens , where spells can be inspected and memorized ; and the options screen , where settings may be altered , saved @-@ games loaded , or the game saved or quit .

Classes and kits

 During character creation , the player chooses a class : fighter , ranger , paladin , thief , bard , mage , cleric , druid , barbarian , monk , or sorcerer ; the last three are new for the sequel . Different classes have different special abilities and restrictions ; a thief character , for instance , can find and remove traps , but thieves have limitations on which weapons and armor they may use , and cannot be of lawful good alignment . Most classes also have a subset of kits , or specializations within a class , from which to choose . Kits have special advantages and usually , disadvantages ; one of the kits of the paladin class , the cavalier , for example , specializes in fighting monsters such as dragons and demons , but cannot use missile weapons . At some point in the game , the player may join or take over a stronghold . The type of stronghold is determined by the protagonist 's class .

Multiplayer

 The game also has a multiplayer mode , in which up to six human players can adventure through the game , controlling player @-@ made characters as well as recruited NPCs . The content of the game is otherwise the same , and one of the players controls the protagonist .

Plot

Setting

 The Forgotten Realms , the high fantasy campaign setting in which Baldur 's Gate II is set , is a fictional world similar to a medieval Earth , but with its own peoples , geography , and history . In the Realms , as its inhabitants call it , fantastic creatures and magic are common .
 Baldur 's Gate II takes place mainly in Amn , a country on the subcontinent of Faerûn . This country , known commonly as the Merchant Kingdom , lies south of Baldur 's Gate ; wealth and trade are the chief concerns of the region . The capital city of Athkatla , around which a fair portion of the game revolves , is the most important in Amn , and is ruled by the anonymous Council of Six . The local thieves ' guild , the Shadow Thieves , also has considerable power . The group , which operates all along the Sword Coast , is based in Athkatla . Another powerful organization in Amn are the Cowled Wizards , who regulate the use of magic in the region . The Shadow Thieves , the Cowled Wizards , and the Harpers , a semi @-@ secret conglomeration of good organizations , all factor prominently into the story and provide side quests .
 Besides Athkatla , other places the player will pass through include : an island , on which stands both the port town of Brynnlaw and the asylum Spellhold ; the Underdark ; the city of Suldanessellar ; and the Astral Plane . There are also other places , which may be explored : the Umar Hills , where people have been disappearing ; a temple ruins , fallen under the shadow of the Shade Lord ; the de 'Arnise Keep , home of the de 'Arnises but recently overrun by trolls ; the town of Trademeet , under attack by animals ; a druid grove connected to Trademeet 's woes ; the Windspear Hills , where the

player becomes entangled in the intrigues of Firkraag , a dragon ; the underwater Sahuagin city ; and the Planar Prison .

Baldur 's Gate II is set in the year 1369 DR (Dale Reckoning) , and thus takes place not long after the Time of Troubles (1358 DR) , when the Tablets of Fate , powerful magic items which maintain a balance between good and evil , were stolen . Lord Ao , the Overdeity , forced the gods to become mortal until the Tablets were found ; some gods died while in this mortal state .

= = = Characters = = =

Bhaal , the God of Murder , was one such god , slain by an adventurer named Cyric , who himself became a god . But Bhaal foresaw his destruction , and walked the land before the other gods . He left behind him " a score of mortal progeny , " whose later deaths , when they were slain by heroes , would fuel his rebirth . The game 's protagonist is one of these offspring ; but , through the choices of the player , may be either good or evil . The character grew up in the library fortress of Candlekeep , watched over by the mage Gorion . Imoen , who grew up there as well , became a close friend . The story of the first Baldur 's Gate follows their adventure along the Sword Coast , where the hero learns of their heritage , and defeats their half @-@ brother Sarevok , a fellow child of Bhaal .

Some notable characters in Shadows of Amn include : Gaelan Bayle , who offers the party the help of the Shadow Thieves ; Aran Linvail , the leader of the Shadow Thieves ; Saemon Havarian , who sails the party to an island ; Adalon , a silver dragon whose eggs have been stolen and given to drow ; Elhan ; and Queen Ellesime , the ruler of Suldanessellar . Jon Irenicus and his sister Bodhi are the chief antagonists , with Irenicus the game 's main villain . Drizzt Do 'Urden also makes an appearance ; and if the player solicits his aid , he and his companions will later help the player .

In Baldur 's Gate II , several characters from the first game reappear , of which the following can join the player 's party : Imoen , who grew up with the protagonist in Candlekeep ; Jaheira , who , with her husband Khalid , was a friend of Gorion 's ; Minsc , a warrior who carries with him a hamster named Boo ; Edwin , a Red Wizard of Thay ; and Viconia , a dark elf cleric . There are also many new NPCs who may join the party : Aerie , a winged elf who has lost her wings and was sold to the circus by slavers at a young age ; Keldorn , an older paladin and a powerful and respected member of the Most Noble Order of the Radiant Heart ; Mazzy , an honorable halfling fighter and " the nearest thing to a paladin that a halfling can aspire to " ; Nalia , who is of the upper class , but , though conscious of class distinction , tries to help those less fortunate than herself ; Valygar , who is of a family noted for its talented magic @-@ users , but hates the art ; Anomen , a member of the Most Noble Order of the Radiant Heart , and whose wish is to become a full knight ; Cernd , a druid ; Haer 'Dalis , a tiefling bard and one of the actors of an acting troupe ; Jan , a gnome , of the Jansen family ; Yoshimo , a thief from the land of Kara @-@ Tur ; and Korgan , an evil dwarven fighter .

= = = Story = = =

Shortly after the events of Baldur 's Gate , the hero and companions are overcome and taken captive . When the game opens , the hero awakens in a cage , and is shortly thereafter experimented upon by a wizard named Jon Irenicus . Irenicus is distracted as his complex is attacked by thieves , and disappears to fight them . The hero uses this opportunity to escape from the complex with a few other companions , including Imoen , and emerges into the city of Athkatla . As soon as the hero and his party have entered the city proper , they see Irenicus fighting off some of his attackers . After he has destroyed his attackers , he notices the hero and his companions . An argument ensues , during which Imoen angrily attacks Irenicus using magic . Immediately Cowled Wizards appear , after a fight arrest both Irenicus and Imoen for the unsanctioned use of magic , and teleport both of them away .

In the slums of Athkatla , a man named Gaelan Bayle offers the party the help of a powerful organization , who can find Imoen or Irenicus for the large sum of 20 @,@ 000 gold pieces . The party is approached by and offered the help of another rival guild headed by Bodhi ; it is the player 's

choice whom to side with .

Imoen and Irenicus are removed to an asylum called Spellhold situated on an island . Irenicus soon breaks his bonds and prepares to experiment on Imoen . In Athkatla , the party raises the money necessary and receives assistance from whichever organization it has decided to work with , and gains passage to the island on a ship sailed by Saemon Havarian . The heroes enter Spellhold , but are captured by Irenicus , who has taken control of the prison and had planned all along to bring the protagonist there . Irenicus subjects the protagonist to a ritual which takes the protagonist 's soul . Imoen , who is revealed to also be a Child of Bhaal , has already been subjected to Irenicus 's ritual , and her soul has gone to Irenicus 's sister Bodhi . Bodhi then abandons the party to the maze beneath Spellhold so she may hunt them . When they face her , the now soulless protagonist loses self @-@ control and transforms into a creature called the Slayer , one of the avatar forms of Bhaal , which scares off Bodhi . The hero returns to their normal self , and the party battles Irenicus , forcing him to retreat . The party follows , and reaches the surface via the Underdark .

Upon reaching the surface , the party encounters the army of the elven city of Suldanessellar . The elves cannot return to the city , for Irenicus has magically hidden it . To gain access to it , the party secures the Rhynn Lanthorn from Bodhi , who has stolen the artifact ; upon Bodhi 's death , Imoen 's soul is restored . The Rhynn Lanthorn lights the way to Suldanessellar , which has been invaded by Irenicus and his minions . The party proceeds through the city and , at the Tree of Life , learns Irenicus is draining the power of the Tree , which will doom Suldanessellar . The heroes defeat him , but because Irenicus still has the protagonist 's soul , they and the rest of the party , are dragged into Hell with the wizard . When they defeat Irenicus , they return to life , and are honored by the elves of Suldanessellar .

= = Development = =

Baldur 's Gate II was developed by BioWare and published by Black Isle Studios and released for Windows in September 2000 . The game uses the same Infinity Engine as Baldur 's Gate . BioWare dedicated the game to Daniel Walker , the company 's second employee , who died in 1999 .

Baldur 's Gate was the first role @-@ playing game designed by BioWare , and they applied what they learned in the process to Baldur 's Gate II . They also felt they did not have enough time to reach their design goals with the first game , due to developing both the content of the game and the Infinity Engine at the same time . In Baldur 's Gate II , it was determined that the designers should be allowed " adequate time to allow the game to reach its full potential . " Throughout its development , they focused " on ensuring that Baldur 's Gate II is significantly better than Baldur 's Gate in every way possible , and to make it appeal not only to fans of the original game but also to make it accessible to new fans who never played the original game . "

Development of Baldur 's Gate II began in January 1999 . From the suggestions of fans on message boards and newsgroups , reviews of Baldur 's Gate , and internal suggestions , a list of constructive criticism was compiled ; from this list , a slightly shorter one of features to be added to the game was made . Some of the items on this list were : support for higher resolutions , such as 800 by 600 pixels and above ; 3D support ; non @-@ pausing dialogue in multiplayer ; drop off panels in the interface ; character kits ; dual @-@ wielding of weapons ; a streamlined journal and annotable map ; deathmatch ; and inclusion of famous AD & D monsters such as the dragon . Not many features had to be cut , and they kept as many as they could . Because of the engine 's mature state of development , most features were fairly easy to add . Ben Smedstad , the producer of the game , said , " The engine was up and running since day one , which is a huge morale booster . When a monster is complete , we put it into the ' override ' directory and it appears in the game ! This is a huge change from working on the original . " Late in the project , deathmatch was removed , while non @-@ pausing dialogue , which proved " the most problematic feature " , was removed early on before being reintroduced in early 2000 .

To avoid some of the design mistakes made in Baldur 's Gate , guidelines were drawn up for each department ; the level designers had the longest set of guidelines . These lists continually changed and evolved as the development progressed . The main design guidelines for the entire project were

that the players should feel like their actions have an effect on the game world , and good versus evil options should be available depending on which path the player takes . Guidelines for the story were to keep the focus on the player 's character , keep the player updated on the activities on the game 's villain , add a significant plot twist , and make the ending of the game open enough so that there would be room for more sequels . Environment guidelines were to break the game into chapters , make some locations key to the central plot , keep areas interesting and easy to quickly navigate , and showcase areas before they were available to explore to capture player interest . For the game systems , guidelines focused on character customization and a well @-@ crafted reward system . The writing guidelines were concerned mainly with dialogue : limiting the number of sentences NPCs spoke at a time , keeping the number of player response choices at three as often as possible , avoiding profanity and accents , and having a small set of random dialogue for unimportant NPCs . Many early design decisions did not follow the guidelines , and programming constraints were not always followed by other departments , such as design and art , leading to slowdowns in some parts of the game that were difficult or impossible to fix .

The process for creating levels was long and complicated . It began with the creation of a general layout of the area to be built by designers . They would pass this concept map to the artists , who added models to it , beginning with the largest objects and ending with small items such as individual pieces of furniture . After everything was put in place by the art team , designers took over again , inserting graphical enhancements , effects , and collision detection code . With a functional level , creatures , items , traps , and triggers were added last , then scripts were written for everything to control behavior . The team found it quite difficult to keep track of changes made to levels , and there were sometimes communication problems between different parts of the team , such as the artists and designers , resulting in inconsistencies between their work . Ray Muzyka , the co @-@ executive producer , wrote , " We learned to make sure all elements of the team are talking to each other and working as a group , rather than as a bunch of individuals ! " They did feel they had done a good job automating the level creation process , as levels were rapidly designed . " A designer , " wrote Muzyka , " might submit a level description and receive it , art complete , a month later ready for scripting , but missing some key features (almost always a door) . We would then have to determine whether the omission was important enough to have the art piece redone , or whether we could simply tweak the design of the level to fit the finished art . "

During the game 's development , a quality assurance department was added to BioWare , and the game 's publishers lent their assistance in testing . Muzyka said , " because of its immense size , Baldur 's Gate II was a tester 's nightmare , " and " this was compounded by the fact that we didn 't do enough testing as areas were being developed . " The game contained about 290 quests , each of which had to be tested in both single player and multiplayer modes . BioWare used a method , introduced to them by Feargus Urquhart , Douglas Avery , and Chris Parker of Black Isle Studios , in which the game 's quests were listed on white @-@ boards , with a cross placed beside each quest . Pairs consisting of a developer and a tester were allotted each a quest , and upon their believing the quest to be stable , its cross was deleted .

Muzyka wrote :

In the final days of working on BG2 there was a strangely serene feeling in the office . We didn 't experience the headlong panic that is sometimes prevalent while finishing a game , but we certainly did experience considerable stress as we built 21 final candidates in 3 days . After a few long nights with the whole team playing the game over and over again , we reached a point where we built a good final candidate . Then it was sent to the duplicators !

The game 's music was composed by Michael Hoenig , a German composer who played with Tangerine Dream . He also composed the music for the first Baldur 's Gate .

= = Release = =

Baldur 's Gate II went gold on September 14 , 2000 ; and was released in North America on September 24 , 2000 , and in Europe on September 29 , 2000 . A Collector 's Edition was also released . It included the game , an additional CD , which contained unique armor and weapons and

music from the soundtrack , a cloth map , eight character trading cards , and a Black Isle Studios writing tablet . According to BioWare , the game had sold over two million units by February 2008 .

= = = Expansion pack = = =

An expansion pack for Shadows of Amn , entitled Baldur 's Gate II : Throne of Bhaal , also developed by BioWare and published by Black Isle , was released on June 21 , 2001 . Throne of Bhaal added a variety of features to the base game : a new dungeon called Watcher 's Keep ; new features and enhancements , such as the Wild Mage character class ; a higher experience point cap and high @-@ level class abilities ; and new spells , such as Wish , Bigby 's Crushing Hand , and Dragon 's Breath . Throne of Bhaal also takes the protagonist 's history further , and , being the final chapter , concludes the Baldur 's Gate saga . Throne of Bhaal was well received ; it won the " PC Role @-@ Playing " award at the 2002 Interactive Achievement Awards and has a Metacritic score of 88 .

= = = Re @-@ releases = = =

Shadows of Amn was re @-@ released , along with its expansion , Throne of Bhaal , as Baldur 's Gate II : The Collection in 2003 . In 2004 , they were bundled with the original Baldur 's Gate and Icewind Dale as Black Isle Compilation Part Two . In 2006 , they were re @-@ released with Baldur 's Gate and Tales of the Sword Coast as Baldur 's Gate : 4 in 1 Boxset . They were also included in The Forgotten Realms Deluxe Edition , and Ultimate Dungeons & Dragons . In November 2010 , Baldur 's Gate II Complete was released in digital format on GOG.com. This version includes both Shadows of Amn and the Throne of Bhaal expansion pack . Bundled with it are the game manuals in PDF format , high definition wallpapers , artwork , avatars , and the soundtracks of Shadows of Amn and Throne of Bhaal .

= = = Enhanced Edition = = =

On March 15 , 2012 , Baldur 's Gate II : Enhanced Edition was announced . Developed by Overhaul Games , it is an enhanced version of Baldur 's Gate II , and uses an updated version of the Infinity Engine . The game was released on November 15 , 2013 .

= = Reception = =

Baldur 's Gate II met with worldwide critical acclaim upon its release , and Metacritic lists it as the sixth highest @-@ scoring PC game on the site as of June 27 , 2015 . GameSpot said that , while it is a very long game , its fine points are what make it so great , and said the game was in a class by itself . IGN also called the game incomparable and peerless . GameSpot later called the game " a towering achievement in the history of role @-@ playing games . " Computer Gaming World 's reviewer felt though the game was worthy being called the best game of the year , and as good as games such as Fallout , Planescape : Torment , and Betrayal at Krondor , " I won 't trap myself with the ' best RPG ever ' phrase . " He also felt the game 's story was somewhere between Planescape : Torment and Icewind Dale in terms of depth . In a 2007 Gamasutra article on the " Platinum and Modern Ages " of computer role @-@ playing games (CRPGs) , Matt Barton noted contemporary reviewers ' universal praise for the game , and said , " I consider it the finest CRPG ever designed . " According to GameSpy , " this is easily one of the finest CRPGs ever made and an experience that no RPG fan should miss " .
Baldur 's Gate II 's gameplay was called " addicting " by GamePro . RPGamer said that while the game was generally the same as the original Baldur 's Gate , the combat was much improved , with less frustration and more strategic options . Computer Gaming World agreed , saying players would put more consideration into designing and implementing combat plans . Some reviewers , however , felt the non @-@ player characters in the game were not as powerful as player @-@ made

characters . GameSpy said the game is much more difficult than Baldur 's Gate , and requires more strategy and planning than the original does . GameSpot felt the opening level of the game " falls flat , " but that it gets much better once the player reaches Athkatla . IGN also noted that the introductory section of the game , while good , was nowhere near as fun as the adventures in Athkatla .

The game 's plot was met positively by most reviewers , with GameSpy calling it " epic " . IGN praised the clarity of the quests and ease of moving from one goal to the next . RPGamer 's reviewer , on the other hand , felt the plot was lackluster , but approved of the side quests , which he said could turn into " minor epics " of their own .

The game 's graphics were well received . GamePro praised them , saying , " the backdrops are stunning and the spell effects are impressive " . IGN echoed this statement , calling the difference between Baldur 's Gate and Shadows of Amn " like looking at a still oil painting , and then turning to see the scene in living motion on a big screen TV . " GameSpot thought both the pre @-@ rendered backgrounds and the animations for characters and monsters were well done . FiringSquad said the game 's artwork surpassed that of Planescape : Torment , and called the background artwork " fantastic . " FiringSquad also praised the voice acting of Baldur 's Gate II , saying , " Characters sound alive and vivacious (or depressed , crazy ? whatever suits them) " and adding that the quality of the voices drew the player more deeply into the game . IGN called the voice acting " outstanding " and said the variety of personalities would cause players to become " attached " to the characters , only noting with disapproval the dearth of new voices for the player 's protagonist . Reviewers generally found the game 's music to be well @-@ done ; though RPGamer felt it was " inoffensive but unimpressive . "

Gameplanet criticized the game 's poor support for online multiplayer , saying it was " unstable and quite frustrating . " Jakub Wojnarowicz of FiringSquad felt the lack of communication between players in combat during online games was problematic , but that Local Area Network play would be more satisfying . PC Zone said multiplayer was as unimpressive as it had been in the first game in the series , and said the game needed multiplayer maps . IGN , however , felt multiplayer play was solidly implemented and fun . Criticism was also directed at bugs in the game , such as frequent crashes when trying to access certain locations . According to Tim McConnaughy from GameSpy , Baldur 's Gate II is " not 100 % stable . " GameSpot noted that the game 's loading times were somewhat long and that the game crashed on occasion , but said these problems are not significant . IGN , though noting that the game slowed down during combat when a lot of animations were happening simultaneously due to spells or " dazzling backgrounds " , said there were almost no other technical problems . GameSpot also felt the small number of character portraits to choose from was a disappointment , and was displeased that the game reused special effects , audio , and graphics from the first game .

= = = Awards = = =

Baldur 's Gate II was inducted into GameSpot 's " Greatest Games of All Time " list and won their Readers ' Choice Game of the Year award for 2000 . It received three " Gaming Globe " awards from Eurogamer in 2001 : Best Game , Best Art Direction , and Best Male Supporting Character (for Minsc) . GameSpy , GameSpot , and IGN all awarded Baldur 's Gate II their " Role @-@ Playing Game of the Year " awards in 2000 . The game won the " Character or Story Development " award at the 2001 Interactive Achievement Awards , and was also nominated for " Game of the Year , " " Game Play Engineering , " " PC Game of the Year , " and " PC Role @-@ Playing . " IGN placed it at No. 25 on their 2005 " Top 100 Games of All Time " list . In 2006 , though not ranking in the top five games , it earned an " honorable mention " in Gamasutra 's Quantum Leap Awards . In 2009 , Game Informer put Baldur 's Gate II at No. 88 on their list of " The Top 200 Games of All Time , " calling it " the best Dungeons & Dragons game ever made . " This is up one place from their top 100 list in 2001 . At the end of 2009 , Baldur 's Gate II , though not quite making the Top 12 list , received an honorable mention in Gamasutra 's Game of the Decade , where readers voted for their best game of the 2000s . In 2010 , on IGN 's Top 25 Modern PC Games , Baldur 's Gate II was

ranked No. 2 .

= = Novel = =

 There is a novelization of the game by Philip Athans . Published in 2000 by Wizards of the Coast , it focuses solely on Abdel , the last of the Bhaalspawn . The novel is the second in the series ; the first , also by Athans , is a novelization of Baldur 's Gate , and the third , by Drew Karpyshyn , of the Throne of Bhaal expansion .