

TIDES OF DANGER

- Eberron -

Shadows of the fiend – chapter 4 of 4



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5 characters
level 1-4

T1

EBERRON



Abstract

Welcome to **Tides of Danger**, a D&D Eberron adventure, part 4 of 4 of the “Shadows of the fiend” story.

The adventure begins with the characters repairing their crashed airship and taking the route to home, filled with gold, new passengers and dangerous entities.

The coasts of Khorvaire are on sight – are they near enough?

Adjusting the adventure

This adventure is designed for 5 2nd-level characters. The story arc should lead the group from 1st level to 5th within 8 chapters.

If you play it as a one-shot adventure, anyway, you can find suggestions about how to increase or lower the difficulty of the encounters for different groups.

Shadows of the fiend

The “Shadows of the fiend” set of stories is designed to offer a good way to shift from a set of new characters to a group of new characters. Each chapter explores tips and situations to develop bonds between the characters, both PCs and NPCs.

“Shadows of the fiend” uses rules of [13th moon – Eberron Shared Campaign](#), which you can download for free. Characters will need 2 chapters to obtain a level up. If you don’t use these rules, you can adjust XP rewards accordingly.





Introduction

The airship **Oceanus** started its journey some day ago from Sharn, but some escaped prisoners hijacked the airship, setting route for an unknown island. A group of adventurers defeated the bandits but the airship, without a pilot, crashed on a forgotten island.

On the island the adventurers found a small team of cyren soldiers, left as sentinels during the Last War and forgotten, their communication officer driven insane by a powerful fiend hidden on the island, **Nal Shalor**. The fiend trapped the elemental of the ship, let the adventurers find it, and convinced them to

Development

The adventure begins on the lost island of Durast and takes place in three acts.

After a quick setup, the Act I – Finishing touches is about collecting the last items needed to repair the ship and to prepare the passengers for an uncomfortable journey.

In Act II – Dragonmarked surprise, the characters will face two new dragonmarks being corrupted by an unseen presence. They must try to fix them, improvising a good solution.

In Act III – Boarded from within, the wight Jerome Luliac unleashes an attack against the characters, killing the passengers and reanimating them under his command. It's up to the characters stop him before it's too late.

The end of the first journey!

This first tier1 adventures for 13th moon are designed in 2 storylines of 4 chapters. The first storyline, "Shadows of the fiend", is made by

- **Flying fear** (level 1) – hijack of the Oceanus and crash on the mysterious island of Durast
- **Ruins of madness** (level 1) – exploration of the island of Durast and discovery of lost cyren soldiers
- **The Shadowflame altar** (level 2) – finding the lost temple of Nal Shalor, the group will find something unsettling and a well known elemental
- **Tides of danger** (level 2) – after repairing the ship, will the characters be able to find a safe way back home?

NPCs presented in these adventures should help introduce special themes of the setting: widespread magic, savage frontiers, faiths and religions, clear and obscure conflicts. This should help with an introduction and a chance for the PCs to build their relations with NPCs and other PCs.

Act I – Finishing touches

Duration: 30/45 minutes

The characters begin the adventure stranded on an unknown island, with a broken airship, the **Oceanus**, a Khyber dragonshard with a bound fire elemental and the will to come back home. Many people are with them: the passengers and the crew of the airship (30 total, or less if some of them died in previous adventures), a group of 8 cyren soldiers forgotten on the island since the Last War, and a small childish blue fire spirit – actually **Nal Shalor**, a powerful fiend in disguise.

Setup

If you didn't play the previous modules or there are new players, you can play a short intro scene with your characters to introduce them to all other players. You can ask each player to introduce the character, adding some relevant information on where or what the character is doing.

You can also set up an “opening credits” scene, describing the last instants of the previous episode – the daring escape from an ancient ruin filled with zombies while carrying a large amount of treasure. Ask your players to describe how their character behaved during the escape, to better outline their features and *showing* more than *telling* who they really are.

Notable characters

Same as the previous adventures, there are various NPCs for the PCs to interact with. You can of course change what happened to them to your own accord.

- **Captain Shorel d’Lyrandar** is a daring adventurer and ex-captain of the ship. His leg is wounded, and he is unable to act due to exhaustion. He still needs some rest to recover. He can give good advice to the PCs
- **Countess Louette Lorianne** is the vain and frivolous daughter of a rich merchant of Sharn. She was almost unscathed at the crash, but she keeps annoying everyone around her, trying to draw anybody’s attention.
- **Count George Blacktail** is Leouette’s betrothed. He often brags a lot about his combat skills, but he’s more an animal handler. He can develop a Mark of Handling in this adventure – if he survives. He’s unhappy of Louette, who is too vain and careless.



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- **Roman Dylar [Moshar d'Phiarlan]** is a member of House Phiarlan in disguise. He'll try to kill and get the message from Bringer without being discovered. Can be a minor antagonist for PCs.
 - **Sam Guilleran** was the bartender on the Oceanus. The captain will ask him to be his eyes and keep an eye out on the passengers. He can be trusted by the characters for surveillance of the passengers.
 - **Kurgaath**, the brutal and disciplined hobgoblin was a former ally of Jerome Luliac but after the crash he is changing his mind and looking for a chance to find his own way. His hatred towards Lyrandars will create trouble with the captain.
 - **Bringer**, the warforged messenger, can be an ally of the PCs: he's looking for a reason to live, since he was built to deliver a message and the recipient is no more, lost forever after the Mourning.
 - **Kevin, the ship boy** will be a problem for the PCs, since he'll try in any way to get involved in adventures, putting himself at risk. He can develop a Mark of Creation in this adventure – if he survives.

You don't have to use them all: try to choose NPCs that will be more interesting for your players.

In addition, there are 3 more entities that will sneak on the ship:

- The **Blue flame elemental**, a sparkle of Nal Shalor, a powerful fiend disguised as a harmless elemental. It will keep a low profile: its goal is to reach Khorvaire to get back all its powers and it will try to stay hidden in the stern of the ship.
- The ghost of **Zznotharak**, a powerful beholder killed by Nal Shalor and seeking vengeance.
- **Jerome Luliac** was a cold-blooded killer. After the crash he died and got raised as a wight by Nal Shalor. Now he is trying to get the revenge he wants from the people who denied him his higher destiny. His aberrant dragonmark is still visible but not working. He will sneak in the ship and try to kill everyone, turning them into undead servants.

Who goes where?

The ship has lost some piece and the lower deck is obstructed by rubble. The mid deck is overcrowded with passengers, soldiers and sailors, so the characters should decide where to place everyone, with the captain not able to think clearly and the second-in-command dead.

Their decisions will change emergencies during the subsequent acts: the two new dragonmarks can activate far from each other, limiting any kind of help from the PCs, and Jerome will start his attack from the lower deck, turning more or less passengers into zombies for his final attack.

Where do we go?

Someone will be required to trace the route for the ship which, still damaged and with an unstable dragonshard, will not be able to fly but can still sail, elementally propelled. A **DC15** wisdom[survival] check will set the correct line to follow. Let the player roll with advantage if he has proficiency in vehicles[water], if he has some good spell to help, or they implement some good idea.

A failed check will lead the ship into a section of rough sea, which will create some trouble during the next acts.

Act II – Dragonmarked surprise

Duration: 45 minutes

After a couple of hours, the group will see that the bad weather is getting worse – and something even worse is upon them.

George Blacktail and the ship boy Kevin will start showing strange marks on their skin, bright and painful. They are developing a dragonmark but the malign presence of Nal Shalor is corrupting the two dragonmarks, making them unstable and dangerous.

Not handled enough

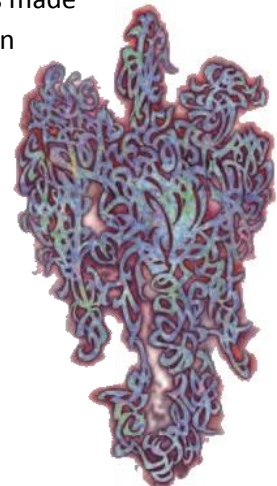
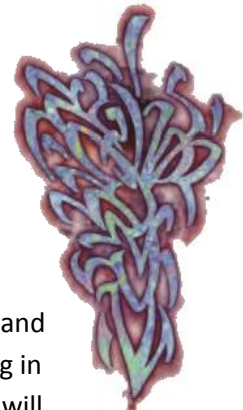
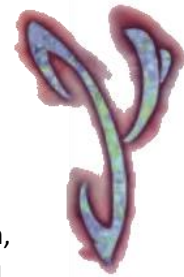
George Blacktail was developing a Mark of Handling, but the corruption is twisting its capabilities into something more heinous: instead of calming animals, his presence is enraging people around him. All people begin acting like under the effect of a *confusion* spell, with cyren soldiers turning hostile against every other passenger of the ship.

Count how many cyren soldiers on the same deck as George are left unattended: they will attack one passenger each. PCs can try to engage enraged soldiers in combat (statistics of a **guard**), preventing them from killing passengers.

Make flesh, not stuff

Kevin, the ship boy, is developing a Mark of Making, but dark powers are warping its abilities and instead of making objects he begins making compositions of flesh. This has two consequences:

- Zznotharak finds himself revived again with a new body but this sudden corporeality causes him some trouble: he is again a **beholder**, but he is trapped inside the rubble on the lower deck, its eyestalks mostly disabled, and unable to move. He is stuck with his central eye looking through an opening in the rubble, projecting his anti-magic field. He is also able to scream, which will do, commanding other puny creatures to set him free.
- A passenger near Kevin is suddenly disassembled in a bunch of little slugs made of flesh (statistics of 10 **slaad tadpole**). They will start to merge and within one round they will form a huge humming mass of flesh, a **gibbering moulder**, with 50hp + 5hp for every surviving tadpole. The gibbering moulder will start attacking everything nearby. Every 10 minutes a random passenger near Kevin will suffer the same transformation.



...so, what?

Both George and Kevin can't control their powers, so the adventurers must find a way to address these problems. There are multiple options:

- Zznotharak is mostly harmless: if they manage to find a way to block its dangerous bite they can place both under the influence of his anti-magic field, stopping their nefarious effects
- If they throw in the sea one or both of them, their effects come to an end within one minute.
- If they manage to move George or Kevin, they can notice, with a **DC15** wisdom[perception] check, that moving away from the stern will reduce the effects: every 10 minutes roll 1d20, with a result of 11 or more the effects are halted for 10 minutes (enraged creatures calm down and no gibbering moulder is created).
- If the PCs have some good idea, which can spice up things for Act III, let it work – your call, let entertaining things happen.

Reward good play and adherence to character's background with *inspiration*, as usual.

Note: action paced combat

This act and the following one are heavily combat oriented: do not turn the fight into a siege war, let it be dynamic and fun. You are on a ship rolling on bad weather, full of rubble, furniture, ropes, and all the stuff a character needs to create a fun and spectacular combat scene. Let yourself and your players enjoy the action.



Act III – Boarded from within

Duration: 45 minutes

While chaos spreads through the ship, events get worse: Jerome Luliac (statistics of a **wight**) appears with 4 **zombies** in the upper deck, trying to turn into undead minions (**zombies**) every passenger he can touch. A cyren soldier not enraged by the effects of George's dragonmark can defend up to 2 passengers, lowering the number of monsters to face.

After starting the attack, Jerome will turn to the PCs, recognizing the reason of his defeat. If there is a character who dealt the killing blow on him during the events of *Flying fear*, Jerome will focus his attacks on that character.

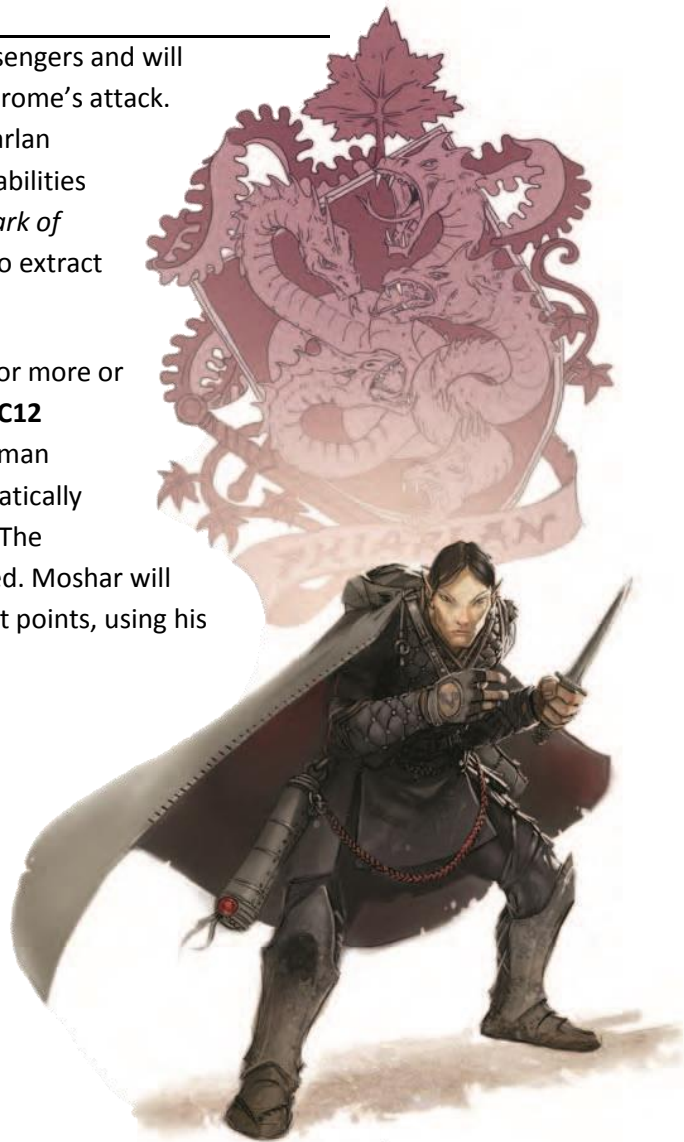
If the route for the ship in Act I was not traced correctly, the bad weather will set up a perfect environment for Jerome: everyone else, zombies included, will be surprised at the beginning of the fight because of the rough sea.

Chaos – better than darkness

During the fight, Bringer will try to defend passengers and will count as one unraged cyrene soldier against Jerome's attack.

While combat enrages, anyway, Moshar d'Phiarlan (statistics of a **Bandit captain** with the special abilities from the *Mark of Shadows* and the *Greater Mark of Shadows*) will try to incapacitate him, hoping to extract his *messenger* without triggering its escape.

Any character with a passive perception of 16 or more or any character who uses his action to make a **DC12** wisdom[perception] check will notice that "Roman Dylar" is attacking Bringer and they will automatically notice that Bringer is defeated after 2 rounds. The character can try to defend the allied warforged. Moshar will escape as soon as he drops below half of his hit points, using his *Slip into shadows* ability.



Rewards

After the fight, the ship manages to reach Sharn in safety. Many expert healers from the Healer's Guild sent by House Lyrandar take care of passengers and crewmen while more notable characters attract special attentions:

- George and Kevin, if they survived, have now a normal dragonmark and Dragonmarked Houses call them, hoping to acquire new members. If they survive they will accept the offer, becoming members of the house and giving the character the **Cannith favoured** and **Vadalis favoured** story award.
- Zznotharak is taken into custody by the City Guard. He will escape on the way, managing to hide himself in the city.
- The Blue flame elemental is nowhere to be found. Who knows?
- If at least 10 passengers survive the journey, House Lyrandar will reward characters with *Wealth*. The captain, if survived, will thank them with a *potion of growth* that let who drinks it instinctively know where the north is (to be added to all players' magic item list, 50gp price).

At the end of the adventure, every player receives **1 XCP** and **1 TP**.

DM special

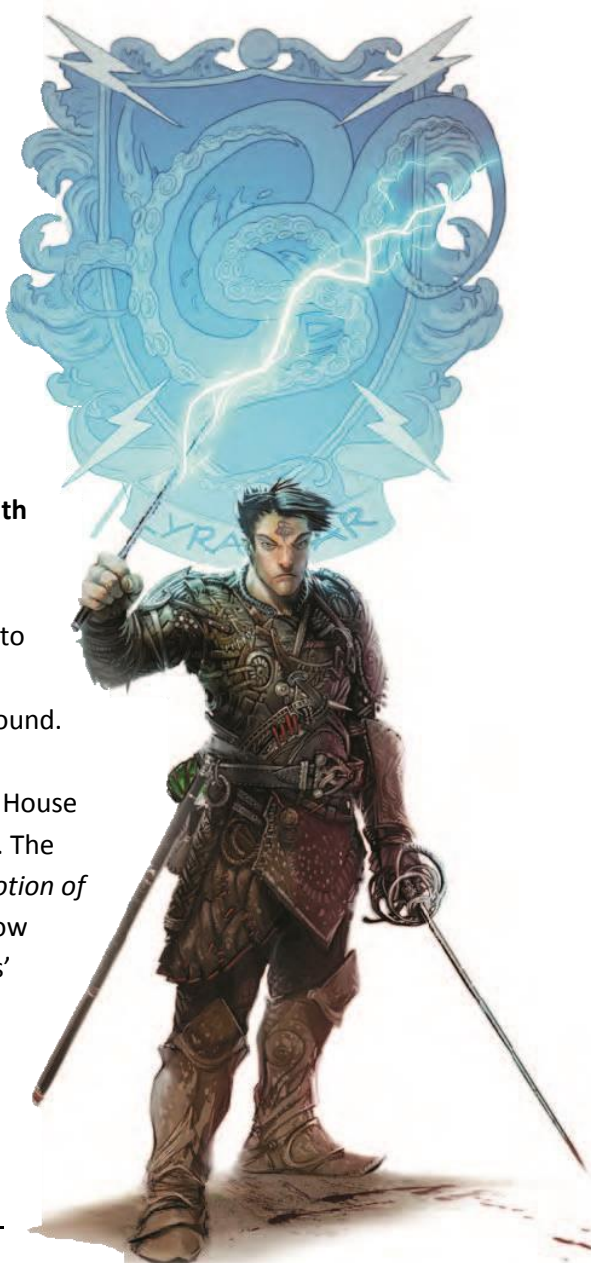
If you DMed all four adventures, you can add to your list any one magic item from one of the adventures.

Story award: Cannith favoured

When doing any charisma-based check to influence a character affiliated to House Cannith with advantage, you can reroll one of the results and use the new result instead.

Story award: Vadalis favoured

When doing any charisma-based check to influence a character affiliated to House Vadalis with advantage, you can reroll one of the results and use the new result instead.





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